

**TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
IHOP BIBLE STUDY**

**# 4 Romans 3: 21 - 31, "Law and Righteousness" – with comments**

**Romans 3: 21 - 31, "Righteousness Through Faith."**

**The purpose of the Letter to the Romans is to develop a "Model for Living the Awakened/Transformed Life." Today's study is the 4th of 27 lessons.**

**According to our Study Chart** we are studying the 2<sup>nd</sup> section of our chart called "Awaken to The Work of God."

**Before you begin, ground in your own human experience the significance of the following words:**

**1) "Faith."** In Gut Trip Analysis, faith is associated with the experience of surrender.

**WS:** One IHOPer said this was an experience of "letting go." The group continued to speak of this experience as falling out of human control into the control of God.

**2) "Righteousness."** In Gut Trip Analysis, righteousness is experienced as Awakening to God/Love.

**3) Jesus Christ."** The way in which Paul uses this term also makes it a symbol and an Old Christian Code Word. Gut Trip Analysis uses this word as the one who demonstrates the Christ Event. You know you've had a Christ Event because it comes to us as an "Ah-Ha" moment that awakens us to the experience of being fully, authentically human/humane beings. This is an "Event," because it generally comes to us in a moment of pain or discouragement. It comes to us when we are held accountable. Under all circumstances, the result is to experience an awakening that some associate it with being reborn.

**WS:** We reviewed the illustration chart associated with Session # 2. This chart holds the various relationships to the center where we experience God/Love. Jesus (the human) and Christ (the Awakened) reveal this center. The Law (a human invention) and the Natural Law (a spiritual association) reveals this center. The outer ring is the association of how "Being Really Human" and "Being Really Humane" that reveals our core relationship to God/Love.

**Previously,** Paul's primary focus is on our relationship to The Law. Now, he shifts his focus to (Christian) Faith. **INSTRUCTIONS FOR THIS STUDY SESSION. This session will be a sharing of our experiences. Please make notes on examples of how, when, where, and why you can ground these words in your own personal experience.**

**Read the assignment in one reading.**

**I. Romans 3: 21 - 31, "Righteous Through Faith"**

**A.** Explain how Righteousness (Awakening) comes through Faith (surrender) to Jesus Christ. Ground in your own human experience. Please be prepared to share your own insights.

**WS:** The IHOPers explored the experience of the Christ Event as an "Ah-Ha" event, or rebirth. My own testimony is that my relationship to Christ began in my

early childhood baptism. However, I was 34 when I surrendered my life into the control of God through a leap of faith that keeps me falling, falling forever. This keeps God in control of my life.

**B. Vs. 25a**, Define the experience of atonement.; literally, this word means the At-One-Ment. God created humans to experience at-one-ment, but our free will results in separation experienced as sin. Ground this word in your own human experience. Please be prepared to share your own insights.

**WS:** The IHOPers spoke of living in a multi-cultural world, and how we need each other to be complete. My whiteness is never understood until I experience the race or gender of another person. Likewise, they will not understand their own race or gender until they experience me as a white male. This is the significance of At-One-Ment. It is being full-filled as a human/humane being.

**C. Vs. 25b**, Define the experience of "Faith in his blood." Ground in your own human experience. Please be prepared to share your own insights.

**WS:** The Blood Covenant is seldom heard in main-line denominations. In particular, these words are seldom heard in my United Methodist Church. This subject goes back to the sacrificial nature of the Christ. It is a fundament of the Mass as understood in the Sacramental Churches like the Roman Catholic and the Episcopal or Anglican Churches.

The topic is based on the Old Testament sacrifices that shed the blood of animals for the Atonement of the sins (separation) experienced by the Israel/Palestine communities. These sacrifices were reminders of The Passover blood of the pure lamb placed upon their doorposts when Death passed over the land of Egypt.

As a New Testament topic, the blood sacrifice is that of the Sacrificial Lamb of God whose death and resurrection demonstrate for us the kind of death we experience in our own Christ Event.

The way I ground this in my own human experience is the constant lesson of learning to die to my-self. As I learn to give up more and more things of this world, the more I experience the depth of what I means to be fully human and to fulfill the essence for which I was created.

**D. Vs. 30**, What is the experience of being justified by faith (or circumcision)? Ground in your own human experience. Please be prepared to share your own insights.

**WS:** The word "faith" is translated as "surrender." This is why I call it a leap of faith when I speak of my own spiritual surrender.

To be "justified" means to be brought back into balance with my intended purpose of being fully and authentically human. The essence of being fully human is to fully awaken to our need for surrendering into God's purpose for us. The experience of our justification is that of living whole, peaceful, and fully spiritually awakened, or live At-One with everyone and all things.

**E. Vs. 31**, Now, describe our relationship to The Law. Ground in your own human experience. Please be prepared to share your own insights.

**WS:** The purpose of The Law is to awaken us to live fully human/humane lives. Christians obey The Law because we are Christians. The Law doesn't make us a Christian, it is a constant reminder to live surrendered lives.

My own human experience is that the laws of the state convict me whenever I see a black and white police car. However, when I live a surrendered life to God, being obedient to the law is easy and I'm grateful for this frequent reminder to live surrendered.

The IHOP talked at length about the nature of a Responsible Person. We spoke about living as Obedient people like soldiers, or as Irresponsible Geniuses who do whatever feels good at the moment. We were reminded that Bonhoeffer described the Responsible Person as the one who stands in the tension between looking like the Obedient Soldier part of the time, and being the Irresponsible Genius part of the time. Every time we make a decision we stand somewhere between Right and Wrong, and Right and Right, and Wrong and Wrong.

The Responsible Person is the one who sees the need, decides the necessary action and then acts. Then, the decision is given up to God and the Responsible Person goes on with their life without guilt.

**Alright folks, talk to me!**