

“There Is None Righteous”

Romans 3:1-28

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Teaching Aim: To demonstrate that the Jews do have a distinct advantage over the Gentiles in that they have received the Hebrew Scriptures, the prophets, the patriarchs, and the covenants. To review the spiritual condition of unregenerate man to find out the alarming results. To realize the only way any of us can be saved today is by grace through faith being in Jesus Christ alone.

DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD’S WORD (*BIBLE STUDY*)

Part I: The advantage of the Jews over the Gentiles (Rom. 3:1-8)

1. According to **verses 1 & 2**, what are some of the advantages that the Jewish people had over the Gentiles? What is the meaning of the word “*oracle*” (**vs. 2**). (See Dictionary) Why was it advantageous for the Jews to have the “*oracles of God*” in their possession? How blessed are we to have the Bible so readily available for us today? How many Bibles do you have in your home? Does owning a Bible raise our accountability before God? If so, how?
2. The word “*believe*” in **verse 3** is used in the sense of a person having “*faith in God*.” Does God’s faithfulness in keeping His promises depend upon how we feel at any given moment? What (or Who) does God’s faithfulness depend upon? Do you find it comforting to know that God is always faithful to keep His Word, even when we are not? (See **Heb. 13:5-6**) What are some ways that you’ve seen God faithfully working in your own life?
3. In **verse 4** Paul quotes from **Psalms 51:4** when David confessed to God his sin against Bathsheba, Uriah the Hittite, David’s own son, and ultimately against God Himself. Did David acknowledge that God was right in judging him? When it comes to repentance, what, if any, difference is there between “*attrition*” and “*contrition*?” What can we learn about true repentance from David’s example? (See **1 John 1:9**)
4. In **verse 5**, Paul anticipated the twisted arguments his readers might use against him and began to debate them in a hypothetical sense. What made the hypothetical arguments so ridiculous? Are Christians wrong in assuming they have “*a license to sin*.” Many “*Christians*” living in a sinful lifestyle think that all they have to do is confess their sins when the time comes, and they will be forgiven. Is this always true? (See **Matt. 7:21-23**) What should a “*so-called Christian*” do when he or she habitually lives in a sinful lifestyle? (See **2 Cor. 13:5**)

5. If God is “*unjust*” as some claimed in Paul’s day and as some also claim in our own, would anybody be able to trust God to do right on Judgment Day (**vv. 5-6**)? Why would the blasphemous claim that God is unjust be terrifying if true? How can we know for sure that God is a just and holy God? (See **Deut. 32:3-4; Psalms 33:5; 97:1-2; Romans 3:4**)

6. Paul continued his hypothetical argument in **verse 7** against a mock debater. What false beliefs do we find illustrated in **verses 7 & 8**? Do some people still fall into this trap today? Who does Scripture identify as “*the father of lies*” and the one who comes “*disguised as an angel of light.*” (See **John 8:44; 2 Cor. 11:14; 1 Pet. 5:8-9**) How did Paul respond to those who held such a sinful belief (**vs. 8**)?

Part II: Both Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin (Rom. 3:9-18)

1. Was Paul’s comment in **verse 9** “*politically correct*” considering the country he lived in and the predominant religion there? What shocking news did Paul deliver to the Jews in **verse 9**? Why would being grouped together with the Gentiles be so offensive to the Jews?

2. In **verses 10-18**, the Holy Spirit’s inspiration through Paul offers a diagnosis for the entire human race. Search and see if you can find the following body parts in **verses 10-18**: the mind; the heart; the hips and upper torso; the throat; the tongue; the lips; the mouth; the hands; the arms and lastly, the legs and feet. How does this illustration demonstrate that the unregenerate person is totally corrupt, dead in his or her sin, and apart from the saving work of Jesus Christ lost?

3. What is the meaning of the word, “*righteousness*?” (See Dictionary) According to **verse 10** (with the exception of Jesus Christ), how many people are “*inherently righteous*?” What, if any, difference is there between being “*inherently righteousness*” and receiving the “*imputed righteousness*” of Jesus Christ? Which of the two is the only way to salvation? (See **Rom. 1:16-17; 10:3-4, 9-10; 2 Cor. 5:21; Phil. 3:8-9**)

4. What will the unregenerate sinner never understand apart from the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit in the human heart (**vs. 11**)? (Hint: See **vs. 10**) Today, *“seeker sensitive”* churches are popping up all over the planet. These are churches that change the paradigm of the worship service to focus on the unbeliever (*“or seeker”*) rather than on God, the Bible, and the edification of the true believer in Christ. Supposedly, by using this model, unbelievers won’t feel as uncomfortable in church and will come to Christ in droves as a result. In this view, the church service is the problem, not the unbeliever’s spiritually dead heart. According to **verse 11**, how many unbelievers truly *“seek”* God without first being born again (or regenerated) by the Holy Spirit? (See **Psa. 14:1-3; John 6:44,65**) How will *“a dummed down Christianity”* affect the church over the long haul? Why is it important for pastors and Bible teachers to teach congregations the whole council of God?

5. The Greek word that is used for *“turned aside”* can also be used of a soldier retreating in the wrong direction during battle; in other words, deserting his fellow soldiers at war (**vs. 12**). What is often the penalty for desertion in a wartime situation? Would you agree that we at war today spiritually? If someone were to judge you on the way you live your life, would they agree that you are faithfully serving in the army of God, or would they say that you are retreating from the spiritual battles? Are you willing to stand and fight against the dark forces of this world and for the Christian faith? According to **verse 12**, how many people are *“inherently good?”* What kind of *“goodness”* is God looking for? (See **Luke 18:18-27**)

6. How many times do we find the word *“none”* or the phrase *“no, not one”* used in **verses 10-12 (NKJV)**? What was the central message that the Apostle Paul was giving to his readers in **verses 10-12**?

7. How is an open mouth an appropriate metaphor for an open tomb (**vs. 13**)? Has someone ever hurt you so deeply by their words that it sucked the life right out of you? (See **Jam. 3:5-6**) Why do we need to be especially careful of the words we say to people when we are angry? What are some ways that a Christian should properly use his or her tongue? (See **Eph. 4:29-32**) Do you have a problem controlling your tongue? Have you ever hurt people in the past by something you’ve said? What are some steps you can take to better reflect Jesus in the way you live your life?

8. Notice that there is a progression in **verses 13-18**. First the mouth opens and begins to speak words that it shouldn't. Damage occurs from the words that were spoken, things get worse, and then cursing may follow. Cursing leads to bitterness and then the anger only grows worse. Anger at times leads to rage and violent outbursts, sometimes even to physical violence. This kind of ungodly behavior only brings destruction and does not glorify God. Have you ever struggled with your anger? What have you done to gain control over your anger? (See **Matt. 12:33-37**) Are you still struggling with anger?

9. Peace, in the sense of "*peace with God*," is the furthest thing from the mind of an unbeliever. (See **Rom. 5:1**) The reason unbelievers act the way they do is because they have no fear of God. How might the story be a little different if people really understood God's wrath is coming on Judgment Day against those who have sinned and rejected Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord (**vs. 18**)? (See **Prov. 9:10; Matt. 13:47-50; John 3:36; Rev. 20:11-15**) Should preachers teach about the severity of God's coming judgment, or is this teaching too harsh for unbelievers today? Who spoke about hell more than anyone else in the Bible? (See **Matt. 13:41-43**)

Part III: By the deeds of the law no one will be justified in God's sight (Rom. 3:19-27a)

1. According to **verse 19**, what will become of the world because of violating God's law? John Calvin used the illustration of a mirror to demonstrate the function of God's law. Do mirrors reveal our blemishes? If so, how? How does this relate to our sin as revealed in God's Word? If God were to play a DVD of your entire life on Judgment Day, how would you feel? (See **Matt. 7:21-23; Rom. 3:23; 5:8-9; 6:23**) What beautiful truth can we learn from **1 John 1:9**?

2. The word "*justified*" in **verse 20** means "*declared righteous*." Our righteousness as Christians is a "*forensic righteousness*," in other words "*a declared righteousness*." God declares the guilty sinner "*not guilty*" by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Our righteousness is also an "*imputed righteousness*." Imputation is a banking term that means to apply from one account to another. A "*double imputation*" is necessary for our salvation. At salvation: 1) By grace through faith in Jesus, our sins are applied to Christ on the cross where He paid for them in full; and 2) "*His righteousness*" is applied to us so that as God sees us, He sees us clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. As a result, we are forgiven of our sins and "*declared righteous*" in Christ. We are saved by the righteousness of Jesus Christ and not our own. According to **verse 20**, how many people will be saved by keeping the law? What will the law reveal?

3. What kind of “*righteousness*” is revealed in **verses 21-22**? According to the Bible, what is the only way for unregenerate men and women to be saved? (**John 3:3,5,16; 14:6; Acts 4:12; 16:31; Eph. 2:8-9**)

4. Paul uses the Greek word “*hamartia*” in **verse 23** as he speaks of our sin. How does this word relate to archery? (Hint: Search online) Do you find that, apart from Jesus Christ, you always fall short of the glory of God? What terrifying news do we learn in **Jam. 2:10**? What makes this news so terrifying? How does the tone of this passage change in **verse 24**? What is the theological meaning of the word “*justified*?” (Hint: Search Theopedia.com) According to **verse 24**, what is the only way for a guilty sinner to be justified (“*declared righteous*”) in the eyes of God?

5. According to **verse 25**, God sent forth His only begotten Son (Jesus) to be the “*propitiation*” for our sins. What does the word “*propitiation*” mean? (Hint: Search Theopedia.com) What does the propitiation of Jesus Christ have to do with your salvation? How can God be both “*just*” and the “*justifier*” of the one who has faith in Jesus Christ (**vs. 26**)? Notice that God in His grace does the work. Does this leave any room for us to be prideful (**vv. 27-28**)? Why or why not?

MINER’S CORNER – *Manna to live by!*

- No unbeliever will ever seek after God apart from first being regenerated by the Holy Spirit. (**John 3:3,5; 6:44,65**)
- As Christians, we are commissioned by God to zealously, yet lovingly, take the gospel of Jesus Christ to the lost and dying world that we live in.
- We have greater access to the Word of God today than any other generation before us.
- God is always faithful to keep His Word, even when we do not.
- The law of God functions as a mirror; it reveals our blemishes (meaning our sin) and points us to our need for Christ. (See **Gal. 3:24**)
- Salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone is the only way to salvation, there is no other way to heaven. (See **John 14:6**)
- As believers in Jesus Christ, we should live every day as though it were our last, making the most of every opportunity to love and to serve Him.