

## March 8, 2026 – Order of Worship

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### TIME OF REFLECTION

“There is a price to pay for speaking the truth. There is a bigger price for living a lie.”

~Cornel West, philosopher, theologian and activist

“Everyone is a moon, and has a dark side which he never shows to anybody.”

~Mark Twain (1835-1910), from his 1897 travelogue *Following the Equator*

“Amiable agnostics will talk cheerfully about ‘man’s search for God.’ To me, as I then was, they might as well have talked about the mouse’s search for the cat.”

~C.S. Lewis (1898-1963), writer, professor, and literary scholar

“The Bible is the perpetual motion of the spirit, an ocean of meaning, its waves beating against man’s abrupt and steep shortcomings, its echo reaching into the blind alleys of his wrestling with despair.”

~Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907-1972), Polish-born rabbi-theologian in *God in Search of Man*

“The pharisee within usurps my true self whenever I prefer appearances to reality, whenever I am afraid of God, whenever I surrender the control of my soul to rules rather than risk living in union with Jesus, when I choose to look good and not be good, when I prefer appearances to reality.”

~Brennan Manning (1934-2013), author and former priest

“There is a vast difference between self-conviction and Holy Spirit-conviction. When God convicts, He gets specific with us about our sin... He uses specific Scriptures. And His kindness toward us leads to a hopeful conclusion of repentance and dependence. Self-conviction, and the conviction of the enemy, on the other hand, is wide-ranging, condemning, and defeatist. It leads back to self: ‘Try harder and do better’ ... It will lead us right back where we started – awash in guilt and condemnation.”

~Christine Hoover, author and speaker

“If Jesus is a wonderful Savior in every way except where we are the most hypocritical, then He is no Savior for us.”

~Ray Ortlund, author and minister

“God’s righteousness compels him... to have to judge the guilty. But then he offers forgiveness and says ‘I will not judge you according to your works.’ So... he sends his Son... so that now when he calls you his own... he has not compromised his righteousness.”

~Jackie Hill Perry, poet, writer, and hip-hop artist

**SERMON** – “Does God Have a Right to Judge?” – *Pastor Don Willeman*

**SERMON PASSAGE** – *Romans 3:1-9 (ESV)*

*Romans 2*

<sup>17</sup>But if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast in God <sup>18</sup>and know his will and approve what is excellent, because you are instructed from the law; <sup>19</sup>and if you are sure that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, <sup>20</sup>an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth— <sup>21</sup>you then who teach others, do you not teach yourself? While you preach against stealing, do you steal? <sup>22</sup>You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? <sup>23</sup>You who boast in the law dishonor God by breaking the law. <sup>24</sup>For, as it is written, “The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.”

<sup>25</sup>For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. <sup>26</sup>So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? <sup>27</sup>Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. <sup>28</sup>For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. <sup>29</sup>But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.

*Romans 3*

<sup>1</sup>Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? <sup>2</sup>Much in every way. To begin with, the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God. <sup>3</sup>What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God? <sup>4</sup>By no means! Let God be true though every one were a liar, as it is written,

“That you may be justified in your words, and prevail when you are judged.”

<sup>5</sup>But if our unrighteousness serves to show the righteousness of God, what shall we say? That God is unrighteous to inflict wrath on us? (I speak in a human way.) <sup>6</sup>By no means! For then how could God judge the world? <sup>7</sup>But if through my lie God’s truth abounds to his glory, why am I still being condemned as a sinner? <sup>8</sup>And why not do evil that good may come?—as some people slanderously charge us with saying. Their condemnation is just.

<sup>9</sup>What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin....