

SALT Church

Romans 3:1-20

“What shall we conclude then?”

August 24, 2025

“The Greatest Book Ever Written”

David and Cindy

Recap:

- Circumcision was given to God’s men as an example of what must take place in every child of God’s heart.
 - There must be the tearing away of the flesh (sin)
 - There must be the shedding of blood so that there can be forgiveness.
 - What was once given as a physical example is now understood in its proper context:
 - To be a child of God requires the circumcision of the heart.

Romans 3:1-20

3 What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew, or what value is there in circumcision?

- Based on what we learned last week I’m thinking “Nothing!”
 - Wasn’t that the whole point?
 - The act of circumcision didn’t matter if your heart had not been changed by God.
 - But Paul sees it a different way.

- We must remember the question “What’s the advantage in being a Jew and in circumcision?”

We continue:

² Much in every way! First of all, the Jews have been entrusted with the very words of God.

- The Jews are God’s chosen people (in a physical sense)
 - They were chosen by God because of Abraham’s faithfulness to God.
 - Therefore, all of those who are of Abraham and Sarah’s seed are blessed because of the covenant God made with Abraham.
 - I add Sarah because it is important to remember that Abraham had other children with other women who were not included in the covenant with God.
 - Perhaps an easier way to say it would be the children of Issac but if you recall Jacob had a brother named Esau whom God hated.
 - This is why you hear the Jews repeat “The God of Abraham, Issac, and Jacob.”
 - Even though Esau was rebellious he still enjoyed the blessing of being an offspring of Issac.
 - Now a major part of that blessing was the giving and receiving of God’s Word known as the Law.
 - Thus, the Jewish people were blessed when they received the Word of God.

Paul's 1st question was "What advantage is there to being a Jew?"

- Next Paul will imagine the next question that would come from a Jew.

³ What if some were unfaithful? Will their unfaithfulness nullify God's faithfulness? ⁴ Not at all! Let God be true, and every human being a liar.

- This is what a Roman Jew would want to hear.
 - But what is Paul saying?
- Paul is conveying the truth about a covenant.
 - When two parties enter into a covenant agreement, they both agree to do their part regardless if the other part does theirs.
- Therefore, Paul can say that the unfaithfulness of man does not determine God's faithfulness.
 - Why?
 - Because God always keeps His Word.

Does this mean that the Jews and the Christians get a pass?

- Absolutely not!!!!
 - Listen to what God said through Moses to the Jewish people.

Deuteronomy 7:6-11 (Moses speaking to the people of God)

⁶ For you are a holy people, who belong to the Lord your God. Of all the people on earth, the Lord your God has chosen you to be his own special treasure.

⁷ "The Lord did not set his heart on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other nations, for you were the smallest of all nations! ⁸ Rather, it was simply that the Lord loves

you, and he was keeping the oath he had sworn to your ancestors. That is why the Lord rescued you with such a strong hand from your slavery and from the oppressive hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. ⁹ Understand, therefore, that **the Lord your God is indeed God. He is the faithful God who keeps his covenant for a thousand generations** and lavishes his unfailing love on those **who love him and obey his commands**. ¹⁰ But he does not hesitate to punish and destroy those who reject him. ¹¹ Therefore, you must obey all these commands, decrees, and regulations I am giving you today.

- There are a lot of key words here:
 - God is faithful.
 - God keeps His covenants.
 - God loves with unfailing love.
 - We love Him and the fruit of that love is obedience.
 - God does not hesitate to:
 - Punish His own
 - Destroy those who reject Him.

This is the nature of our God.

Back to our text:

³ What if some were unfaithful? Will their unfaithfulness nullify God's faithfulness? ⁴ Not at all! Let God be true, and every human being a liar.

- God will love them enough to punish, with purpose of correction.

- God love enough to destroy those that reject Him.

As it is written:

**‘So that you may be proved right when you speak
and prevail when you judge.’**

- Paul quotes King David as he repents of his adultery and murder.
 - This is an excellent choice of scripture as it speaks to the level of the commitment of God’s heart to His covenant promise.

Psalms 51:1-6

*¹ Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your unfailing love;
according to your great compassion
blot out my transgressions.*

*² Wash away all my iniquity
and cleanse me from my sin.*

*³ For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is always before me.*

*⁴ Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight;
so you are right in your verdict
and justified when you judge.*

*⁵ Surely I was sinful at birth,
sinful from the time my mother conceived me.*

*⁶ Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb;
you taught me wisdom in that secret place.*

Can you see the beauty of drawing us back to Psalms 51?

- We are born unfaithful
- We are conceived in sin
- We live in sin
 - But we can't give up on pursuing holiness.
 - Listen as the Apostle Paul helps us process.

5 But if our unrighteousness brings out God's righteousness more clearly, what shall we say? That God is unjust in bringing his wrath on us? (I am using a human argument.)

- Let me say this in another way
 - **"God made me this way"**
 - I was born sinful therefore it is God's fault.
 - How can He judge me for being who I am if He created me this way.
 - Didn't He knit me together in my mother's womb?

What have we learned from our Genesis study?

- God created humanity (Adam and Eve) in absolute perfection, but He also gave them freedom.
- In their freedom they had everything and only one rule, "do not eat from that tree."
 - God knew what was going to happen.
 - Jesus knew what was going to be required of Him.
 - The Holy Spirit knew that He would be rejected.

So, what do we do with statements like "I was born this way!"

- 1st we validate truth
 - You were born that way because of sin
 - God did not create you that way, sin was passed down to you through your parents no matter how righteous they are.
 - This is why Jesus said that you must be born again.
 - This is why the Word of God says *that if any man be in Christ that behold, he is a new creation, and the old things have passed away and the new things have come.*

Only a fool would say, “Let’s sin more so that God can get more glory so He can pour out more grace and mercy.”

Only a fool would say that God made me a sinner and therefore has no right to judge me.

Only a fool would say that God has no right to pour out His wrath on the sinner.

We go back to Paul’s argument.

⁵ But if our unrighteousness brings out God’s righteousness more clearly, what shall we say? That God is unjust in bringing his wrath on us? (I am using a human argument.)

⁶ Certainly not! If that were so, how could God judge the world? ⁷ Someone might argue, ‘If my falsehood enhances God’s truthfulness and so increases his glory, why am I still condemned as a sinner?’ ⁸ Why not say – as some slanderously

claim that we say – ‘Let us do evil that good may result’? Their condemnation is just!

- Surely this is the argument of the depraved mind.
 - “Let’s sin more so that we can be forgiven more!”
- That is like saying:
 - Let’s spend more money to get out of debt
 - Let’s eat more to lose weight
 - Let’s draw squares so that people will see circles
 - Let’s walk in darkness so that people can see the light!

Only a depraved mind would think this way.

9 What shall we conclude then? Do we have any advantage? Not at all! For we have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under the power of sin.

- You’re making my head hurt Paul!!!!

Romans 3:1-2

3 What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew, or what value is there in circumcision? 2 Much in every way! First of all, the Jews have been entrusted with the very words of God.

Can you see why I waited over 15 years before I decided to teach the book of Romans?

I’m not the only one that feels this way.

- Consider the Apostle Peter

2 Peter 3:14-16

¹⁴ So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him. ¹⁵ Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote to you with the wisdom that God gave him. ¹⁶ He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. **His letters contain some things that are hard to understand,** which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

- It is one thing for me to say Paul is complex, but it is another thing when another Apostle under the power of the Holy Spirit says that Paul is hard to understand.

⁹ What shall we conclude then? Do we have any advantage? Not at all! For we have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under the power of sin.

- Here is what I believe Paul is trying to convey:
 - The Jewish people had an advantage in the beginning because they were the keepers of the Law.
 - They had this advantage at birth.
 - They had the Word of God, this gave them the advantage.
 - They no longer have the advantage because the Word of God is available to everyone.
 - The Bible is by far the most published book in the world.

Pay attention because here is the key to understanding verse 9

9 What shall we conclude then? (Who is the “we?”)

The “we” is not the Jews because chapter 2 addressed the Jews, and the beginning of *chapter 3 was a segway from the Jews* to another group.

- The “we” are the gentiles. (remember Paul is arguing from a human point of view)

So, what is Paul trying to convey?

- When it comes to sin, no one has the advantage.
- Jews and gentiles alike are sinners and will be condemned unless the just price for sin has been paid.
 - *Hebrews 9:22* says “without the shedding of blood there can be no forgiveness”
 - Forgiveness only comes from perfect sinless blood.
 - This was the blood that Jesus spoke of on the night before His crucifixion “This cup represents my blood which is given for the forgiveness of sin”

So, our conclusion is this:

- The Jews had the advantage in the beginning because they had the Word of God.
- They no longer have the advantage because they reject the New Covenant (The New Testament)
 - In fact, they are now at a disadvantage because they reject the New Covenant and are under the condemnation of the Old Covenant.
- Both Jews and gentiles are under the curse of sin until they receive the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

How do we know this to be true?

- Listen as Paul describes the total depravity of man.
 - Ask yourself, could this person ever “find” Jesus without the grace of God?

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,

they have together become worthless;

there is no one who does good, not even one.’

¹³ ‘Their throats are open graves;

their tongues practice deceit.’

‘The poison of vipers is on their lips.’

¹⁴ ‘Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.’

¹⁵ ‘Their feet are swift to shed blood;

¹⁶ ruin and misery mark their ways,

¹⁷ and the way of peace they do not know.’

¹⁸ ‘There is no fear of God before their eyes.’

Those verses scream to us that we have no hope of ever “finding Jesus.”

- In our depraved minds all we want is sin.
- We don’t long for Him we despise Him.
 - This is humanity if left alone.

▪ This is me and you without Jesus Christ.

- This is how I know that people do not find Jesus on their own.
 - But Pastor I thought we found Jesus?

John 6:43-44

⁴³ ‘Stop grumbling among yourselves,’ Jesus answered. ⁴⁴ ‘No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day.

John 6:37 (Jesus talking)

³⁷ All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.

John 17:6-7

⁶ ‘I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. ⁷ Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you.

Okay Pastor, we get it, what’s your point?

- If you believe that you found Jesus
- If you believe that you were the initiator of your faith
 - You diminish your lost, sinful, depraved, and hopeless situation.

- You diminish the incredible love of the Father who saw you in your hopeless state and took you to His Son and said this one belongs to You.
- You diminish the great cost of the cross
- You diminish the power of the salvation
- You diminish your adoption into the family of God to which you now belong.
 - Can you see how important it is that you have the proper perspective on how you became a child of God?

If you fail to realize that it was The Father that took you to the Son here is what will happen to you.

- Because you “found Jesus” you will always
 - be trying to earn your salvation rather than allowing your faith to produce the good fruit of obedience.
 - Trying to earn your salvation is a works doctrine that the Jews especially loved.
 - It was born out of a desire to not break the Law of God which is a good thing.
 - It is a good thing, but it is also an impossible thing.
 - To be under the Law is to be under judgement.
 - Everyone who is not a child of God is under judgement.

Back to our text

¹⁹ Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God.

- This is a powerful statement.

- ***God will hold everyone accountable to The Law.***

- But Pastor I thought we were not under the Law.
 - Jesus said that He did not come to abolish the Law but to fulfil the Law.
 - Meaning the Law is good and is still in effect.
 - Therefore, the only way to survive the judgement of God is to be completely righteous.
 - The only way this can happen for anyone is through the power of the gospel.
 - We have been forgiven not because the Law has been abolished but because Jesus' righteous life, death, and resurrection has paid the penalty that the Law requires.

²⁰ Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin.

- We close with this truth:
 - The Law was given to point out our sin.
 - Sin is the great cancer that will take all of our physical lives.
 - Sin will also have an impact on our souls.

- Hebrews 9:22 is still in effect “without the shedding of blood there can be no forgiveness”
- Those who do not know Jesus as Lord will have no forgiveness because their blood is contaminated with sin.
- Those who do know Jesus as Lord will be forgiven because His sacrifice, His shed blood, because of His sinless life was accepted by the Father over 2,000 years ago.
- The evidence of the Fathers acceptance is His resurrected life.
 - The proof is all around you.
 - Worldwide calendar reset 2025 years ago.
 - Church on Sundays rather than Saturdays
 - Billions of Bibles in print
 - Changed lives clearly seen.

Close in prayer