

WARM-UP

- Do you consider yourself careful with words? Why or why not?
- Have you ever tried making up for hurting a friend? What happened?
- When was the last time you asked for forgiveness from a friend or family member? Tell us what happened.

WORD ²³. . . *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,* ²⁴*and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,* ²⁵*whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.*

ROMANS 3:23–25

God's word tells us that regardless of the number of good things we do, we will never fulfill God's standard of righteousness, *for all have sinned*. God's holiness demands a sinless life—which no man can ever attain. But the good news is God is also loving and faithful. He made a way for us to be reconciled to Him. This is the message of the gospel. We can be in right standing with God because of the life, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Today, we will look at how God declares us righteous through Jesus.

1 | We needed to be rescued from our sinful nature.

11". . . no one understands; no one seeks for God. . . . " 14"Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness." 16". . . in their paths are ruin and misery . . ." **ROMANS 3:11,14,16**

God knows that left on our own, we would continue sinning against Him with our thoughts, words, and actions. Left to ourselves, our lives are miserable and we will also lead others on the path of *ruin and misery*. We cannot rescue ourselves from sin. We need someone to save us. This is exactly why Jesus had to die on the cross. Through the cross, we can have freedom and forgiveness from sin. How did God rescue you from sin?

2 | God gives us righteousness as a gift.

24. . . and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood . . . **ROMANS 3:24,25**

Because we *all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*, we deserve to receive the punishment for our sins—death and eternal separation from God (2 Thessalonians 1:9). Because of God's love, He sent Jesus as the propitiation, the sacrifice that satisfied the wrath of God. Now, we can receive mercy and forgiveness for our sins. We do not have to earn or work for our righteousness because Jesus already paid the penalty for our sin on the cross. God gives His righteousness to us as a free gift, which means we are now in right standing with Him. According to 2 Corinthians 5:21, how have we become righteous? For what purpose?

3 | We receive righteousness by faith.

... whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. **ROMANS 3:25**

God is reaching out to us with a free gift. But to make the gift ours, we need to receive it by faith. Receiving God's righteousness means putting our faith in Jesus and what He did for us on the cross. It means we fully trust that Jesus' sacrifice reconciled us to God and gave us a right standing with Him. Now that you have received righteousness by faith, how has the way you live changed?

APPLICATION

- Have you been reconciled to God through what Christ Jesus did for you? Do you want to put your faith in Him and receive the forgiveness He brings today? Ask someone to pray with you and help you start your new life with God.
- How does knowing that God gave righteousness as a gift change your mindset and the way you live? How can you grow in your faith this week?
- Ask God to bring to mind two or three people who need to receive the righteousness that comes from Him. Pray for them and ask God for opportunities to minister to them this week.

