

If you missed last week - LISTEN TO ANDY'S MESSAGE!

Read passage -- vv. 19-31

1. It is almost Christmas shopping season → popular items will be out of stock -- iPad -- how excited when it was back in stock and available
2. The issue for Paul in the NT was “righteousness” — **the ultimate issue for every human**
 - The question: what must I do to get it
 - Religion says: just obey God
 - Law says: you can't obey God — **vv. 19-20**
 - Gospel says: Jesus obeyed God for you
3. **Righteousness** is now in stock - **v. 21** - *available, but we can't pay for it or earn it or trade for it*
4. *We must receive it as a GIFT, or not receive it at all -- vv. 22-23* → **SHEER GRACE**
5. Paul uses three big words to explain this gift (gospel) - **vv. 24-25**
 - Justification -- the blue ribbon for the high jump
 - Redemption -- the price for a slave's freedom
 - Propitiation -- the OT scapegoat

5. This is “SHEER GRACE CHRISTIANITY”

6. This should be exciting for two kinds of people
 - The moralist — *can quit striving for God*
 - The rebel — *can quit running from God*
7. **v. 26** tells us that God satisfied justice so that he could extend mercy - “justify”
 - OT -- looked forward to the cross
 - NT -- we look back upon the cross

The result: he is not primarily a judge out to get us; he is a father who is out to bless us
Again - **sheer grace!**

8. Two implications with vast applications:

- #1 — **Humility before God - vv. 27-28**
 - What do I do when things don't go my way? Mad at God - Why? I expect God to **reward** me. God **owes** me. I am **entitled** to things going my way.
 - I take the family to Disney World and it rains all week - isn't fair!!!
 - My face breaks out right before a major social event
 - Someone else is chosen for the job I wanted
 - The other team wins the game
 - My marriage stinks and someone else's looks perfect
 - Someone else's kids are walking in faith, mine are 1,000 miles from Jesus
 - Someone else has a great extended family, in-laws, grandparents, etc. - we fight/super strained relationships

We want God to be fair! *But if God is fair, I am in real trouble, aren't I?*

- Do I really want what I deserve?
- The Gospel says that Jesus got what I deserve so that I can get what I don't deserve.

Leads to a sincere, spiritual humility before God.

- A sense of *dependency* (helpless like a child)
- and a *spirit of thankfulness* (we do not get what we deserve; we get grace)
- A new way to pray → with dependency and thankfulness

- #2 — **Humility before others - vv. 29-30**

The ground is level at the cross (v. 22 - “there is **no distinction**, all fall short”)

- Paul’s day → circumcised or uncircumcised
- white or black — wealthy or poor — educated or uneducated
- tee-totalers or non-tee totalers — tattoos or no tattoos
- Republican / democrat — Green / not so green — macs / pcs :)
- married or divorced — and btwn spouses

★ I look at others in a whole new way — even my spouse, extended family

★ **ALL in the same boat of need for sheer grace**

The gospel is NOT Jesus + (anything)

9. That is why Paul ends this section by affirming the law in v. 31

The law (God’s ethical, moral standard) sets the stage for sheer grace Christianity...

- It does the leveling... by setting the high bar.
- It exists to confirm our sense of failure and to challenge our sense of entitlement.

It shows us that we are sunk without a rescue.

In the days before the Panama Canal was built, ships from the east coast bound for the west coast had to sail all the way around south America — around Cape Horn. On Feb 4, 1910, the steamer Kentucky was sailing past the cape when it ran into heavy weather and began to leak faster than the pumps could pump. The captain sent out an SOS distress signal with the message, gave coordinates and said, “We are sinking.” A nearby ship, the Alamo, heard the call, and moments later, the bells in the engine room were ringing the signals that changed the Alamo’s course and turned her nose in the direction of the sinking Kentucky. All passengers on board the Kentucky were saved just before the vessel sank. *Apart from being rescued by the Alamo, they all would have drown.*

Some of us here feel like we are sinking, too... broken by sin and circumstances... Some feel like failures... can’t get it right. Others are angry at God because we think he owes us.

The law exists to confirm our sense of failure and to challenge our sense of entitlement. *It shows us that, apart from a dramatic rescue, we ALL are sunk.*

Thankfully, the gospel tells me that there was one who rescued me by being sunk for me. Who was consumed by a frigid sea of judgement so that I could bask in the warmth of God’s fatherly affection and acceptance.

I don’t deserve it — and yet that is my reality. ***That is sheer grace Christianity.*** And so I do not plead to God for *fairness* — I thank God for his *mercy*. ***Mercy to save me from the storm of judgement, and to sustain me when things do not go the way I want them to go. I can still trust him -- live by faith.***

The gospel is the ultimate SOS. It doesn’t call out to the Alamo, but to God himself for rescue. But like the Alamo, when I cry out for help, God’s rescuing mercy is turned in my direction.

***Maybe you’d like to plead for God’s mercy today?
Let me encourage you to make an an SOS to heaven...***

“Whosoever calls on the name of the Lord [Jesus] shall be saved.