

# THE WHOLE BIBLE: 66 BOOKS IN 10 WEEKS

## Romans – 2 Corinthians

### ROMANS

- longest of Paul's letters and most theologically dense
- spells out the gospel in fullest form

### Main theme: the righteousness of God received by faith

#### Romans 3:20-26

<sup>20</sup>For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. <sup>21</sup>But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it – <sup>22</sup>the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: <sup>23</sup>for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup>and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>25</sup>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. <sup>26</sup>It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

### What is justification?

- justification is a verdict – righteous standing before God
- bombshell of gospel – law doesn't justify!

### Impotence of the moral law

- “works of law” – obedience to Ten Commandments and OT law
- the law doesn't “justify” | instead, teaches us that we are sinners

### The “righteousness of God” is a gift

- Martin Luther called this an “alien righteousness”
- justification is not mere forgiveness, but imputed righteousness

### This is main dispute with Roman Catholicism

- *when* does justification happen? on *what basis*?

### Justified “by faith”

- faith is the fitting instrument – empty hand that receives the gift

### 1 CORINTHIANS

- unlike Romans, very situational and addresses practical problems
  - divisions and factions; sexual immorality; social snobbery
  - questions about marriage, divorce, pagan rituals, resurrection

#### 1 Corinthians 5:1-13

<sup>1</sup>It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. <sup>2</sup>And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you.

<sup>3</sup>For though absent in body, I am present in spirit; and as if present, I have already pronounced judgment on the one who did such a thing. <sup>4</sup>When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, <sup>5</sup>you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

<sup>6</sup>Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? <sup>7</sup>Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. <sup>8</sup>Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

<sup>9</sup>I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people – <sup>10</sup>not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. <sup>11</sup>But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler – not even to eat with such a one. <sup>12</sup>For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? <sup>13</sup>God judges those outside. “Purge the evil person from among you.”

### Principle of church discipline

- loving to sinner – accountability, not enabling
- loving to community – holiness is corporate, not just individual

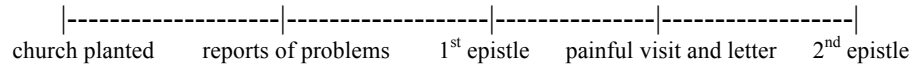
### “Let him be removed from among you”

- not about shunning and ending friendships
- but about “the name of Christ”
  - formal process of excommunication | removal of membership
- difference between “inside” the church and “outside” the church

## 2 CORINTHIANS

- many questioned if Paul could be an apostle if suffers so much
- most personal of Paul's letters – full of anguish and sorrow
- central theme: suffering and weakness in the Christian life

### Timeline of Corinthian Church



#### 2 Corinthians 4:7-12

<sup>7</sup> But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. <sup>8</sup> We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; <sup>9</sup> persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; <sup>10</sup> always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. <sup>11</sup> For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. <sup>12</sup> So death is at work in us, but life in you.

### The cross-shaped life

- [1] God alone receives the glory | [2] life through death

#### [1] God alone receives the glory

- our weakness (“jars of clay”) demonstrates the power of God
- v. 7 – “to show that power belongs to God and not us”

#### [2] Life to others, death for self

- only self-giving love produces life
- we live out suffering love of Jesus (carry “death” in our body)
- so that others might know the “life of Jesus”

### This is a challenging teaching – cross-shaped life

- we don't want to suffer | we want a safe, comfortable life
- but “whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will keep it” (Luke 17:33)
- strange joy of suffering for sake of Christ

## Introduction to Romans

- addressed to church in Rome
- for most part, not addressing any specific problems – generalized
- longest of Paul’s letters and most theologically dense
- spells out the gospel in fullest form

## Main theme: the righteousness of God received by faith

### Romans 3:20-26

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## What is justification?

- justification is *a verdict* – righteous standing before God
- bombshell of gospel – law doesn’t justify!

## Impotence of the moral law

- “works of law” – obedience to Ten Commandments and OT law
- but counterintuitively, the law doesn’t “justify”
- instead, law teaches us that we are sinners
  - law says, “this is how you can be good” / “how to avoid sin”
  - but in end, law makes us sinners (consciousness of sin)
  - “through the law comes knowledge of sin” (v. 20)

## v. 21 – “but now, the righteousness of God manifest apart from law”

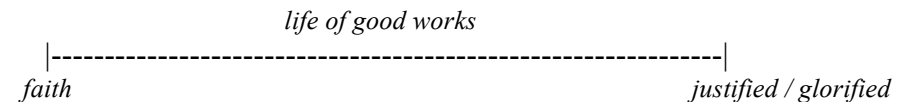
- crucial turning point | key to gospel
- what is “righteousness of God”?
  - not ours, because no one is righteous
  - but God’s righteousness – perfect moral record of Christ

## Martin Luther called this an “alien righteousness”

- imputed to us – credited to our account
- not mere forgiveness, but imputed righteousness
- illustration: inmate released from prison
  - not simply released (cessation of punishment)
  - but new identity and assets (credit of honor)

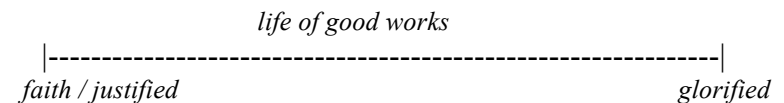
## This is main dispute with Roman Catholicism

- when does justification happen? on what basis?
- in Catholic teaching, justification comes at end of Christian life
  - starts with faith, grace infused/poured in, but moral record
  - necessity of purgatory (finish work)



## Protestant Reformation

- justification comes at beginning of Christian life
- but what about good works then?
  - good works are fruit of justification, not grounds
  - we are good because we are justified, not in order to be justified



## Justified through faith

- faith is fitting instrument of our justification
  - act of humility and repentance | glorifies the giver
- faith is the empty hand that receives the gift

## v. 26 – “so that he might be just and the justifier of the believer”

- cross satisfies demands of law (just) and gives grace (justifier)

## Introduction to 1 Corinthians

- unlike Romans, very situational and addresses practical problems
  - divisions and factions; sexual immorality; social snobbery
  - questions about marriage, divorce, pagan rituals, resurrection

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<sup>13</sup> God judges those outside. “Purge the evil person from among you.”

## Principle of church discipline

- feels very threatening | many people have been abused by church
- American individualism – don't want bonds of community
  - like in abstract, a sense of belonging and connectedness
  - but don't like obligation and responsibility to others

## Church is a community of love

- love does the hard but necessary thing
- loving to sinner – accountability, not enabling
  - easiest thing is to ignore and enable
  - but to intervene, to speak truth in love is suffering
- loving to community – holiness is corporate, not just individual
  - not private morality, but communal life of holiness
  - v. 6, “a little leaven leavens the whole lump”
  - living in community, we influence one another

## “Let him be removed from among you”

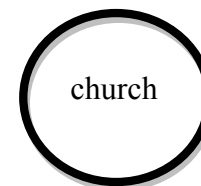
- this is widely misunderstood and poorly practiced in churches
  - either neglected entirely or practiced heavy-handedly

## The “removal” is not about shunning

- not exclusionary and discarding friendships and relationships

## But about taking away the “name of Christ” from someone living in contradiction to the gospel

- telling someone, “you're not living like a follower of Christ”
- formal process – excommunication
  - remove from church membership (must be explicit, not implicit)
  - v. 11, “who bears the name of brother”



the world

### **This is what is means “not to associate” (v. 9)**

- doesn't mean no friendships or attendance in church
  - Jesus eat with tax collectors and prostitutes
- v. 10, “not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world”
  - church discipline is for those *inside* the church, not outside

### **Inside the church, practice fellowship meal – Communion**

- v. 11, “not even to eat with such a one”

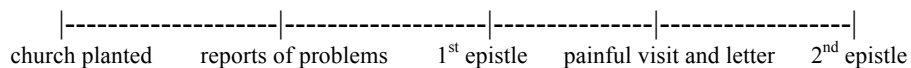
### **Outside the church is the realm of Satan**

- v 5, “deliver this man to Satan” ... so that he may be saved
  - purpose of excommunication is to wake up a brother in Christ
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### **Introduction to 2 Corinthians**

- many questioned if Paul could be an apostle if suffers so much
- most personal of Paul's letters – full of anguish and sorrow
- what is at stake is nothing less than the gospel
  - worldly values of power and success vs. gospel values of weakness and suffering

### **Timeline of Corinthian church | 5 year period**



- Paul plants church (Acts 18) – 1.5 years
- receives report of problems (1 Cor. 1:11)
  - divisions, immorality, false teachers who reject Paul
- writes 1 Corinthians | but mixed reception
- personal painful visit (2 Cor. 2:1)
- followed up with a “tearful letter”
- finally, 2 Corinthians

### **Central theme – suffering and weakness in the Christian life**

- questioning: how Paul be apostle if his life is full of troubles?
- Paul's response: cross is not just how we are saved
  - but a pattern of life we live as followers of Jesus

### **2 Corinthians 4:7-12**

<sup>7</sup> But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. <sup>8</sup> We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; <sup>9</sup> persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; <sup>10</sup> always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. <sup>11</sup> For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. <sup>12</sup> So death is at work in us, but life in you.

### **Pattern of the cross**

- [1] glory through suffering | [2] life through death

### **[1] Glory through suffering**

- Christ humbled himself on cross – highly exalted, every knee bow
- cross is pattern for us to follow as well
  - “whoever wants greatest must be servant of all”
  - “first will be last, last will be first”
  - way up is the way down

### **[2] Life to others, death for self**

- only through the death of Christ, life to his people
- only self-giving love produces life
- true in all relationships | illustration: raising a child

### **v. 10 – “always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies”**

- we testify to suffering love of Jesus through our suffering
- our suffering makes our gospel witness authentic and powerful

### **This is a challenging teaching – cross-shaped life**

- we don't want to suffer | we want a safe, comfortable life
- but “whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will keep it” (Luke 17:33)
- 1 Peter 4:12 – “do not be surprised at the fiery trial, as though something strange were happening to you”
- 2 Tim. 3:12 – “all desire a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted”
- strange joy of suffering for sake of Christ