

Devotional Questions –Romans 3:21-31

1. *How [do] the Law and the Prophets witness to the gospel (Romans 3:21)?*
2. *What are the terms or conditions of God's salvation? Whom do they apply to (Romans 3:22, 24, 26, 28, 30)? What does he stress by repetition?*
3. *Why is sin such an important concept in understanding and appreciating the gospel (Romans 3:22-23)?*
4. *Why do you think people prefer to work their way to heaven than to accept God's free gift (Romans 3:24)?*
5. *What is the gift of God's grace (Romans 3:24)?*
6. *How does Jesus' sacrifice demonstrate God's justice* (Romans 3:25)? *The correct term is "**righteousness**" Romans 3:25. See full answer to Question 6.*
7. *What is propitiation' or 'atoning sacrifice'* and why is it so important (Romans 3:25)? *"**Propitiation**" Romans 3:25 is the correct term, not "atoning sacrifice." See the accompanying study **Propitiation**.*
8. *How does the gospel establish the law (Romans 3:31)?*
9. *How does Paul want us to respond to this chapter?*

Devotional Questions –Romans 3:21-31, Answers to Questions

See Dr Ruckman's commentary *The Book of Romans* pp 127-151 and the *Ruckman Reference Bible* pp 1432, 1489, 1511 for detailed comment.

1. *How [do] the Law and the Prophets witness to the gospel (Romans 3:21)?*

“The gospel of the grace of God” Acts 20:24 is that especially to the Jew ***“...by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses”*** Acts 13:39 and likewise to the Gentile and indeed all men ***“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus”*** Romans 3:23-24.

As Paul states ***“Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also”*** Romans 3:29.

The Law and the Prophets bear witness to ***“The gospel of the grace of God”*** Acts 20:24 in that though many in Israel perished for their disobedience to God during the wilderness journey when ***“The wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and smote down the chosen men of Israel”*** Psalm 78:31 with Exodus 32:26-28, Numbers 11:33-34, 14:29, 32, 16:49 the Law reveals that God *forbore* to behold iniquity in Israel when He *had* beheld it.

“He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel: the LORD his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them” Numbers 23:21.

Moreover, the prophets reveal that the Lord was ever ready to *pardon* iniquity in Israel.

“Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea” Micah 7:18-19.

Numbers 23:21, from the Law and Micah 7:18-19, from the prophets, therefore bear witness to ***“the gospel of the grace of God”*** Acts 20:24 that is ***“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus”*** Romans 3:24 because as Paul states ***“But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith”*** Galatians 3:11 and thereby be just ***“in the sight of God”*** that according to their being ***“in Christ...a new creature”*** 2 Corinthians 5:17 *God does not behold their iniquity but pardons it.*

John addresses the issue of the reality of sin in the believer, for which God has made provision through the Lord Jesus Christ. Note the key word ***“propitiation.”***

“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world” 1 John 2:1-2.

2. *What are the terms or conditions of God's salvation? Whom do they apply to (Romans 3:22, 24, 26, 28, 30)? What does he stress by repetition?*

God's terms of ***“the gospel of the grace of God”*** Acts 20:24 are:

- ***“faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe”*** Romans 3:22
- ***“his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus”*** Romans 3:24
- ***“a propitiation through faith in his blood”*** Romans 3:25

Paul states ***“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”*** Romans 10:17.

Through the scripture therefore God in His grace gifts the willing hearer with ***“faith of Jesus Christ”*** – see www.timefortruth.co.uk/alan-oreilly/ *Romans 1 Part 1 Question 9* on Romans 1:17 - to receive from God redemption from sin with the Lord Jesus Christ as his propitiatory substitute Who alone as such could furnish the price of redemption as Peter explains.

“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” 1 Peter 1:18-19 with Acts 4:12
“Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

God’s terms of **“the gospel of the grace of God”** Acts 20:24 stand as an invitation to *all* men **“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men”** Titus 2:11 though they are effective *only* for those willing to receive them **“because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe”** 1 Timothy 4:10.

Paul emphasises the necessity to be identified as **“him which believeth in Jesus”** Romans 3:26 **“by faith of Jesus Christ”** Romans 3:22 to be **“justified by faith”** Romans 3:28, 30 **“through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus”** Romans 3:24. That is the right emphasis as Paul himself testifies.

“But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith” Philippians 3:7-9.

3. Why is sin such an important concept in understanding and appreciating the gospel (Romans 3:22-23)?

Sin:

- Afflicts **“every man that cometh into the world”** John 1:9 **“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God”** Romans 3:23
- Kills every man that it afflicts **“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned”** Romans 5:12
- Condemns to hell every man that dies from its affliction **“And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh”** Isaiah 66:24.

What Paul testifies about **“the gospel of Christ”** Romans 1:16 and the freedom from the affliction of sin that it brings is therefore greatly to be appreciated.

“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death” Romans 8:2.

4. Why do you think people prefer to work their way to heaven than to accept God’s free gift (Romans 3:24)?

Paul explains why. **“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God”** 1 Corinthians 1:18.

Dr Ruckman states that nothing appears more foolish for salvation than to trust the blood of a dead Jew, yet that is precisely **“the gospel of the grace of God”** Acts 20:24 as heaven itself testifies. **“And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation”** Revelation 5:9.

5. What is the gift of God’s grace (Romans 3:24)?

“...It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us” Romans 8:34.

6. *How does Jesus' sacrifice demonstrate God's justice* (Romans 3:25)?* *The correct term is "**righteousness**" Romans 3:25 insofar as it is "**the righteous judgment of God**" Romans 2:5 that must be satisfied by "**a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God**" Philippians 4:18.

That sacrifice was the Lord Jesus Christ in that "**Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour**" Ephesians 5:2 whereby "**mercy rejoiceth against judgment**" James 2:13 satisfying even "**the righteous judgment of God**" Romans 2:5 in that "**...God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)**" Ephesians 2:4-5.

See the accompanying study **Propitiation**.

7. *What is propitiation' or 'atoning sacrifice'* and why is it so important (Romans 3:25)?* *"**Propitiation**" Romans 3:25 is the correct term, not "*atoning sacrifice.*" See the accompanying study **Propitiation**.

"**Propitiation**" is the Lord Jesus Christ. That is vital to understand "**For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit**" 1 Peter 3:18.

Only the Lord Jesus Christ is said in scripture to be *worthy* to suffer in that way. See *Question 4* and Revelation 5:9 "**And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.**"

8. *How does the gospel establish the law (Romans 3:31)?*

"**The gospel of Christ**" Romans 1:16 establishes or vindicates the law by showing that the purpose of the law has been fulfilled.

"**Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith**" Galatians 3:24.

9. *How does Paul want us to respond to this chapter?*

The way Paul did. See the conclusion of *Question 2* and Paul's testimony. It should be today's believer's testimony.

"**But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith**" Philippians 3:7-9.

Propitiation

Based on *Reply to DiVietro's Attack on Gail Riplinger – Flotsam Flush* pp 108-109
www.timefortruth.co.uk/why-av-only/james-white-dr-divietro-and-dawaite.php

“Propitiation” from the Scriptures

Concerning the word propitiate, or the related Biblical term ***“propitiation”*** Romans 3:25, 1 John 2:2, 4:10, again ‘the Greek’ isn’t necessary to determine the meaning of the word.

Following Dr Mrs Riplinger’s approach¹, the word ***“propitiation”*** is understood from scripture as follows.

Romans 3:24-25 ***“Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;”***

1 John 2:1-2 ***“Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”***

1 John 4:10 ***“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”***

Propitiation is a Person

“Propitiation,” like salvation, Luke 2:30, 19:9, is above all a Person², ***“Jesus Christ the righteous.”*** God is a personal God, not simply a theological or doctrinal God.

Dr DiVietro gives no indication of any lexicon that reveals this basic meaning of the word ***“propitiation.”***

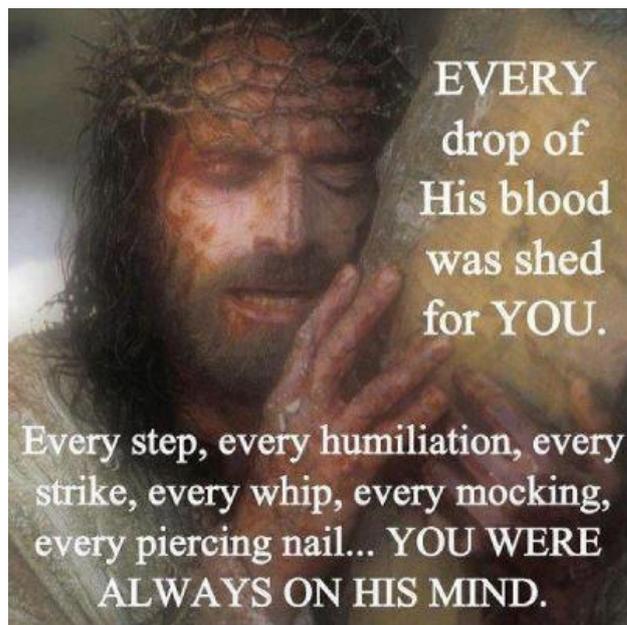
The scripture, however, gives further insight into this meaning.

1 John 4:14 states ***“And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.”***

In sum, ***“The Saviour”*** and ***“the propitiation”*** are one and the same. He is ***“Jesus Christ the righteous”*** or ***“Jehovah is salvation”***³ Matthew 1:21, Who is ***“the Messiah the Prince”*** Daniel 9:25 and ***“the Holy One”*** 1 John 2:20, anointed of the Holy Ghost Luke 3:22, 4:18.

The word ***“propitiation”*** may be understood in more detail by a study of what the Lord Jesus Christ did as ***“the Saviour of the world.”***

As such, He is ***“the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world”*** John 1:29.



“But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed” Isaiah 53:5

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Propitiation is “Christ our Passover”

Therefore, as Paul states in 1 Corinthians 5:7 **“For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.”**

Ephesians 5:2, Hebrews 7:26-27, 9:26, 1 Peter 1:18-19 are all important in the context of **“Christ our Passover,”** along with Genesis 8:21.

“And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.”

“For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.”

“For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”

“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” 1 Peter 1:18-19.

“And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man’s sake; for the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.”

Propitiation is “the Saviour” and “savour”

The voluntary, sinless sacrifice **“which taketh away the sin of the world”** of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself **“to God”** as **“a sweetsmelling savour”** turned away God’s wrath as Noah’s sacrifice did after the flood, for anyone who believes that the Lord Jesus Christ is both **“the Saviour”** and **“savour”** for him personally, John 3:36.

This is **“propitiation.”**

Drs Waite and DiVietro may dismiss the above as an example of having to **“chase all over the King James Bible to find the definitions of its words”**⁴ but **“he that seeketh findeth”** Matthew 7:7 and **“unto you that hear shall more be given”** Mark 4:24.

References

¹ *In Awe of Thy Word* by G. A. Riplinger www.avpublications.com/avnew/home.html pp 81-82

² *Ruckman Reference Bible*, p 1638

³ *The Oxford Bible Reader’s Dictionary & Concordance*

⁴ *Dr D. A. Waite and The Dead Bible Society* www.timefortruth.co.uk/why-av-only/james-white-dr-divietro-and-dawaite.php p 6

The Saving Work of Jesus Christ

- Redemption = Jesus Christ **PAID THE PRICE** for all sins 
- Propitiation = Jesus Christ **SATISFIED** the justice of God the Father 
- Reconciliation = God’s **PEACE TREATY** with the entire human race 

Propitiation – Christ’s Appeasement of God’s Justifiable Wrath

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