

Sermon Series: Book of Romans  
Sermon title: "Justified by His Grace"  
Scripture Reading: Romans 3:21-26  
Clearwater Bay International Baptist Church  
November 6, 2022  
S.C. Brown, Pastor

### **Opening illustration: (Edit)**

Eugene Clark was on parole when he was initially charged by cops with assault for the Sept, 2020, pummeling of Ramon Luna, 67, who was knocked into a coma before later dying from his injuries.

Clark, 54, allegedly socked Luna in the head, causing the victim to fall to the ground and lose consciousness at the intersection of 125th Street and Lexington Avenue in Harlem, police sources said.

As Luna lay defenseless on the ground, Clark and another man allegedly rifled through the victim's pockets and snatched some of his belongings, prosecutors said.

Luna was taken to Hospital after the vicious attack. Doctors there discovered he had suffered multiple brain bleeds.

Police busted Clark nine days after the brutal attack. During questioning, he allegedly identified himself on

surveillance video that captured the incident and admitted to pushing the victim to the ground, according to prosecutors and sources.

The alleged assailant was also slapped with a grand larceny charge and ultimately released on bail on his initial charges.

But following Luna's death on Aug. 4, 2021, the Manhattan District Attorney's Office convened a grand jury in the case.

On Feb. 2, a grand jury in Manhattan Supreme Court indicted Clark for murder in the second degree, assault, two counts of robbery and grand larceny.

The suspect was arraigned recently on the superseding charges.

At the hearing, Manhattan prosecutors requested that Clark be held without bail.

But in a shocking move, Judge April Newbauer released Clark on electronic monitoring.

One source familiar with the investigation slammed Newbauer's decision to free Clark.

"I couldn't believe it," the source fumed. "Never, in all my years, have I heard of something like this before. [Clark] implicated himself in [Luna's] death and now he's free (on bail)?"

All would agree that those who commit crimes should face punishment in line with the offenses.

A judge is no judge at all that let's criminals walk free!

But isn't that what God does in forgiving sinners who rebel against him?

How can God save sinners and yet uphold righteousness and justice?

### **Let's pray.**

This passage that we are looking at today is one sentence, **verses 21-26**. And it is probably the most important sentence in the Bible.

So we better pay attention.

The main point for today's message is this:

**Through the death of Christ on the cross, God accomplished his saving righteousness and his judging righteousness for all who have faith in Christ.**

I want to give you 2 points and 2 questions today and I want to break it down like this.

First we want to look at what this text says about God's...

### **I. Saving righteousness**

Then we want to address a question....

**Question-** How can the Righteous Judge just let sinners go free? (Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?" Genesis 18:25)  
Can God just sweep sin under the rug?

Then we want to look at Gods.....

## **II. Judging righteousness**

Then, lastly we will address the question....

**Question-** How could Christ's death wipe out all the sin of every believer from all time?

## **I. Saving righteousness**

### **Romans 3:21-26 ESV**

**21** But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— **22** the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: **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. **26** 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.

We saw last week that mankind, no human being, has the righteousness needed to reconcile their relationship with God. "All are under sin".

We saw in **verse 20** that '**By works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight.**'

So, we are all in big trouble because God is holy and righteous and all human beings are under sin and can't do enough good things to make themselves right with God.

**Verse 23** in today's text tells us, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

We sin and we have lost the ability to reflect God's glory as he originally intended.

"**But**" is the first word in **verse 21**. This is important. There's a big turn here. BUT !!!

**21** But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— **22** the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. This righteousness in verses 21-22 is God's saving righteousness; a way to be right with God.

*"A way to be right with God has been manifested and that way to be right with God is through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe."*

It is 'apart from the law' which here means apart from your works.

But the "Law and the Prophets"....which means the Old Testament...does point to this way to be right with God.

For example:

**Ezekiel 36:25-27**

**25** I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. **26** And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. **27** And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

How did God accomplish this Saving Righteousness?  
How did God make people right with himself?

### **Verses 24**

**24** and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

It's a gift.

He declares people to be right with him as a gift, a gracious gift.

How is he able to do that?

### **Through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.**

This means a ransom payment.

Sinners owe God a debt...and the payment is death.

They either pay the debt or die.

Enter Jesus Christ. He paid the debt; the ransom payment.

### **How did he do that?**

**Question 1**- How can the Righteous Judge just let sinners go free?

He can't.

He has to punish sin.

Which brings us to God's justice...

## II. Judging righteousness

**25** whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. **26** 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.

God the Father asked God the Son to die for sinners to pay their sin debt.

Can you believe that? Do you believe that?

*Propitiation* here means literally, 'Mercy Seat'.

In the Old Testament, lambs were offered up to atone for sin and to appease the wrath of God for sin.

The blood was poured and sprinkled on the lid of the ark of the covenant....this lid was the 'Mercy Seat'.

This means that Christ, the Lamb of God...shed his blood to atone for sin and appease God's wrath for sin, in the place of sinners.



In the Old Testament, the lambs were offered as a sacrifice for sin but they only covered the sins....they didn't take the penalty of sin away.

A lamb for sin is not enough.

God had patiently passed over sins but his full wrath was poured out on Christ on the cross to pay for sin once and for all.

God had to be just. He had to punish sin.

But he also desired to justify, to make sinners right with himself.

The just and the justifier.

He accomplished this in the death of Christ.

God accepted the sacrifice of Jesus as payment.

Now, all who believe and receive Christ by faith will be 'justified'; declared right with God.

This is by God's grace.

This is God's saving righteousness....brought about by God's judging righteousness.

Which brings us to our second and last question.

**Question 2- How could Christ's death wipe out all sin? How is it enough? Everyone who has ever lived....and ever will live...who has faith in Christ...**

**if we calculate all of their sin....it must be a lot of sin. How could it be enough?**

## **2 Corinthians 5:21**

For our sake, he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

One man's death for all that sin? That's a lot of sin.

We can only say in response that if God accepted Christ's death as payment for so much sin....and to appease so much wrath...that Christ must be of great value.

How can we calculate the worth of Christ?