

Romans 3:22–24 There is no difference, ²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Paul stated earlier (2:11) that God shows no favoritism in dealing with sinners. Those who are disobedient (which is everyone, Jew and Gentile alike) are under his wrath. But that same impartiality also shows itself when God deals with people in grace and mercy. In that aspect of God's dealing "there is no difference" as well, Paul tells us. How can he say that? On what does he base his statement? By inspiration the apostle supplies the rationale for his bold assertion: "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace." All have sinned, and consequently all "fall short of the glory of God." One explanation offered for the second half of that line is that by its fall into sin, the human race lost the glory God gave it at creation, which he fully intended for people to have. That is a plausible explanation that does no violence to the verb paired with it, namely, that all sinned. But the Greek word here translated as "glory" has another meaning in some contexts. It can also be translated as "praise," in the sense of approval. A clear example of this occurs in John 5:43, 44, where Jesus takes his unbelieving compatriots to task with the rebuke, "I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him. How can you believe if you accept praise [or approval] from one another, yet make no effort to obtain the praise [approval] that comes from the only God?"* According to the latter interpretation, Paul would be saying, "All have sinned and lack God's approval." Lacking God's approval is surely a serious indictment, and yet Paul can go on to say an absolutely amazing thing. He continues, "All have sinned ... and are justified." **The grammar of the original Greek here makes it perfectly clear that the ones justified are the same "all" who sinned.** That's why Paul can say that with God "there is no difference." All sinned; all are justified.** How can that be? The answer: because God justifies (declares people just) "freely by his grace." These two terms are virtually synonymous. Freely means "free of charge, without price or cost." By his grace means "as a gift." Because no person has any merit to bring, justification has to come as a gift. Being declared just is something that is done to or for the sinner. It's not something he does for himself. Therefore, receiving justification as a gift is the only way justification works—and that's also the way it always works. **When Paul says that all are justified, we need to be careful, however, not to misunderstand him, as though he were saying that all will be saved. That would be the false teaching of universalism.** Natural man, wicked and perverse sinner that he is, retains the awesome power to resist God's grace. In their stubborn unbelief, many people unfortunately refuse to accept Christ's merit, and they will be lost forever for their unbelief. Our Savior's sobering verdict, "Whoever does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:16), is still true. In the case of those who are lost, unbelief has rejected the righteousness from God that truly was there for them. Paul's teaching of **general justification, or objective justification** as it is sometimes called, has far-reaching implications. It is really the heart of the gospel. Think of what it implies for you personally. **If all sinners are justified**, then surely you are too—despite all the sins and shortcomings that Satan argues should disqualify you. Because "there is no difference," God assures you that his grace is for all, including you. Righteousness from God is there—to be accepted by faith. **General justification** has great significance also for our outreach and evangelism efforts. **If all have been justified**, then there is no one to whom you cannot go with the gospel's good news. You can tell anyone and everyone, "Your sins have all been **forgiven** by Christ's substitutionary death. He has earned a robe of righteousness for you. It's there for you. Accept it; believe it." (See Acts 16:29–31). Paul has stressed the absolute necessity of faith if sinners are to receive righteousness from God. But to be true faith, in the sense of trust and confidence, it has to have something to hang on to. It has to have a proper object of trust. Paul now addresses this point.

Panning, Armin J. (2001-06-30). Romans (The People's Bible) (Kindle Locations 1139-1141). Northwestern Publishing House. Kindle Edition.

Romans 3:25 God presented him [Christ Jesus] as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood.

God's motive for **justifying sinners** is mercy; his method is redemption. The term redemption is intended to bring to mind for his readers the idea of a slave, or a prisoner of war, or perhaps even a kidnapped person—anyone who needs to be ransomed, to be “bought back.” The purchase price is greater than anything the captive can raise on his own. Somebody on the outside has to step in and help if there is to be a rescue. And that is exactly what God did! **He provided “the redemption that came by Christ Jesus” (3:24).** God is a holy God who can't just wink at sins and dismiss the sinner's many infractions as if they didn't matter. God, in his Word, is clear and direct on that matter: “The wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23). The sinner's life was forfeit. Sin had to be paid for with a life. Again Scripture is clear: “Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness” (Hebrews 9:22). Sin carried a heavy price that had to be paid—and it was! God sent his very own Son to be the substitute to die in our place. Christ became true man so that he might shed his blood as a sacrifice and die the sinner's death, or as Paul puts it, “God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement.” The apostle's terminology here reflects the activity God had directed Israel to observe annually on the great Day of Atonement. God commanded this festival as a graphic reminder of Israel's need to confess its sins and then symbolically transfer those sins to a scapegoat that was driven out into the wilderness, bearing away the sins of the people (Leviticus 16:1–34, particularly 20–22). God's intent was to remind Israel of its need for a Savior and to strengthen in them a longing for the promised Messiah, the Redeemer, who would do for them literally what was being enacted symbolically. In writing to the Romans, Paul is, of course, speaking from the New Testament perspective in which Christ already has come and offered himself as the sacrifice, thereby putting us at one with God. Hence Paul can say that all have been justified by God's grace “through faith in his [Christ's] blood.”

God's Justice Demonstrated

God's motive for justifying sinners is grace; his method is redemption. His objective, or goal, for doing so is now described by Paul. It's a twofold objective on God's part: to demonstrate that he is just, and to demonstrate that he is a God who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

Panning, Armin J. (2001-06-30). Romans (The People's Bible) (Kindle Locations 1165-1166). Northwestern Publishing House. Kindle Edition.

Galatians 3:13-14, "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"), 14 that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."

Romans 3:21-26

21But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; 23for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24being justified freely by His grace through the redemption (τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως) that is in Christ Jesus, 25whom God set forth as a propitiation(ἰλαστήριον) by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, 26to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Romans 4:3-9

3For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." 4Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt.

5But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, 6just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works:

7 "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven,
And whose sins are covered;

8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin."

9Does this blessedness then come upon the circumcised only, or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness.

Romans 4:22-5:2

22And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness." 23Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, 24but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, 25who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.

5:1Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Romans 5:1-21

1Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; 4and perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

Rom 3:21-26

For there is no difference;
for all have sinned
and all fall short of the glory of God,
being justified freely by His grace
through the redemption that is in Christ
Jesus,
whom God set forth as a propitiation
by His blood, through faith...
that He might be just
and the justifier
of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Two reasons

“to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed,

1. “His righteousness”=God’s Righteousness. Here this righteousness is God doing right things or behaving in a righteous way. When God is just(in giving people what they deserve=justice)—and He always is—we say He is showing/demonstrating His righteousness. Knowing that God had not justly punished sins in the past, God now revealed how he was still the just God. In the punishment of Jesus Christ, the Father was justly punishing sin.

26to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

2. Sins were passed over, more than that, some men were declared righteous(justified, saved). V.26 clearly says that God only justifies “the one who has faith in Jesus.” How could God both justify/save sinners and punish their sin. The revelation of a righteousness that is imputed to sinners and not inherent in them is the answer. God saved men (through faith in Jesus Christ) and He punished sin through the price of redemption. God is both just and the justifier of those who come to faith.

Thus (1) God demonstrates his acts in the past were just/righteous, and (2) that His present acts of declaring believers justified, is also just/righteous.

Various Translations of Rom 3:24-25

Translate the participle appropriately
NKJV For there is no difference; ²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴being justified freely by His grace through the redemption (τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως) that is in Christ Jesus, The NKV concludes v.24 with a comma, saving a period for the end of v.26.

KJV 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: ²³ For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; ²⁴ Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

NASB ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;

Translate the participle as a main verb
NIV There is no difference, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

The NIV adds a period which might lead some to wrongly assume that the phrase “through faith” (v.25) does not modify v.22b-24.

ESV 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,

RSV ²³ since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ they are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus,

Romans 3:21-26

21But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe.

v.21 The Law and the Prophets= Old Testament is the witness.

v.21 The righteousness of God (that is, the doctrine concerning the righteousness of God= Gospel/Promise. This righteousness is not a righteousness which comes through doing right things. This righteousness is the righteousness which comes through faith in Jesus Christ, so that the one who believes receives Jesus' righteousness. Or put another way, Christ's righteousness is declared to be the believer's own righteousness. This Gospel/Promise is being revealed. This righteousness is not some fictitious objective righteousness for the world, because v.22 says it is "through faith" and "to all and on all who believe."

For there is no difference; 23for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24being justified freely by His grace through the redemption (τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως) that is in Christ Jesus, 25whom God set forth as a propitiation(ἰλαστήριον) by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, 26to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

v.22-23 "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" = original sin comes through conception.

²³πάντες γὰρ ἥμαρτον καὶ ὑστεροῦνται τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ ²⁴δικαιούμενοι δωρεὰν τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι διὰ τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.

Verbs = "have sinned" Aorist(past tense), active, indicative main verb

"fall short" Present tense, middle, indicative another main verb

"being justified" Present, passive **participle**. You can't say "All have sinned...and all are justified..." If St. Paul had written another main verb, "And were justified," you could, but he didn't. Of those who have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, whenever and wherever they come to faith(v.25), they are justified.

All of the phrases that follow (the end of v.22 through 26 is one long Greek sentence) explain how these sinners are being justified:

1. "freely" –apart from works
2. "by His grace" –at God's initiative.
3. "through the redemption (τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως) that is in Christ Jesus, 25whom God set forth as a propitiation(ἰλαστήριον) by His blood," (Both Redemption and Propitiation are atonement words. This price includes all the world's sins—even unbelievers.)

"through faith" – Here is the way that the all-have sinned-and-fall-short-of-the-glory-of-God people "are being justified!" Tense of verb shows it is not past tense.