

REMNANT CHURCH SERMON NOTES – ROMANS 3: 27-31
PREACHED ON JANUARY 4, 2026 BY REV. B.B. ANUM-HIGHER

27 Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. Because of what law? The law that requires works? No, because of the law that requires faith. 28 For we maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law. 29 Or is God the God of Jews only? Is He not the God of Gentiles too? Yes, of Gentiles too, 30 since there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith. 31 Do we, then, nullify the law by this faith? Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law.

➤ **INTRODUCTION**

- Paul takes up the topic again of how anyone can be saved. He also explained why salvation is available to all who believe in Him in today's verses.
- One of the topics that has sparked division among people who identify with the church is the question of how people are saved. Some believe that one is saved by their good works, such as giving charity, fasting, and praying for a long time. Others believe that a combination of your faith and good works saves you. In Roman Catholicism, salvation is achieved through faith in Jesus Christ, participation in the sacraments, and living a life of good works. The Roman Catholic Church teaches that grace must be earned, salvation is achieved through works, justification must be completed through our obedience, the work of Christ on the cross is insufficient to atone for sins, and full assurance of salvation is impossible.
- The Roman Catholics means of salvation by merit often opens up the opportunity for people who believe they have worked sufficiently to earn their salvation to boast and might even look down on others. We have an example given by Jesus in a parable recorded in [Luke 18:9-14](#). “9 To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: 10 “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’13 “But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’14 “I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”
- If salvation must be earned, the thief on the cross with Jesus would not have heard these words from Jesus, “[Today you will be with me in paradise](#),” because he had no good works to show; he had not been involved in any sacraments to be accepted by God to hear such words from Jesus. It is therefore unbiblical to believe that salvation can be earned by good works, keeping some laws, observing some sacraments, or any other religious rituals.

- However, as we have previously studied in our series on Paul's Letter to the Romans, the Bible speaks clearly and authoritatively that eternal salvation is a free gift of grace that comes to sinners through faith in Jesus Christ alone, and it can never be lost. There is salvation in no other person than the Lord Jesus Christ, who alone is our Savior.

➤ VERSES 27 AND 28

27 Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. Because of what law? The law that requires works? No, because of the law that requires faith. 28 For we maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law.

- Paul, in our text for today, concludes with a question: "Where is boasting then?" If you can't earn your salvation by any good works of yours and it is only by faith in Jesus Christ, then how can you boast? Paul asked. It shouldn't be anywhere. There is no room for self-congratulation or credit. The word used by Paul implies that boasting is cut off once and for all. It is unimaginable to boast.
- I can boast about my salvation if I earned it. With a proud heart, I would love to share with others how I fasted for several months, prayed for years, gave to charity, and built homes for the homeless to merit my salvation. If salvation is by merit, I would love to share with people how I never missed going to church, reading my Bible, memorizing the catechisms, and engaging in street evangelism, among other things. If salvation can be earned, I would be quick to look down on others who cannot perform the spiritual rituals I can, because I have something to stand on and boast about.
- Thanks be to God that in His wisdom, He has designed a plan of salvation that prevents the true believer from any form of boasting because they have nothing to stand on to boast. Thanks be to God that salvation by faith alone in Christ excludes any contribution by men and women. By God's design, pride is excluded because it is completely incompatible with the salvation that is freely ours through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone.
- Boasting is excluded by the law of faith, by the nature and principle of faith, or by the way faith works. However, the natural man and woman, the unbeliever, always find this design of salvation offensive because it dismisses their pride. The natural man or woman hates being justified freely by His grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone. Faith alone in Jesus Christ absolutely refuses to recognize the natural man and woman's imagined or real merits and gives no place to their pride whatsoever.

➤ WHY THE DESIGN OF SALVATION EXCLUDES BOASTING.

- What is boasting? Boasting is the act of self-congratulation for what you have achieved. It is self-glorification and feeling good about yourself because of what you have done for yourself. Pride is another word for boasting.

- There are many sins human beings commit, and God is angry with every one of them. We sin when we think about evil things, say evil words, or actually do things God has told us not to do. Adultery and murder are considered to be grave sins by many. However, one of the greatest sins, if not the greatest sin, is pride. God has forgiven people who were involved in prostitution or adultery. He has saved murderers, such as David and Paul. However, pride, even though it is forgivable, is the sin that the Bible tells us God seemed to hate the most. Pride is one of the most detestable of sins.
- God, we are told in 1 Peter 5:5 and James 4:6, actually opposes the proud man and woman. He actually resists them. Imagine God actively working to oppose the proud person; He keeps them at a distance because He doesn't want to have anything to do with them. James says God has set Himself in battle array against the proud person. This is how grave pride and boasting are in the sight of God.
- Pride is the root cause of all sins. To be humble in Scripture means to take God at His word and to be obedient to God. However, the proud man and woman want to take God away from His rightful place in their life. The proud person wants to claim God's glory, honor, and recognition for themselves. Grace and pride are eternal enemies. As creatures, we are a debtor to mercy alone, and everything we are and have is by grace of God, not based on anything in us. Proud people congratulate themselves on their accomplishments.
- How was the first human sin committed in the garden? The Devil, we are told, deceived the woman into desiring to be like the Creator God. When the woman responded to the serpent's question about the forbidden tree, the Devil responded, saying, **“For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”** Genesis 3:5. The Devil deceived the woman to desire to share with God His glory and honor. To the woman, the Devil said, “Don't let God take all the glory and honor; you can become like God when you eat of the tree He had prohibited you from.” She fell for this lie, and sin affected all humanity because of the pride of Eve, her desire to be like God. Pride led to the first human sin. God resisted the first human beings by driving them away from the garden.
- We have another example of how God resisted human pride in the story of the Tower of Babel recorded in Genesis 11:1-9. After the Flood, God commanded humanity to **“increase in number and fill the earth”** (Genesis 9:1). Humanity decided to do the exact opposite, **“Then they said, ‘Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth’”** (Genesis 11:4). Humanity decided to build a great city and all congregate there. They decided to build a gigantic tower as a symbol of their power, to make a name for themselves. In response, God confused the languages of humanity so that they could no longer communicate with each other. The result was that people congregated with other people who spoke the same language, and then went together and settled in different parts of the world. God confused the languages

at the Tower of Babel to enforce His command for humanity to spread across the globe.

- We also have Nebuchadnezzar as an example of God opposing the proud. King Nebuchadnezzar II commanded one of the greatest empires in ancient history—the Babylonian Empire. Under his reign, Babylon flourished with architectural wonders like the Hanging Gardens, immense wealth, and military dominance. While walking on the roof of his palace, Nebuchadnezzar uttered his infamous boast in **Daniel 4:30. This mighty king declared, “Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?”** Nebuchadnezzar credited himself as the ultimate authority, the builder of glory, the source of majesty, rather than the recipient of divine providence. God lifted His disciplinary hand on him for his pride. “Your royal authority has been taken from you... You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals.” Daniel 4:31–32. Instantly, his mind unraveled. His identity as king vanished. He lived in isolation, eating grass like cattle. His hair grew long like eagle feathers, his nails like bird claws. This mighty monarch is remembered in Scripture not merely for his achievements, but for the moment he lost everything, even his sanity, and lived like an animal in the wilderness.
- In the New Testament, we read about King Herod, who was humbled by God for his pride in Acts 12. **“21 On the appointed day, Herod, wearing his royal robes, sat on his throne and delivered a public address to the people. 22 They shouted, “This is the voice of a god, not of a man.” 23 Immediately, because Herod did not give praise to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died.”**
- Herod received excessive praise from the people of Tyre and Sidon, but he refused to glorify God. Like most politicians, He made a moving speech, and the audience kept shouting, “The voice of a god and not of a man!” They praised the king as if he were a god, and he enjoyed it, taking the glory unto himself, and did not give glory to God. He died a horrible death.
- Now, to the question: **if God has always resisted the proud person throughout human history, and pride is one of the most detestable of sins, why would He design a plan of salvation based on human accomplishment that might promote boasting? Why would the God who keeps the boastful person at a distance design a salvation based on merit that might encourage the proud man and woman to keep boasting?** He will certainly not do that.
- So if you are a Christian and can still boast about your contribution to your justification, then you have seriously misunderstood the gospel and Christianity. There is no room for boasting in Christianity because it is against God’s nature to design such a salvation. It is not God’s way to depend on a salvation that is attained by human merits. God will humble anyone who adds anything to His designed means of salvation by sending them to hell. Salvation is by faith alone in Jesus Christ alone, and it excludes boasting.

➤ FAITH IS THE OPPOSITE OF BOASTING.

- Paul had previously said that faith comes by hearing the word of God. Faith doesn't come to anyone through their works, merits, accomplishments, or anything else. Faith is a gift from God, and the faith that saves must always be in Jesus Christ. Faith is therefore a gift of God to the sinner.
- We can have five people hear the same gospel from a preacher, but only one might respond positively to it, while the rest may not. How can this be explained? The person who repented and believed did so because God created faith in him. Paul wrote to the Ephesian Christians about faith being a gift of God, for which reason no one can boast, as recorded in **Ephesians 2:8-9. "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."**
- Someone might say, if I have to repent and believe in Jesus Christ to have a saving faith, is that not work? Am I not contributing to my salvation? The Bible answers that question in Acts 5:30 and 2 Timothy 2:25. In both verses, Scripture states that even the repentance necessary for a saving faith is a gift of God. It is God who makes anyone repent and believe.
- Appearing before the Sanhedrin, Peter and the other apostles replied to the full assembly of the elders of Israel, saying, **"God exalted Jesus Christ to His own right hand as Prince and Savior that He might bring Israel to repentance and forgive their sins. We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him."** Acts 5: 30-31. It is God who brings Israel to repentance, and it is God who grants repentance to anyone. We have the same point made in **2 Timothy 2:25. "Opponents must be gently instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth."**
- The unbeliever is spiritually dead and incapable of any spiritual activities, so God has to take the first initiative before any spiritual activity can take place in the life of the natural man or woman. The natural man and woman can therefore not repent and believe in Christ and have faith unless God grants them repentance, unless God creates faith in him or her. At the beginning of Chapter 3 of Romans, Paul describes the marks of the natural person and states that they do not seek God. By nature, no one wants to seek God because our heart and the Devil deceive us that there are benefits in living a sinful life. God always took the first step to save sinners. He took the first step to save Abraham, Paul, and He does the same for anyone He has saved and will save.
- John wrote that **"We love because He first loved us."** 1 John 4:19. Also in John 15: 16, Jesus said, **"You did not choose Me, but I chose you."** He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world. Before we were born, He had set His affection on the believers, and He took the first step to create faith in them. How can any true believer then boast about his or her salvation?

➤ HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOUR FAITH IS GENUINE?

- The Bible teaches that the church will always have true and false believers, so how do you know who the false professors of faith are, and how do you know where you belong if you are a member of the visible church? How do I prove to others and myself that I am justified and that I do not vainly claim that I have faith?
- Knowing the truth alone will not save anyone. The Jews are a vivid example of this desperate condition, as they often prided themselves on being God's chosen people and thus did not need Paul's teachings.
- James teaches that the way to distinguish the true faith from the false is by your actions. A feigned or dead faith does not save sinners, but the true faith always involves repentance, an action, and a changed life. James 2:14-26. The passage emphasizes that faith without works is dead. It teaches that merely professing faith is insufficient; true faith must be demonstrated through actions.
- Genuine faith leads to a transformed life that produces good deeds, underscoring the inseparable connection between belief and behavior. Saving faith has a distinct character. It is not just agreeing with specific facts, but it is directing the mind and will in agreement with God. James argues against separating belief and commitment. Mere belief does not save. Faith means believing, trusting, and committing to God in obedience to His word.
- Sometimes, a Christian may claim that their faith or works are the reason they receive salvation, but that is incorrect. One's faith is merely the instrument by which they receive salvation, and their works are simply the outward expression of the work of the Lord in them. The Christian should be very mindful that their faith is not only intellectual or a belief; it must be a true element of trust and commitment in their lives. Faith is the instrument of salvation, not the cause. We are not justified because of faith but by faith. Faith links us to Christ's righteousness. Christ's righteousness, not our faith, saves us.

➤ VERSES 29 AND 30

29 Or is God the God of Jews only? Is He not the God of Gentiles too? Yes, of Gentiles too, 30 since there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith.

- When the Jews claim that they only are God's chosen people, Paul refutes this by saying that the Lord Jesus is God for all. Those who will receive salvation are those who believe in Christ, regardless of whether they are Jews or Gentiles. Paul states emphatically that there is indeed only one God and that there is only one way to receive salvation. Justification, the acquittal before God, is found for both Jews and Gentiles. The offer of salvation has a universal character. Paul asked, "Is He not also the God of the Gentiles?" Of course He is. If there is only

one God, then God is God of the Gentiles as much as He is God of the Jews. Not only is this righteousness available to both Jew and Gentile, but it is also received in the same way by both Jew and Gentile. Since one God justifies both Jew and Gentile, He justifies them in the same way: by or through faith in Christ.

- There is now equal opportunity because Christ has broken down all partitions between the Jews and Gentiles. The gospel is for all people without distinction. In the same way, it doesn't matter if you were raised in a Christian or pagan home, attended a Christian or Muslim school, are a citizen of a Christian-dominated nation or not, are a faithful member of a church, or have never been to a church; you must repent of your sins and believe in Jesus Christ for your salvation. There is only one way of salvation, and it is for all who believe in Christ. It is fatal to think that you are saved because your parents are saved. We will all be held individually accountable to the one true and living God. Salvation is a personal transaction each of us must have with God.
- The Apostle Paul makes it clear that there is only one way of salvation for all people, regardless of their background. Therefore, the distinction between Jews and Gentiles has been entirely abolished through Christ's work on the cross.

➤ VERSE 31

31 Do we, then, nullify the law by this faith? Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law.

- Some Jews may feel that with this new message about receiving salvation through faith apart from the works of the Law (Romans 3:28), it means that their Law is void, but Paul says that is unthinkable. Paul anticipated that someone might ask, "If the Law doesn't make us righteous, what good is it? Paul, you have just made the law void. You are going against the Law of God." Certainly not! Of course, Paul does not void the Law.
- Instead, Paul pointed out that faith in Christ and the Ten Commandments or the Moral Law are complementary. Having faith in Christ does not abolish the Law; instead, it affirms its importance, showing that the Law still has relevance in the lives of believers. True faith is accompanied by repentance from sin and obedience to the Ten Commandments. In John 14:15, Jesus says to the disciples, **"If you love me, you will keep my commandments."** You show that your faith is genuine by living an obedient life, by keeping the Ten Commandments.
- The phrase "we uphold the law" suggests that through faith, believers are empowered to live in accordance with God's standards. This means that while they are justified by faith, they now have the power to keep God's commandments.
- Paul emphasizes that Christ's atoning sacrifice, the propitiation by His blood, fulfills the Law's requirements. By trusting in Christ, believers receive righteousness that the Law demands for a relationship with God and to escape His wrath, but that no human being can achieve on their own. Justification by

faith, therefore, establishes a new way of living that honors God's commandments through the transformative power of faith.

- Paul is repeating what the Lord said in the Sermon on the Mount. The Lord honored the Law. Jesus perfectly obeyed the Law in His active obedience. Jesus bore the punishment for our sins, as demanded by the Law, through His passive obedience. The gospel confirms what the Law says about God's holiness and righteousness. The gospel confirms what the Law says about God's wrath against sin. The gospel confirms what the Law says about our sin and sinfulness. The gospel fulfills the Old Testament types and shadows, such as the sacrifices and priesthood. The gospel confirms that without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins, and it provides us with a spiritual understanding of the Law. Faith in Christ does not nullify the Law; rather, it upholds and fulfills it, demonstrating the harmony between faith and God's commandments.

➤ **APPLICATIONS**

- God has spoken to you and to me this morning. What do we do with God's Word? He has reminded us that salvation is open to all people, yet there is nothing that one actually does that merits salvation; it is truly only by the work of the Lord.
- Salvation is open to and freely given by God to anyone who repents and believes in Jesus Christ. Salvation is open to murderers such as Moses, to adulterers and sexually immoral such as David, robbers such as the man hanged on the Cross with Jesus, and persecutors of Christians such as Paul. Salvation is also available to the alcoholic and drug addicts. Salvation is available to people from all walks of life who repent and believe in Christ. It is available to the educated and those with no formal education, to the rich and the poor, to the employed and the unemployed, to the healthy and the ill, to the young and the old.
- Salvation is also personal. You must repent to restore your relationship with God and escape His wrath now and on the Day of Judgment. Paul was not ashamed to preach the gospel about Jesus Christ, and I am also not ashamed to preach it every Sunday. You should also not be embarrassed to repent and believe this gospel about Jesus Christ, the only appointed Savior of the world.
- As we have just entered the new year, one of your goals and my goal, and in fact our greatest ambition in life, is to have a relationship with God. It may require financial resources, multiple correspondences with individuals in authority, and several attempts to establish a relationship with President Trump or others in positions of authority. However, it is a free gift to have a relationship with God, the Almighty, Creator, Sustainer, and Judge of the world. He will have a relationship with you and keep you to Himself eternally if you come to Him in faith by repenting of your sins and believing in His Son, Jesus Christ, and His work for you on the Cross.
- May the Lord bless His word!