

# No one righteous, including You.

7.21.24

Message 12

Romans Series

Romans 3:1–20 (CSB)

**3** So what advantage does the Jew have? Or what is the benefit of circumcision? **2** Considerable in every way. First, they were entrusted with the very words of God. **3** What then? If some were unfaithful, will their unfaithfulness nullify God's faithfulness? **4** Absolutely not! Let God be true, even though everyone is a liar, as it is written:

**That you may be justified in your words  
and triumph when you judge.**

**5** But if our unrighteousness highlights God's righteousness, what are we to say? I am using a human argument: Is God unrighteous to inflict wrath? **6** Absolutely not! Otherwise, how will God judge the world? **7** But if by my lie God's truth abounds to his glory, why am I also still being judged as a sinner? **8** And why not say, just as some people slanderously claim we say, "Let us do what is evil so that good may come"? Their condemnation is deserved!

**9** What then? Are we any better off? Not at all! For we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin, **10** as it is written:

**There is no one righteous, not even one.**

**11 There is no one who understands;**

**there is no one who seeks God.**

**12 All have turned away;**

**all alike have become worthless.**

**There is no one who does what is good,  
not even one.'**

**13 Their throat is an open grave;  
they deceive with their tongues.'**

**Vipers' venom is under their lips.'**

**14 Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.'**

**15 Their feet are swift to shed blood;**

**16 ruin and wretchedness are in their paths,**

**17 and the path of peace they have not known.'**

**18 There is no fear of God before their eyes.'**

**19** Now we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are subject to the law, so that every mouth may be shut and the whole world may become subject to God's judgment. **20** For no one will be justified in his sight by the works of the law, because the knowledge of sin comes through the law.

## 1. Do as I say, not as I do.

A. The Jews were not good examples of righteousness.

1. The Jewish people were called to model righteousness before the eyes of the world so that they would repent and be saved.

2. But they blew it.

B. By the Apostle Paul's day, they were trying to reclaim their calling and distinction.

1. They hyper focused on the details of the Law, believing that through the Law they would be saved.

2. And in the process, everyone else must become like them or they would go to hell.

C. The Apostle Paul is shattering that argument.

1. It isn't that being a Jew was meaningless, Paul says.
2. There were advantages, but the advantages were not enough to bring them salvation.
3. One more time, Paul explains the hopelessness of humanity.

## 2. Paul asks, *Is God unjust to judge and punish?*

A. Because God is absolutely perfect and absolutely good, of course, He is just to punish wickedness and sin.

1. Our world today still argues that God cannot be good while also judging the world.
2. Judgment seems to contradict the principles of love, goodness, righteousness, and mercy.
3. Yet, because God is good He must judge and judgment requires an element of wrath.

B. Some Jews claimed that their "badness" magnified God's "goodness."

1. No such thing as bad publicity, right?
2. If I make God look good through my sin, then why would I be punished?

C. My actions and behaviors do not change who God is.

1. My wickedness and sin does not change who God is.
2. When I'm unfaithful, He remains faithful.
3. When I'm unjust, God is still just.
4. Even if I live a lie, God is still truth, and all truth speaks of Him.

D. Even in our day, when Christians fall and fail, God is still good.

1. Even though there are consequences and many refuse to return to Church or God because of the actions of Christians, God is still good even when His people are not.

2. God is still loving when His people are not.
3. God is still righteous even when His appointed leaders are not.
4. When we elevate other Christians to the same level as God, we will always be disappointed when they fail.

E. God alone is good, and the Apostle hammers this home in this passage.

1. The middle verses in bold print are quotations from 7 different Old Testament passages.
2. By piecing these verses together, we see how utterly sinful and wicked humanity is.
3. Notice what is said:

3. There is no one righteous, and no one does good.

**There is no one righteous, not even one.**

**<sup>11</sup> There is no one who understands;**

**there is no one who seeks God.**

**<sup>12</sup> All have turned away;**

**all alike have become worthless.**

**There is no one who does what is good,**

**not even one.'**

**<sup>13</sup> Their throat is an open grave;**

**they deceive with their tongues.'**

**Vipers' venom is under their lips.'**

**<sup>14</sup> Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.'**

**<sup>15</sup> Their feet are swift to shed blood;**

**<sup>16</sup> ruin and wretchedness are in their paths,**

**17 and the path of peace they have not known.'**

**18 There is no fear of God before their eyes.'**

A. How lost are we?

1. When people talk it leads to death.
2. Everyone is deceived and speaks deception.
3. Our mouths are full of cursing and bitterness

B. The way we live our lives

1. Lead to bloodshed.
  2. We leave ruin in our path.
  3. We know don't know how to walk in peace or righteousness.
- Vs 17

C. These verses are clear:

1. Humanity is completely corrupt.
2. We cannot save ourselves.
3. If it was up to us, there is nothing worth redeeming,
4. To put it in the language of Ozark people: there's nothin worth keepin.

4. Even the Law doesn't help.

A. The Jewish people placed their hope in keeping the Law.

1. Surely if they were more obedient...
2. If they just kept all of the law.
3. If they were just better people,
4. Surely they could at least save themselves.

B. But Paul pulls the rug out from beneath them by declaring that the Law actually helps condemn.

1. The Law shows us God's righteous standard without empowering us to live by it.
2. All along the Law was intended to point people to God in faith.
  - a. Abraham did, and it was credited to him as righteousness. (This is a big theme of Romans 4)
  - b. Phineas the priest acted in faith and that was credited to him as righteousness too.
  - c. In the earliest of days of humanity, Enoch walked with God at a time when no one else was.
  - d. King David, although far from perfect, consistently expressed faith in God and was forgiven.
3. Yet, for the majority, the Law was a standard they could not keep.
  - a. Year after year, sacrifices were made to atone for sin that they seemed powerless to stop.
  - b. And instead of them placing their hope and faith in the God who inspired the Law, they placed their hope in the Law instead.

C. Paul lays it out clearly in verse 9:

1. For we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin,
2. To be "under sin," then, was to be under its authority (7:14; Gal 3:22; cf. Rom 5:21; 6:12), to be its slave (6:6-9, 14, 19-20; 7:25), and to have it dwelling within (7:20, 23), prompting and directing one's actions<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Frank Thielman, *Romans*, ed. Clinton E. Arnold, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2018), 184.

3. All people are under sin's authority;
  - a. All people are slaves to sin.
  - b. All people have sin dwelling within them.
  - c. All people are directed by sin.
4. What are we to do?

5. The way Paul writes this is brilliant.

A. By now, the readers are hopeless.

1. By now we shouldn't have a piece of pride left.
2. There is no hope.
3. There is no escaping the consequences of sin.

B. What are we to do?

1. Has God brought us this far for us to fail?
2. Are we to die in this miserable state, left wanting for a Savior?

C. With 1 word, Paul now shifts all of the Book of Romans.

1. All are lost.
2. Wrath is revealed.
3. Righteousness is impossible.
4. NO one is good.

BUT...

<sup>21</sup> But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— <sup>22</sup> the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup> and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

6. No one is righteous BUT JESUS.

- A. God's righteousness is revealed APART from Law.
  - 1. In Jesus, we see perfection and holiness personified.
  - 2. In Jesus, we see the righteousness of God for all who believe.
  - 3. In Jesus, the line of Jew and Gentile is erased.
- B. All fall short of the glory of God...
  - 1. But in Jesus, we are justified by grace.
  - 2. Because of Jesus we...
    - a. Receive a righteousness that isn't ours.
    - b. We speak a word better than anything we've ever known.
    - c. We walk a path that leads to life.
    - d. We embrace a Law that changes and transforms.
- C. I'm so thankful for Jesus.
  - 1. What I couldn't do, Jesus has already done.
  - 2. Salvation is a gift, and gifts are meant to be enjoyed.
  - 3. This life with Jesus is not meant to feel like work, but to feel like enjoying a gift.

### Prayer for life and enjoyment.

- A. This morning I want to close in a little different way.
  - 1. Usually this is the time of the message where I present a few areas of correction and direction.
  - 2. But this morning, I want to pray for an experience of joy, life, and hope.
- B. Many of us here today are:
  - 1. Tired.
  - 2. Joyless



3. Anxious.

4. Overwhelmed.

5. Life feels like one constant struggle, with no relief in sight.

C. Today, I us to pray for the Spirit to help us enjoy this life and this great salvation.

1. May we experience the joy of the Spirit.

2. May we feel the great love God has for us.

3. May we leave this place with a joy unspeakable and full of glory.