

## Romans: Verse-by-Verse

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Romans 3:28-31

### Student Notes

- **Recap of verse 27:** All boasting about self-salvation was excluded whether by Jews or Gentiles: “Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. Because of what law? The law that requires works? No, because of the law that requires faith.”

Verses 28-31: How this applies to the Jewish Law and the relationship of the Gentiles to the Jews.

- **The Mosaic Law or The Principle of Faith?**

“Because of what law? The law that requires works? No, because of the law that requires faith.”

A Greek Intersection: The term "law" – as in “a law of faith” – can also be translated as the word, "principle". “Boasting is excluded not by the "principle" of works but by the "principle" of faith.

The other option: The word, "Law", as the literal meaning. The same Greek word is used in verse 28 -- "works of the Law"; verse 31: "Do we then nullify the Law through faith?"

A reasonable assumption: Translating the Greek word as "Law" in verse 27. Paul means the Mosaic Law would not exclude boasting if it commended works as the way of justification.

- **Connecting verses 27 and 28:**

The Mosaic law excludes boasting for self-salvation because justification comes to us by faith -- not by works of Law. If Jews and

Gentiles cannot boast about saving themselves through works – then justification must be possible only by faith -- "apart from works of Law."

- **Justification Apart from Works of Law**

"For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law. "apart from works of Law?" Verse 29 -- another question: "Or is God the God of Jews only? Is He not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also."

Why Paul references the Gentiles here: If justification "is apart from works of the Law", the Jews could not be justified by the works of the Mosaic Law. Otherwise, they would have grounds for boasting.

But what about the Gentiles? If justification could have been attained by the Mosaic Law – then God could not be the God of the Gentiles. He could only be the God of the Jews – because that would be the only path to justification.

- **The God of the Jews and Gentiles**

Verse 30: "... Since there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith."

There is one God over both the Jewish nation and the Gentile nations and there is only one way to be right with Him – by faith.

Circumcision: A very narrow example of the "works of Law". Circumcision was a ritual required by the Mosaic Law in order to permanently mark the Jews as God's Covenant people.

Because God **is** the God of both the Jews and Gentiles – the "works of the law" cannot be the deciding factor for justification. He says God will "justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith."

Paul's return to his previous argument: See Romans 2:25-29.

Throughout the Old Testament the primary sign that one was included in the Jewish community was circumcision. For the Jews this was marvelous, but for the Gentiles this meant exclusion. The Gentiles did not have the Mosaic Law and they did not have the mark of covenant. See: Ephesians 2:11-12

- **New Covenant Exclusions:**

Under the New Covenant, God decided to exclude two things from the process of justification. 1. The “works of the Mosaic law’ – including the rite of circumcision. 2. Boasting – the evidence of internal pride – whether by the Jews or the Gentiles.

He makes justification by faith:

- In verse 28 Paul tells us: "A man is justified by faith, apart from works of the Law."
- In verse 30 Paul tells us: "... There is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith."

Under the New Covenant, God has eliminated the possibility of anyone being made right with Him by a work of the Mosaic Law or by Boasting – meaning, anything you can do to save yourself. The only way to be right with God is to put your full trust in Christ.

Paul is going to make this all the more evident when we get to Romans 4:4-5, where he explains,

“Now to the one who works, wages are not credited as a gift but as an obligation. However, to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness.”

This is how God can be the God of the Jews and the God of the Gentiles. He has eliminated the works of the Mosaic Law and He has eliminated any grounds of boasting – self-salvation.