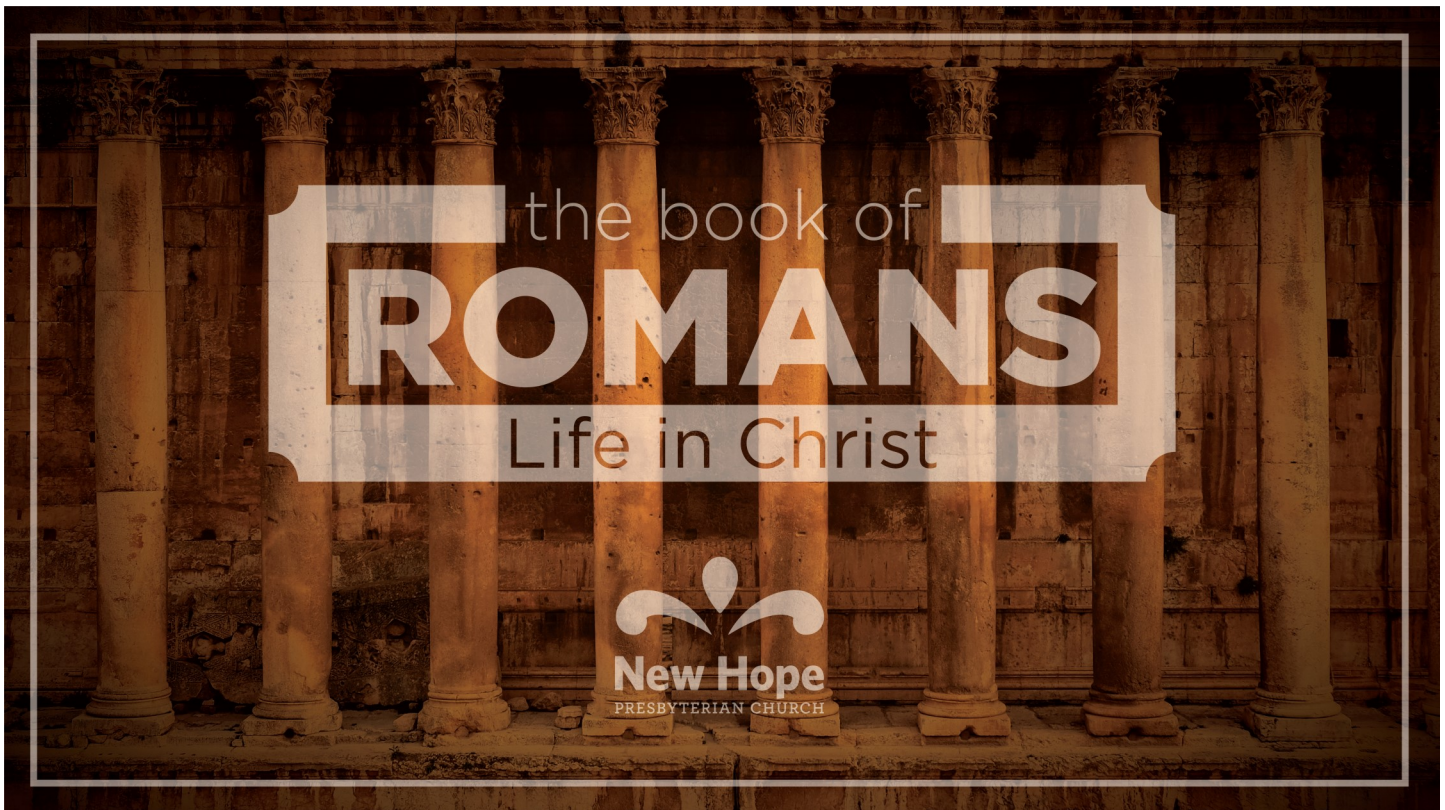




Romans: Life in Christ Study Guide (Week 5)

But Now

September 5, 2021

Romans 3:21-31

²¹ But now, apart from law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed, and is attested by the law and the prophets, ²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction, ²³ since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; ²⁴ they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith. He did this to show his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously committed; ²⁶ it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies the one who has faith in Jesus.

²⁷ Then what becomes of boasting? It is excluded. By what law? By that of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸ For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law. ²⁹ Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, ³⁰ since God is one; and he will justify the circumcised on the ground of faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith. ³¹ Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.

1. The first words of this week's scripture are, "But now." Looking back over Romans 1:18-3:20, why is this transition important? Why do you think Paul has structured his letter in this way?

2. Justification is another rich Old Testament word. How would you define justification? What is the significance of justification for the Christian faith?
3. What does Paul reveal about who God is and what God does for us in this passage?
4. Read Romans 3:22-24. This is one of the most famous lines in Romans. Why do you think this has been the focus of so many over the years?
5. Justification should result in a new future for all of us—a journey of life transformed by God's grace. How have you seen this be true in your life?

Reflections on Romans

In these eleven verses the apostle summarizes what is essential about his understanding of God and Christ: God has manifested his saving, righteousness in Christ's death and resurrection, a righteousness effected apart from, but not in opposition to, the law. To be sure, these verses do not summarize the whole of Paul's theology, but there is little doubt that this section of Romans provides one of Paul's most powerful statements of what God has done in Christ. Through Christ, God justified, redeemed, and reconciled humanity to himself.

From Frank Matera's commentary on *Romans*, p.101-102.