

# The Letter of St. Paul to the ROMANS



## OPENING WORSHIP

To begin your Bible study, read together **Psalm 51**. This is one of the seven *Penitential Psalms*. The penitent believer expresses his grief over the sins he has committed and rejoices in the complete forgiveness of the Lord.

## INTRODUCTION

Gentile pagans are guilty of sin. Jews are guilty of breaking their own law. God's law binds every human being over to disobedience, so that God may have mercy on all mankind.

This is the beauty of the gospel! The righteousness that God *demand*s from a sinner is the righteousness that God himself *gives* to a sinner. The righteousness that you must have to be able to stand before God is a righteousness that comes from outside you. It comes from Jesus Christ, and becomes yours through faith.

## TECHNICAL VOCABULARY

Many of the words used in this section have very particular technical meanings. Write a definition or description of the meaning of each of these words:

Righteousness

Law and the prophets

Sin

Faith

Redemption

Atonement

Justice (see Rom. 2:6-11)

## TIME FOR SOME GOSPEL

Read **Romans 3:21-31** and consider the following questions:

Where does a human being get the righteousness he needs to be able to be acceptable to God (v. 21-22)?

What does Paul mean when he calls this "a righteousness from God, *apart from law*" (v. 21)?

What does the word *justify* mean (note two dimensions of the word)?

1.

2.

Consider verses 25 and 26. What does Paul mean when he says that God *had left the sins committed before hand unpunished*? How was this “injustice” rectified?

How might you be tempted to boast before God about our own righteousness (v. 27)?

Explain the meaning of verse 28 in simple terms.

## **IS THIS SOMETHING NEW?**

**Read Romans 4:1-25.**

The Jews took great pride in being descendants of Father Abraham. They considered him to be a good and holy man. Now Paul addresses the question: How was Abraham justified in the Old Testament? Was it because he was a good man (by law)? Or was it by God’s grace?

How was Abraham counted as righteous before God (v. 3)?

What role do good works play in justification (v. 5)?

Describe how *God justifies the wicked*.

One of the questions the Jews were wrestling with in Paul’s day was whether a Gentile had to become a (circumcised) Jew before he could become a Christian. What was the connection between circumcision and Abraham’s justification (v. 9-12)? How did circumcision relate to justification in Paul’s day?

Discuss the meaning of verse 15: *Where there is no law there is no transgression*.

Describe Abraham’s faith. How does it compare to your faith today? In what ways was it similar or different?

In verses 22-24 Paul talks about God *crediting* righteousness through faith. Describe what this picture means to you.

Look closely at verse 25. For whom did Jesus die? For whom did Jesus rise again? What does this say about God’s justification?

The term for the justification described in Romans 4:25 is: \_\_\_\_\_.

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## **VERSE TO REMEMBER**

**Romans 3:23**

*All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.*

**For next time read Romans chapters 3:19 through 5.**

Reflect upon how the gospel brings comfort and joy to your heart.