

INTRODUCTION

1. The entire human race is guilty before God (3:19, 20). Paul meticulously proved Gentiles as sinners (1:18-32), Jews (2:1-29), and everyone (3:1-20).

2. With no hope, God provided His own glorious righteousness, without works (law), but supported by the O.T. (Law and prophets). This is appropriated through faith (3:21, 11).

3. God's righteousness is now:

1. UNTO ALL

This is but two words in the original, but is packed with meaning. Its basic concern is that God's righteousness is not limited to the Jewish people. It is now (v. 21) "unto all." This means Jews and Gentiles. Gentiles were virtually outside. Consider their situation (Eph. 2:12):

- 1) Without Christ (Messiah).
- 2) Aliens to Israel's politic.
- 3) Strangers to covenants.
- 4) Without hope.
- 5) Without God.

With the dispensational change, Gentiles are now included--unto all. Of course, this is the great thrust of missions. God's righteousness is unto all--Central and South America, Europe, Africa, Far East, Islands of the Sea--everywhere! There is no ethnic boundary now. So we sing: "Let the Nations now Rejoice; Jesus Saves; Jesus saves!"

2. UPON ALL

While many MSS do not include this phrase, it appears in others and that with good reason. It is not God's intention to cover a sinner's sin, but to place righteousness upon believers as a garment.

The account of God's provision for Adam and Eve is illustrative of this truth (cf. Gen. 3:21). Other Scriptures relate to the subject (Isa. 64:6; Job 29:14; Psa. 132:9; Isa. 11:5; 59:17; 61:10). This is the truth regarding the Bride (Rev. 19:7, 8). It explains the wedding garment parable (Mt. 22:11-13). No wonder Zinzendorf wrote:

Jesus, thy blood and righteousness  
My beauty are, my glorious dress.  
Mid flaming worlds in these arrayed  
With joy shall I lift up my head.

The truth of "upon all" also shows that being in Christ, we are become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Cor. 1:30, 31). This is absolutely mind transcending. This is God's obstetrics; not His pediatrics. It relates to our new birth and not child-training. It is a stunning truth that we are perfect in Christ forever. We have no intrinsic righteousness, but are righteous in Christ.

### 3. FOR BELIEVERS

This is a present tense participle. It affirms that people who believe are those to whom God's righteousness is given. Obviously, belief is not a magical expression (cf. James 2:19, 20). True faith is the issue. That sort bears fruit; it works!

True faith is founded upon Jesus Christ (Jn 14:6; Acts 4:12). We are responsible to Him alone. Christ is the issue. Some day all will be held accountable at His judgment bar; now everyone is responsible to believe at least two basic truths:

- a. No one can ever produce anything which would satisfy God.
- b. God is satisfied with Christ's death for our sin.

God's righteousness is unto all and upon all "who are believers."

### 4. NO DIFFERENCE

The word difference means "distinctions." Surely there is no distinction now between Jew and Gentile, between sinners of whatever sort. This buttresses the truth of this verse.

But this phrase also means there is no difference.

- a. In God's declaration of sin and righteousness.
- b. In God's way to declare His verdict. Guilt comes from Sinai; free righteousness from Calvary.
- c. In God as Source of declaring guilt and righteousness.

### CONCLUSION

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word. What more can He say than to you He hath said, to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?