

6/25/10

All Are Guilty Before God
Rom. 3:1-20

Paul the apostle began his epistle boldly proclaiming he was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek, the righteousness of God being revealed from faith to faith, quoting Habbakuk.

Next Paul revealed that from the beginning of time man has been without excuse, regarding his denial and rejection about the knowledge or existence of God, due to creation, conscience and history.

Then Paul revealed the certainty of the righteous judgment of God over the moralist who are hypocrites or self-righteous, if they die without Christ.

Paul also pointed out that the Jews had a great privilege to be chosen by God as the covenant people, the danger being if they did not live up to it, misunderstanding the rite of circumcision for their standing with God, instead of having a circumcised heart, the mark by obedience.

Paul having proven that the Gentiles, as well as the Jews are far from God and deceived about their

knowledge of God as well as the things of God, takes up one final argument regarding the righteousness of God versus the unrighteousness of man to bring about his concluding verdict of the entire world being guilty, from three perspectives.

- I The distortion of God's righteousness defended. Rom. 3:1-8
- II. The description of man's unrighteousness revealed. Rom. 3:9-18
- III. The declaration of man's guilt for unrighteousness pronounced. Rom. 3:19-20

I The distortion of God's righteousness defended. Rom. 3:1-8

A. The apostle Paul having revealed that the confidence of the Jew, simply on possessing the Law and the covenant is a false assurance, one must obey and be a doer of the Law.

* Paul continues with his diatribe, as a prosecuting attorney to present his next argument that will reveal the Jew guilty again before God.

- 1. Paul asks two questions. vs. 1
 - a. First, "What advantage then has a Jew?"
 - b. Second, "What profit is there in circumcision?"

2. Paul is referring back to what he just stated about the Jews. Rom. 2:17-29
 - a. He said their privilege made them more accountable and their failure to live up to God's knowledge caused the Gentiles to blaspheme God. Rom. 2:17-24
 - b. He said their circumcision was seen as uncircumcision by God, if they disobeyed the law, for a true Jew was one circumcised of heart. Rom. 2:25-29
- B.** The apostle Paul declared their advantage. vs. 2
1. Paul stated that the Jew had much advantage in every way, but he chose one thing to focus on, the oracles of God. vs. 2
 - a. The word chiefly "proton", means first as in a series emphasizing priority and importance.
 - b. The word oracles "logia", refers to the Divine word of God, the content of all the revelation of God to man.
 - 1) Revealing the will of God for man.
 - 2) Revealing the promises of God to man.
 - 3) Revealing warnings of God for man.

- 4) Revealing the prophecies of the Messiah to be born of man.
 - c. The word appears three other times in the New Testament and in the LXX. Acts 7:38, Heb. 5:12, 1Pet. 4:11
2. Paul stated that the word of God was entrusted to the Jews.
 - a. The word committed "pisteuo", means to believe or entrust.
 - 1) Of the 248 times it appears, only six are translated "committed". Lk. 16:11, Jn. 2:24, Rom. 3:2, Gal. 2:7, 1Tim. 1:11, Tit. 1:3
 - b. But the association can not be missed for the oracles of God were given for several reasons.
 - 1) To believe, obey and trust them completely.
 - 2) To proclaim them to others.
 - 3) To transmit them to the following generations as accurate as possible, as the revelation given to them.
- C.** The apostle Paul defended the faithfulness of God by presenting an argument from the human perspective that would seek to find fault with God and then refutes it. vs. 3-4
1. Paul poses the condition of some Jew not believing the revelation of God. vs. 3
 - a. He states this in a question, "For what if some did not believe?"

- 1) There were Jews who believed the word of God, as well as the remnant throughout their history.
 - 2) There were Jews who did not believe the word of God, even as the nation did not and went into captivity.
- b.** He then poses a ridiculous result of such unbelief by a rhetorical question, “Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect?” vs. 3b
- 1) The word unbelief “apistia”, means without faith and trust.
 - 2) The phrase without affect “katageo”, means to abolish or bring to an end.
 - 3) In other words, if some Jew did not believe what God revealed in His word entrusted to them, would that make the revelation null and void or inoperative?
- 2.** Paul states the obvious and only answer to this rhetorical question, revealing the foolishness of such a thought. vs. 4
- a.** His response was immediate, exclamatory and emphatically in the negative, “Certainly not!” vs. 4a
- 1) As to say, perish the thought.
 - 2) God forbid.

- 3) What man believes or disbelieves about God and His word, in no way alters the promises, plans or prophecies of God, for they are not sourced in man but God alone!
- b.** He follows by declaring the faithful reliability of God, opposed to man unreliability, “Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar.” vs. 4b
- 1) The word true “alethes”, means truthful and liar “pseustes”, simply means untruthful, false.
 - 2) Jesus said Satan is a liar and the father of it. Jn. 8:44
- c.** His proof is from the Psalms.
- 1) The first declares the contrast of God being true, but every man a liar. Ps. 116:11
 - 2) The second declares the just judgment of God over David’s sin with Bathsheba having sinned against God alone, showing the inability of man to charge God with unrighteous judgment. Ps. 51:4
 - 3) The word “overcome”, means to prevail or win the case and clearly is in reference to God by the capital “You”, two times.

- D.** The apostle Paul then defends the righteousness or justice of God by posing three arguments from the human perspective. vs. 5-8
- 1.** Paul first argues, if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God all the more, are we to conclude that God is unjust to inflict wrath on us for our unrighteousness? vs. 5
 - * It is a two part question.
 - a.** He uses a play on words, what is our response to be towards God if our unrighteous conduct establishes or commends the righteousness character of God all the more? vs. 5a-b
 - * Paul says, “But if our unrighteousness demonstrate the righteousness of God, what shall we say?” vs. 5a-b
 - b.** He then says, are we to conclude that God is unjust and wrong to pour out His wrath on us for our unrighteous conduct? vs. 5c
 - * “Is God unjust who inflicts wrath?” vs. 5c
 - 1)** Again, this is a rhetorical question with only one obvious answer, No!
 - 2)** For God is the epitome of holiness.
 - 3)** The word wrath “orge”, means God’s righteous anger with and against sin. Rom. 1:18

- c.** The apostle Paul quickly rejects such a thought by two statements. vs. 5d
 - 1)** He first qualified his statement of verse five, “I speak as a man”, referring to one who does not know God, a natural man. vs. 5d
 - 2)** He then says, “Certainly not! For then how will God judge the world? vs. 6
 - * In other words, how then could God judge the entire world justly!
- 2.** Paul secondly argues that if his lie promotes and advances God’s truth, why does God judge him as a sinner? vs. 7
 - * “If the truth of God has increased through my lie to His glory, why am I also still judged as a sinner?”
 - a.** The reasoning being, if I am helping God by my lie shouldn’t God reward me or at least not be so hard on me!
 - b.** The reasoning again being, if my false words actually bring glory to God, then why am I still judged by God as a sinner?
- 3.** Paul last of all argues, if this is true then, “Why not say, Let us do evil that good may come?—as we are slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say. Their condemnation is just.” vs. 8a-d
 - a.** He reveals the foolishness of such a twisted view of God and sin by his

- rhetorical question that has only one answer, no we are not to do evil!
- b. He then reveals this to be a slanderous report by some Jews, as being taught by him and other Christians. vs. 8c
 - b. He declares others affirm the slanderous report. vs. 8c
 - c. He declares that their judgment is just. vs. 8d
 - 1) The word just “endikos”, means right.
 - 2) The apostle Paul concludes by vindicating the righteous character and justice of God, who will bring judgment on such unrighteous people.

Illustration

Justice Gray of the Supreme Court once said to a man who had appeared before him in one of the lower courts and had escaped conviction by some technicality: “I know that you are guilty and you know it, and I wish you to remember that one day you will stand before a better and wiser judge, and that there you will be dealt with according to Justice and not according to law.” #2899

Application

1. If Paul says God will hold the Jew responsible for the Scriptures, do we think that God will not hold people responsible for the gospel?

- a. People who have heard the gospel and rejected it.
 - b. People who embraced the gospel and walked away.
 - c. People in so called Christian Universities and churches, not believing the Bible to be the Inerrant and infallible word of God.
 - d. People who mock the Scriptures as God’s standard for life and practice.
 - e. Pastors and teachers who embrace heresy and teach it as the truth of the Gospel.
 - * “Thus says the LORD of hosts: “Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you. They make you worthless; They speak a vision of their own heart, Not from the mouth of the LORD. They continually say to those who despise Me, ‘The LORD has said, “You shall have peace”’; And to everyone who walks according to the dictates of his own heart, they say, ‘No evil shall come upon you.’” Jer. 23:16-17
2. The incredibly brash and arrogant words and statements of modern-day atheists who have a sense of smugness about them, as they say the Bible is a mere book and its words meaningless.
- a. They say that God did not create the world in six days.
 - b. They say there was no flood.
 - c. They say that man does not need salvation, he is not a sinner.

- d. They say that there is no heaven or hell.
 - e. They say that God did not choose Israel as His people, not delivered them from Egypt.
 - f. They say there is Satan.
 - g. Now having said all this they believe that they have made void or cancelled all these things out of existence, when in reality they still are true and exist.
 - h. If it were not so tragic, it would be quit funny, but what is at stake is their eternity!
* The fool (senseless or insane person) has said in his heart, literally, no God” Ps. 14:1
3. There are people, Pastors and missionaries that lie, steal, commit sexual sin and God has used them and is using them to bring many people to Christ.
- a. Yet some believe God will reward them.
 - b. Others know God will judge them.
 - c. Still others conclude that because God uses them to bring many to the Kingdom, that He winks at their sin.
* “It is a **fearful** thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” Heb. 10:31

The distortion of God’s righteousness is to be defended!

II. The description of man’s unrighteousness revealed. Rom. 3:9-18

- A. The apostle Paul reaffirmed the problem of man’s unrighteousness as universal. vs. 9
1. The problem is presented by another rhetorical question of comparison, “What then are we better than they? NO not at all!” vs. 9a-c
 - a. Who is the “we”, referring to?
 - 1) Some say to the Gentile.
 - 2) Others say Paul is including himself with the Jews, but that contradict his argument.
 - 3) The “we” is identified for us in verse eight, where Paul used it two times for the Christian and two times in verse nine.
 - b. Who are the “they” referring to? The Jew who does not believe or misunderstand God and His word!
 - 1) The entire section is dealing with the Jews. vs. 1-8
 - 2) The words “than they” are in italic, meaning that they are not in the original Greek text, but inserted for better understanding.
 2. The problem has already been stated by Paul and must be acknowledge by all mankind. vs. 9d
 - * “For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin.”

- a. The Jews and Gentiles have been previously charged guilty and under the wrath of God before the court of heaven. Rom. 1, 2
 - b. All are under sin.
 - 1) The root of sin nature.
 - 2) The fruit of sin.
- B.** The apostle Paul depicted the universal unrighteous rebellion of man against God. vs. 10-12
- * The Scriptures are the authority not man, and all quotes are not exact but general and Paul applies them as the Holy Spirit led.
- 1. There is none righteous. no, not one. vs. 10, Ps. 14:1, Eccl. 7:20
 - a. The word righteous “dikaios”, means to be right or do right.
 - b. The various forms of righteous and righteousness appear forty-five times in Romans.
 - c. The prophet Isaiah says that our righteousness is as filthy rags, describing a menstrual garment. Is. 64:6
 - 2. There is none who understands. vs. 11a, Ps. 14:2
 - a. The understanding is spiritual, understands “suniemi”, from the root to put together and make sense.

- b. The ways of God and the works of God.
- 3. There is none who seeks after God. vs. 11b, Ps. 14:2
 - a. The word seek “ekklino”, means to search for with the idea of a determined search.
 - b. The search is away from God.
- 4. They have all turned aside. vs. 12a, Ps. 14:3, Is. 53:6
 - a. The term is all inclusive.
 - b. The phrase turn aside “ekklino”, means to lean out or turn aside or deviate from the way of God, as prescribed.
- 5. They have together become unprofitable. vs. 12b, Ps. 14:3
 - a. The word unprofitable “achreioo”, means to make useless or render unserviceable.
 - b. The term is used for sour milk or rotten produce.
 - c. The charge is regarding the things of God, to God, man and self.
- 6. There is none who does good, no, not one. vs. 12c, Ps. 14:3
 - a. The reference is to acts of integrity.
 - b. The motive is always with oneself in mind.

- C. The apostle Paul also depicted the universal evil of man's unrighteousness towards man. vs. 13-15
1. Their throat is an open tomb. vs. 13a, Ps. 5:9
 - a. The word open "anoigo", is a perfect participle communicating it has been open and remains open.
 - b. The throat of man is a grave of constant stench of death coming forth.
 2. The tongue is used for practicing deceit. vs. 13b, Ps. 5:9
 - a. The tongue is a vicious member that sets the course of hell on fire.
 - * The beast behind the ivory cage!
 - b. The tongue is an unruly member.
 - * The proverbs have much to say about the mouth as well as James. Ja. 3
 3. The poison of asps is under their lips. vs. 13c, Ps. 140:3
 - a. The reference is to an Egyptian cobra, which is the most deadly of snakes.
 - b. The snake was the instrument of deception for Eve.
 4. Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. vs. 14, Ps. 10:7
 - a. They dishonor their fellow man.
 - b. They resent their fellow man.
 - * The Hebrew means fraud, Paul is quoting the LXX.

5. Their feet are swift to shed blood. vs. 15, Is. 59:7, Prov. 1:16
 - a. Their actions are life threatening.
 - b. They are quick to act.
- D. The apostle Paul depicted the universal destructive pattern of man's unrighteousness. vs. 16-18
1. Destruction and misery are in their ways. vs. 16, Is. 59:7
 - a. The end result of man without God is destruction to others and self.
 - * The word destruction "suntrimma" means that which is broken or shattered, ruined.
 - b. The process is filled with misery by living apart from God.
 - * Misery "talaiporia", hardship, trouble and calamity.
 - c. The reason is that they live out their sin nature.
 - * The word way "hodos", refers to their manner of thinking and their course of conduct.
 2. The way of peace they have not known. vs. 17, Is. 59:8
 - a. Man is a sinner and selfish, peace is foreign to him, look at man's history.
 - b. Man is empty always looking for some temporary peace or lives under

a false peace, ignoring or rejecting God.

3. There is no fear of God before their eyes. vs. 18, Ps. 36:1
 - a. This is the heart of the problem, not that man does not believe in God, but that though they know there is a God, they do not fear Him!
 - b. This is the foundation and first step toward wisdom. Prov. 1:9, 9:10

Illustration

There is no better example of the evidence of the universal depravity of man as Paul has just declared, than the exposure of Tiger Woods infidelity to his beautiful wife, shattering his public image by his what was in his heart and allowed to be lived out.

Application

1. The human race is fallen and depraved from birth, there is no exception.
 - a. The infant you brought home from the hospital will be provoked by your words of no.
 - b. There is not one person that can say they have never told a lie.
 - c. There is no person who can say I have never had a bad thought of lust, hate or murder.
 - * “Can the Ethiopian change his **skin** or the leopard its spots? Then may you also do

good who are accustomed to do evil.”
Jer. 13:23

2. The extent and unimaginable evil that the history of man has on record confirms the universal unrighteousness of man.
 - a. The horror of the Catholic Church by direct orders of the Pope cannot be ignored, to imprison, steal a person’s property, torture in the most cruel ways, against Christians who would not bow their knee to Rome, all in the name of God.
 - b. The death camps of Hitler’s Germany, should never be forgotten, as people were staved, tortured, experimented on surgically without anesthesia and put to death in gas chambers.
 - c. The modern-day murder of innocent children by abortion, has to be the greatest charge against America before the throne of God, as we have killed and continue to kill over 4,000 babies a day since 1973, about one-thousand more than were killed in the World Trade Center by our enemies.
 - d. Nothing has change with the evil heart of man before the flood, listen to the words of God.
 - 1) “Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. Gen. 5:5

2) “Then the LORD said in His heart, “I will never again curse the ground for man’s sake, although the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done.” Gen. 8:21

3. The matters of personal relations and social unrest is not only an American problem, but a global one, much like the days of Noah.

- a. Violence in our homes, schools and society is a normal thing.
- b. Sexual assaults, dates rapes are the norm.
- c. Home invasion, vandalism, identity theft happens every day.
- d. Murders by husbands, wives, children, gang retaliation, rode-rage or being a victim in a robbery happens every day in our city, state or nation.

* “For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.”
Tit. 3:3

The description of man’s unrighteousness is to be revealed!

III. The declaration of man’s guilt for unrighteousness pronounced. Rom. 3:19-20

A. The law speaks to those who live under law. vs. 19a-b

* “Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law.”

1. The word to know “oida”, means to know absolutely.
2. Those under the law means those under the jurisdiction or control of the law.

B. The purpose of the law was to stop the mouth of every person. vs. 19c

* “that every mouth may be stopped.”

1. The law accused them.
2. The Law condemned them.
3. The Law took away any defense they might have in mind.
4. The Law never found one exception.

C. The ultimate purpose of the Law was to prove the entire world guilty before God. vs. 19d

* “and all the world may become guilty before God.”

1. By the Law of Moses is the primary context of the verse, but certainly any and every other law.
2. By the law of creation.
3. By the law of conscience.
4. By the law of history.
5. By the law of morality.

* The words “stopped”, and “become” are both in the aorist, with finality!
Linski

D. There will be no flesh justified by the law before God. vs. 20a

* “Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight.”

1. His judgment will be all revealing.
2. His judgment will be perfect.

E. The law reveals man’s failure. vs. 20b

* “for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”

1. The word knowledge “epignosis”, means full and complete knowledge.
2. The law of Moses and general law accuse man of his failure to meet God’s standard of perfection.

Illustration

If each of us were taken to court and was put on trial to prove that they are not perfect or sinless, we would be found to be absolutely guilty by the overwhelming evidence in their life.

* This is the problem with all humanity, though you might find some better than others, some not as wicked as others, yet all humanity falls short of perfection!

Application

1. The law and sin condemns every person in the world and God has to judge sin, but God has made provisions for man to escape his wrath and be saved.

- a. By agreeing I am a sinner, under the wrath of God in need of a Savior through repentance to be born again. Jn. 3:3-5
- b. By understanding that there is but one way, name and mediator to save me, Jesus Christ. Jn. 14:6, Acts 4:12, 1Tim. 2:5

2. Every person will have a set number of years to repent of their sins and be saved.

- a. The majority of people come to Jesus in their youth.
- b. The older a person gets, the more difficult it is to be saved, due to a person’s set ways and evil heart.
- c. The person who dies without repenting and excepting Jesus as their Savior, will have no excuse or justification before God, from creation, conscience, history and the gospel.
* “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Rom. 3:23

3. The grace and compassion of God is open to all who will call on Him.

- a. Good moral people.
- b. Immoral people.
- c. Liars, thieves, adulterers and murders.
- d. Homo-sexual, bi-sexual, hetero-sexual.
- e. White, black, yellow, brown or red.
- g. Religious, atheist or agnostic.

* “And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children’s children to the third and the fourth generation.” Ex. 34:6-7

The declaration Of man’s guilt for unrighteousness is to be pronounced!

Conclusion

Paul ‘s final argument regarding the righteousness of God versus the unrighteousness of man bringing the concluding verdict of man’s guilt from three perspectives:

- I** The distortion of God’s righteousness was defended!
- II.** The description of man’s unrighteousness was revealed!
- III.** The declaration of man’s guilt for unrighteousness was pronounced!