

A few thoughts and questions to consider:

As Brad mentioned in his explanation and contrast of Romans 3:20 and 3:21, we are in a dark cloud of hopelessness without the beautiful light of the Gospel that Paul explains so well in this passage.

- Reflect on the time and place when God, through your faith in Jesus Christ, moved you from a life of hopelessness to a hope-filled Christ follower.
- Think as well about a time since your salvation when you experienced hope in an otherwise hopeless situation. Jot down a few notes – maybe a prayer of praise to God – about that experience.

Romans 3:21 begins with the two-word phrase “But now.” Martyn Lloyd-Jones, Welsh minister and Bible scholar, says of these two words, “there are no more vital words in the whole of scripture. ...can there be words any more blessed or more wonderful than these words?” Douglas Moo, in Romans - The NIV Application Commentary, notes “New Testament writers use these two words to contrast the state of people or the world **outside of Christ**, with the situation **in Christ** (emphasis added).”

As we’ve begun our journey through Romans, this contrast is very evident as Paul has clearly made the case for the sinful depravity of man (Rom 2:9-12) and the impossibility of being justified by the works of the law (Rom 3:20). Paul uses “But now” to lead us into the beautiful story of the Good News of Jesus Christ. This two-word phrase is also found in the following passages: Rom 6:21-22; Rom 7:5-6; Rom 16:25-27; Gal 4:8-9; Eph 2:11-13; Eph 5:8; Col 1:21-22; Col 3:7-8; Heb 12:26; 1 Pet 2:10; 1 Pet 2:25.

Along with Romans 3:21, read and ponder at least two of these other passages and their truths as experienced and manifested in your life. Then write a prayer to God, thanking Him for the beauty of His saving and sustaining grace.

In Romans 3:22, Paul states “The righteousness of God is through faith in Jesus Christ to **all** who believe (emphasis added).” To ensure we understand, he adds that God makes no distinction between people; this gift of God’s grace is available to both Jew and Gentile. In Galatians 3:28, Paul elaborates this point: “There is no Jew or Greek, slave or free, male and female; since you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

- How should God’s desire to see **all** people saved impact my view toward evangelism?

- Is there any individual person or group of people with whom you have trouble envisioning as being “worthy” of God’s grace? Remembering that none of us is worthy, pray for the salvation of that person or group of people.

Romans 3:24-25 includes three facets of the “Righteousness of God” that is received through faith: (1) justification, (2) redemption, and (3) Jesus Christ as the “propitiation” or “atoning sacrifice.” These three aspects are interrelated but unique in their own way. Write in your words what each of these means and how they have changed your life. (If you need help, the Greek word translated “justified” was judicial and was used when one was declared innocent by a judge; “redemption” was the price paid to set a slave free; “propitiation / atoning sacrifice” speaks of satisfying God’s wrath toward one’s sin.)

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Once again, we encourage you to dig a little deeper into this passage (you may also include Romans 3:1-20) by preparing a HEAR Report. As noted in previous weeks, HEAR is an acronym for Highlight, Explain, Apply, Respond.

- Read thru this passage (or even Romans 1) and HIGHLIGHT a verse(s) that you found especially powerful.
- EXPLAIN the verse. What was the context and purpose for what was written and when it was written.
- APPLY the verse to yourself
- Lastly, RESPOND to the verse. Maybe there are changes God wants you to make in your life w.r.t. the verse. Or your response may be a prayer to God. It may be praising Him. However you feel led to respond.

As has been pointed out by others, the goal isn’t for you / me to jot down a “profound truth” but to note the “truth you found.”

Please email truths you found. We’ll share some of those next week.

Also please email comments, suggestions for this program. We want and need to hear from you.

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Name:

H.E.A.R. REPORT for

\_(Bible passage).

Highlight a verse(s)

Explain what the text means.

Possible questions to consider: *Why was this written? To whom was it originally written? How does it fit with the verses immediately before and after it? Why did the Holy Spirit include this passage in the book? What is He intending to communicate through this text?*

Apply “the significance of these verses to you personally”

Possible questions to consider: *How can this help me? What does this mean to me? What would the application of this verse look like in my life? What does this mean to me? How does this apply to my family, my church family, my community? What is God saying to me?*

Respond

Matthew 7:7 (ESV), “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.”

Source: Growing Up, Robby Gallaty