

Romans – A Survey

“The Gospel - Revealing The Righteousness of God”

I. Introductory Matters (1:1-17)

II. **God’s Righteousness Revealed in Condemnation (Sin) (1:18-3:20)**

A. Condemnation against **pagan, immoral humanity (1:18-32)**.

B. **Condemnation against the moralist (2:1-16)**.

C. **Condemnation against unfaithful Jews (2:17-3:8)** – The Group discussed here: “JEW” 2:17, 28, 29; 3:1. The Jew claimed to be exempt from condemnation on three grounds. Paul knew this, for he, himself was a Jew. These were the three grounds: 1. He was a son of Abraham. 2. He had the law. 3. He was circumcised. The old rabbinical writings of the Jews contain such statements as this: “No circumcised man will be lost.”

1. **The law cannot save the Jew (2:17-24). Notice the word “law”** v.17, 18, 20, 23. There are five advantages in which the Jew placed his hope.

a. His Name: From Judah “One who is praised” (v.17)

b. His Trust: He trusted that the law would save him (v.17)

c. His Boast: Their boast on God was on the wrong premise. (v.17)

d. His Knowledge: Thou knowest the will of God. (v.18)

e. His Confidence: “A guide for the blind,” “A light of them which are in darkness,” “An instructor of the foolish,” and “A teacher of babes.” (v.19-20). Paul displays a sense of sarcasm. Paul knew what was in the Jew’s mind: Gentiles were ignorant and foolish!

f. Paul’s Questions: (v. 21-22) Paul asks a series of questions to arouse the Jews’ conscience regarding the inconsistencies in their lives. They teach righteousness, but in practical life they violate righteous principles. Example: A Sunday school teacher teaches about Biblical principles of abstinence from alcohol and tobacco products, BUT, he invests in companies that produce, market, and sell these products, hoping all the time that his investments produce a profitable return.

g. You are a “lousy” testimony! (v.23-24) The Gentiles see your hypocrisy! God’s name is blasphemed. “If these are the people of God, what **kind of God it THAT?** (Is. 52:5.)

h. The very LAW that the Jew boasted in, will now condemn the JEW.

i. The Jews’ answer to this charge: “OK, OK, BUT I am circumcised, that will count for something!

2. **Circumcision cannot save the Jew (2:25-27).** Notice the word “circumcision” v. 25, 26, 27.

a. **Because he had not kept the law.** Lack of circumcision would not condemn a Gentile just as the possession of circumcision would not save the Jew. The whole question rests upon the law. The JEW cannot be saved by his circumcision, because he has not kept the law; but if the Gentile did keep the law, lack of circumcision would not condemn him. This situation has a parallel among religious people today, the man who trusts in the rite of baptism, in membership in the Christian church will face a heightened guilt and condemnation in the eyes of God. His contact with the doctrines of Christianity increases his responsibility.

b. **The Jews' Answer:** I am a son of Abraham, and God has made certain promises to the sons of Abraham and the Jews that He dare not break. That will save me.”

3. **Birth cannot save the Jew (2:28-29)** Paul shows that there is such a thing as being a Jew merely in outward form. But God demands an **inward reality** and would not recognize any man as a Jew unless he has the **inward reality**. Some people think this statement teaches that every Christian is a Jew, but what it really teaches is that every Jew is not a Jew. No man can be a Jew unless he is born outwardly as a son of Abraham, and also inwardly in spirit; therefore, a man born only outwardly of Abraham **is not a true JEW**.

- a. Notice these **contrasting word pairs**: outwardly - inwardly; flesh - heart; spirit-the letter; man-God. (v.28-29)
- b. The matter of **heart circumcision** was not anything new; the Old Testament is full of it. No Jew could deny that Paul was on safe ground when he talked about circumcision of heart (**Jer 4:4**). God demanded the **inward reality**, not merely the outward shell of profession that the Jew had. (**Ps 51:12; 17**)
- c. He was **“called”** a Jew. Outward reference (v.17). Some are called “Christian.” Baptism, church membership does not produce spiritual circumcision. One must be BORN from above.”

4. **Arguments cannot save the Jew (3:1-8)**

a. **Objection 1 (v.1)** What advantage then hath the Jew? **Answer: (v.2)** To him was given the oracles of God, the Scriptures, the promises concerning Jesus Christ. The very advantage that the Jew had was the very thing that condemned him, because he did not believe in the Messiah when he came.

b. **Objection 2 (v.3)** Well, what if some of us did not believe? We had the oracle, we admit that. But we did not all believe them. Shall the unbelief of some cancel out the **faithfulness of God?**” Won't God keep his promises to the Jewish nation anyway? He is arguing that God must keep His promises whether the Jew is a sinner or a righteous person. **Answer (v.4)** Paul answers: **“God forbid!”** God's faithfulness cannot fail - it cannot be made of none effect.” If every man the world becomes a liar, God will still remain true.

c. **Objection 3 (v.5)** If God's righteousness appears in a clearer light because of our sin, can God blame us for our sin? If our unrighteousness makes clearer the righteousness of God, He would be unrighteous to take vengeance on us.” **Answer (v.6)** **“God forbid!”** Paul is saying that if God cannot judge a sinner because his sin makes

the righteousness of God more conspicuous, then He cannot deal with any sinner. That sort of reasoning would clear the slate for the Gentiles as well as for the Jews, and it would get rid of all judgment.

d. Objection 4 (v.7) He is still arguing that somehow, if the sin of man would make conspicuous God's righteousness - if man's lie made God's truth appear the greater - how then can God justly judge the sinner? **Answer (v.8)** Let us press that argument to its logical conclusion and see just exactly where it leads. And as some people say. What is the logical conclusion of that doctrine? Here it is, let us do evil that good may come." **The end justifies the means.**

Bibliography

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