

Last week we looked at how “*God is love*” (**1st John 4:8**). This week we are going to see that He is also just. Some struggle to reconcile these two truths, despite the fact that Scripture shows us they are inseparable. Do you or have you ever wrestled with this idea? Of the two attributes, which is hardest for you to comprehend: God’s love or His justice? Explain.

Read **Romans 3:21-26** and discuss the following.

**Romans 1:18-3:20** describe how we are all without excuse and hopeless to earn or find God’s favor on our own. With that in mind, consider the words that begin this passage: “*But now.*” What shift in emphasis do these words signal?

How is God’s righteousness “*manifested*”—shown or made known—in Jesus Christ? (**v.21-22**)

“*For there is now no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*” (**v.22b-23**) This is a reference to an assumed distinction between Jews and Gentiles. What differences between these two groups might the original audience have expected? What does Paul mean is saying there is now no difference?

What are some assumed distinctions we make between different groups of people today? Explain.

What is the *bad news* of this passage? What is the *good news*? Why is the *bad* necessary for helping us understand the *good*? Explain.

What does *faith* mean to you? How would you explain it to a child?

How can God be called just if He passes over sins? (**v.25**)

What does it mean for God to be “*just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus*”? (**v.26**) How does this display both His love and justice?

What’s the largest financial debt you’ve ever had? Imagine if your creditor came to you and said, “*Someone else paid your debt. You now owe nothing.*” What would you say and do?

How should we tangibly, daily, respond to the redemption that we have in Christ Jesus?

What about this discussion has most comforted and/or convicted you personally?