

## ROMANS, THE BOOK

*God's Courtroom*

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*Excerpt from Apples of Gold*

“A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.” Proverbs 25:11

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The Book of Romans is a courtroom. First, Paul called Jews and Gentiles to the stand and proves both guilty before God.

Next, he explained God's wise and marvelous way of deliverance from the terrible consequence of man's rebellion – justification by faith.

Then he answered his accusers challenge: “This plan of salvation is too simple and too easy. It will encourage people to sin. It is against the very Law of God.”

In refuting them, Paul explained how the believer can experience victory, liberty, and security.

Chapters 9 – 11 are not a detour. The Jewish believers in the Roman assemblies would naturally ask: “What about Israel? How does God's righteousness expressed through justification by faith relate to them and where do they fit in this age of the Church?”

Paul gave a complete history of Israel in these 3 chapters – past, present, and future. He concluded with the practical outworking of God's righteousness in the life of the believer – beginning with dedication to God (12:1-2).

The theme of Romans is the righteousness of God, but to make that meaningful to his audience, Paul had to begin with the unrighteousness of man. Until man knows he is a sinner, he cannot appreciate the gracious salvation God offers in Christ Jesus.

First, Law and condemnation: then grace and salvation.

Having proved all are sinners, Paul next explained how sinners can be saved. The theological term for this salvation is “justification by faith”.

Justification by faith is an act of God whereby He declares the repentant believing sinner righteous in Christ on the basis of the finished work of Christ on the Cross.

There are no degrees of justification; each believer has the same standing before God.

Justification is something God does, not man. No sinner can justify himself before God. All have broken the Creator's Law and stands before Him as guilty.

Justification does *not* mean that God *makes* us righteous, but that He *declares* us righteous. Justification is a legal matter. God puts the righteousness of Christ on our record in the place of our own sinfulness – and no one can change this record.

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