

## **But Now**

(Rom 3:21-31)

- Read section from 3:21-31

### I. The great transition

- A) This is the beginning of not only a new section, but the beginning of the bulk and body of the epistle which runs clear through ch 11.
- B) This “but now” is the beginning of the good news
  - i. Paul has first made man hopeless and helpless of himself, and now turns to the “but now”
    - a) It seems impossible a man may be Christian without being made hopeless in himself
  - ii. Rom 3:21-31 is in many ways a summary statement of preface of this entire section of Romans, in the same way as Rom 1:18 was of the previous section
    - a) This may be the greatest section in the entire bible

### C) Division

- i. Rom 3:21-24 (description of salvation)
  - a) God had promised and now reveals (v.21)
  - b) Not by works of man but by God (v.22)
  - c) Available to all races (v.23)
  - d) All of God’s grace (v.24)
  - e) All through Christ (v.24)
- ii. Rom 3:25-31 (characteristics of salvation)
  - a) This salvation is in conformity to God’s character (v.25-26)
  - b) This salvation gives all the glory to God and none to man (v.27-28)
  - c) This salvation shows God over all the world, not just one race (v.29-30)
  - d) This salvation honors God’s word and His Law, doesn’t invalidate it (v.31)

### II. Testing our gospel

- A) If our gospel does not conform to this section of scripture, it is wrong
  - i. Paul says here, “I am not taking from nor negating the Law and prophets, I am in perfect agreement with all they have said, and I am in fact confirming it and proving it”
    - a) Acts 26:22-23- “Saying none other than what Moses and the prophets said”
    - b) Acts 17:1-3- Paul’s manner
  - ii. We must take our bible together as a whole

- a) This is why the gentile fathers included O/T with the N/T
- b) “Any method of showing N/T salvation other than a fulfillment of O/T prophecy is wrong.” MLJ
  - 1) A way of expressing the gospel as a contrast to the O/T or a reaction to the Law’s “failure” is completely false
    - (a) Rom 1:1-3- This is God’s gospel
      - (1) Sin is rebellion against God and estrangement from God
      - (2) Gospel is God’s method of reconciling man back to Himself
      - (3) 1 Pet 3:18- “To bring us back to God”
      - (4) Salvation is planned and provided for by the Father, in Christ through the Spirit, it is God’s Gospel
- iii. A righteousness which is not by perfect obedience to the law is clearly taught in the law itself (sacrificial system) and in the prophets (coming Redeemer)

### III. Dispensational error

- A) Eph 2:1-7- “Times past, but now, ages to come”
  - i. They take these three statements and make them refer to 3 periods of time in which God acts differently in the salvation of man as well as in the inheritance provided
    - a) Making the “but now” refer to a change in salvation’s method at any point (Acts 2, 9, 13, 28) make a doctrine which causes the Gentile to be “un-redeemable” prior to it
    - b) It also sets all men “under grace” and not “under condemnation”
      - 1) Acts 17:30- God commands all men to repent
      - 2) Rom 1:18- How could Gos show wrath?
    - c) “Grace” is not God’s reaction to “Law’s” failure
      - 1) Eph 1:3-7- Salvation by grace through faith from before the foundation of the world
      - 2) 1 Pet 1:18-20- Christ foreordained to die from before the world was
      - 3) Acts 2:23- “Determinate counsel of God”
      - 4) Rev 13:8- “Lamb slain from the foundation of the world”
- B) Dispensation- “stewardship,” for “house” and “law” and it is the method of administering the house (one house)
  - i. It is God’s administering His plan of salvation to man
    - a) God is righteousness, God therefore demands righteousness and therefore God must supply righteousness (throughout the bible)
      - 1) All heresies come from departure from one of these 3 truths
    - b) “The Law is so far from justifying us, that it directs us to another way of justification, points at Christ our righteousness, to whom all the prophets witness.” MH

- C) The “dispensational change” that occurred is concerning the method of administering the goods of the house, and not the house itself nor entry into it
- i. Past “veiled”, now “revealed” and in the future “openly manifested”
    - a) It is not Past “all dead under law” but now “all alive under grace”
  - ii. Rev 10:7- The Mystery of God finished

IV. What is this “But now”

- A) John 9:1-7 & 25- “I was blind, BUT NOW I see”
- B) John 5:24- “Is passed from death unto life”
  - i. Paul and the other apostles were always using this “but now” method
    - a) Eph 2:1-4- “But God”
    - b) Eph 2:11-13- “But Now”
    - c) Eph 5:8- “But Now”
    - d) 2 Tim 1:9-10- “But Is Now”
    - e) Tit 3:4-6- “But After”
    - f) Rom 5:8-9- “But God”
    - g) Rom 6:20-22- “But Now”
    - h) Rom 7:5-6- “But Now”
    - i) 1 Cor 2:9-10- “But God”
    - j) Gal 4:8-9- “But Now”
    - k) Phil 3:4-9- Paul’s “But Now”
    - l) 1 Pet 2:10- “But Now”