

The Gospel in a Paragraph

Sermon 7 in the Romans Series

Romans 3:21-26

This paragraph is considered by many to be the heart of the gospel.

Leon Morris says “This is possibly the single most important paragraph ever written.”

v. 21 – Righteousness apart from the Law

Psalm 143:2

There is not a single child of Adam’s race that will be saved by law-keeping.

Luther notes – the purpose of the law “is not to justify but to terrify.”

Spurgeon says, “All the law can do is to show us our sin...The object of the law of God is not to cleanse us, but to show us how much cleansing we need; to reveal our disease, not to find a remedy for it.

But now – the promise of the OT has come. Luke 24:25-27

v. 22 – Righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ

For **all** who believe!

Salvation can only come by God’s grace appropriated by faith!

1 Cor. 1:30 -- It is because of him (God) that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. (NIV)

2 Cor. 5:21

Isaiah 53:4-6

Our sins cleansed by His blood.

Our only righteousness is His righteousness – given to us

v. 23 – All need this Righteousness

v. 24a -- Justification

Justification means “not guilty”

Isaiah 55:1-11

v. 24b – Redemption

Pictured in Israel freed from Egyptian bondage.

v. 25 – Propitiation

Propitiation has to do with the way the wrath of God is turned away from us.

Richard Niebuhr about 70 years ago said something that sadly is probably even more true in 2023 (as quoted by Dr. J.V. Fesko)

“The gospel as it is preached in America is:

A God without wrath

who brings humans without sin

into a kingdom without judgment

through a Christ without a cross.”

v. 26 – God: Just and the Justifier