

DISCOVERING THE BIBLE

LESSON 54 JESUS—OUR SUBSTITUTE

”For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.”

Matthew 21:32

- We need a way to righteousness. The way is through repentance and belief

“... But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Romans 3:21-24

- All of us have sinned and fall short of the glory of God
- In what way do we fall short of the glory of God?
- How do we get this righteousness—from our own works or by God’s gift?

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

- Can God simply ignore the wages of sin?

“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”

Ephesians 4:32-5:2

- There are 2 sides to the passage. The first is how we live—and the second why we live that kind of life. The heart of it is that Jesus gave his life for us as a sacrifice.
- Why do you think Jesus would give his life for us?

“My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense--Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.”

1 John 2:1,2

- The setting is a court scene. What role does Jesus have in the court?
- How would you define atonement?
- When you hear of something that has gone wrong—what do you expect should happen? Payment for sin? Is this atonement?
- Can you see that Jesus is taking part in the scene as both the one who is expressing justice and mercy?

“For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith. The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known

about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.”

Romans 1:17-21

- The passage describes the righteousness that comes from God. It comes by faith—not works. The passage also describes God’s wrath—anger. The effect is that we should know God and therefore glorify God. Instead people who don’t have a relationship with God think futile thoughts and live futile lives.
- Can you summarise the gospel?

“Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit...”

Ephesians 2:14-22

- That theme of unity continues. Can you see links between us and God in the passage?
- How do we get close to the Father—God?