

ROMANS

THREE WORDS

WEEK 6 | AMANDA BEGGS

KEY POINTS

- The phrase “but now” in Romans 3:21 signals a decisive turn from the reality of universal human sin and condemnation to the availability of God’s righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ.
- Justification is God’s declaration that guilty sinners are righteous; it is instantaneous, irreversible, and received as a gift with no contribution from the recipient.
- Justification has two sides: the believer is declared both not guilty and positively righteous, as Christ’s perfect record is credited to them.
- Living from a place of justification changes relationships, freeing believers from the need to self-justify and enabling genuine repentance and repair.
- Redemption draws on the ancient image of purchasing a slave’s freedom; Jesus paid the price to liberate sinners from bondage to sin, which is a cruel and controlling master.
- Common modern “masters” — comparison, approval, achievement, appetite — enslave people in ways that mirror the bondage from which Christ redeems.
- Propitiation means God Himself provided the sacrifice that satisfied His own holy wrath against sin; this distinguishes the gospel from pagan attempts to appease an unpredictable deity.
- The mercy seat of the Old Testament tabernacle, where the high priest sprinkled blood on the Day of Atonement, prefigures Jesus as the ultimate and final propitiation.
- Unlike Old Testament priests who stood and repeated sacrifices that could never fully remove sin, Jesus sat down after offering one perfect sacrifice, signaling that the work is finished.
- Faith is described as placing one’s full weight on Christ’s finished work rather than on one’s own past, present condition, or future hopes.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Romans 3:21-31

Romans 1:16-17

Romans 8:1

Romans 8:15

Hebrews 2

Hebrews 10

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does understanding justification as a gift given 'without cause' challenge the way you think about earning God's approval in your daily life?
2. Amanda illustrates how living from a place of acceptance rather than striving for it can change the way we relate to others. Can you think of a recent relationship conflict where a deeper understanding of your justification in Christ might have changed how you responded?
3. Redemption is described as Jesus purchasing our freedom from slavery, yet many of us remain functionally enslaved to comparison, approval, achievement, or appetite. Which of these masters most influences your thoughts and choices, and what would it look like to live as a freed son or daughter instead?
4. Propitiation reveals that God both demands justice for sin and provides the sacrifice to satisfy that justice. How does understanding that God's wrath is not the absence of love but a holy opposition to evil change the way you relate to Him?
5. Romans 3:23 is often quoted as ending with 'all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,' but Paul's sentence continues with 'and are justified by his grace as a gift.' How does reading the full sentence rather than stopping at condemnation reshape your understanding of what the gospel actually declares about you?

***TO CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION,** check out the additional Week Six Discussion Guide under Small Group Materials in the North Way app under Romans.