

Timeless Truth

ROMANS: CHAPTER THREE

WEEK THREE | JILL SNODGRASS



TIMELESS TEACHING |

- I. WE AS SINNERS ARE IN NEED OF BOTH THE LAW AND GRACE. (vs.1-8)
 - A. Without Scripture, we would have no knowledge of our Savior and no knowledge of our need for Him. We would be lost and dying without hope and, worst of all, unaware of our desperate, miserable state.
 - B. We need the law, His Holy Word to show us God's standard and His grace to live up to it in freedom and joy.
 - C. To know the Word, is to know God. And to obey it, is to love Him. Therefore, it's difficult to know Him or love Him very well, if we don't spend time with Him in it.
 - D. Grace is the very reason we can have a relationship with God. It renders religion useless. Instead of viewing everything in our lives from the perspective of following rules, grace allows us to be led by the Spirit and live through the eyes and the heart of Jesus.
 - E. Law and grace should come as a package deal. Both carry equal weight. And so as we walk in faith, we should keep them in their proper balance.
- II. WE AS SINNERS ARE SICK AND IN NEED OF A CURE. (vs. 9-20)
 - A. Sin is a sickness in our hearts that affects our entire body.

- B. This sickness is not about the bad things we have done, but about what we have become.
- C. Without knowledge of our sickness and acceptance of the Cure, there is not one who is completely healthy and righteous before God.
- D. God gave us the law so that we would see our sinfulness (how sick we really are), and in turn see our need for His Son, Jesus our Cure.

God knew of our miserable condition, knew we would never seek Him on our own, and knew that we ultimately run from Him. So, He pursued us. He continues to pursue and chase us. Because out of His love, He holds the Cure to our waywardness, our never ending desires and weaknesses. He loves us too much to leave us lost and defenseless.

III. WE AS SINNERS ARE IN NEED OF HEART CHANGING FAITH. (vs. 21-31)

- A. Just as we need to acknowledge that we are sinful and deserve God's wrath, we must also acknowledge that we do not have the power to make ourselves righteous before God.
- B. The righteousness of God is a gift of grace. One that we do not deserve. One that we cannot earn. And although this gift is free, it is not cheap.
- C. It is the work of Jesus Christ on a cross that this grace on God's part possible.
 - Jesus redeemed us through the shedding of His blood upon the cross.
 - For someone to escape the wrath of God, the judgment for their sin must be poured out on an innocent substitute. This is what Jesus did for us. He took our place upon that cross, dying the death we all deserve, and became the sacrifice of atonement. Propitiation means to turn God's wrath aside.
 - Through Christ's death on the cross, God justifies us, making us righteous in His sight so that we no longer face condemnation.

D. It is simply through faith in Jesus Christ that we are made righteous in God's sight.

For faith to become personal and powerful, it is both receiving and unwrapping the gift the Giver has given us.

Anybody can believe in God. Even the demons know who is Christ is. But when faith becomes action, and we put God truths into practice, the good news of the gospel shifts from our heads to our hearts, and we come alive with Christ. Our hearts stop beating for sin and start beating for Him.

WEEK THREE

ROMANS: CHAPTER THREE

FOR EVERYONE HAS SINNED; WE ALL FALL SHORT OF GOD'S GLORIOUS STANDARD. YET GOD, WITH UNDERSERVED KINDNESS, DECLARES THAT WE ARE RIGHTEOUS. HE DID THIS THROUGH CHRIST JESUS WHEN HE FREED US FROM THE PENALTY FOR OUR SINS.

ROMANS 3:23-24 NLT

DAY ONE

ROMANS 3:1-2 | Our Greatest Possession



TIMELESS TRUTH |

YES, THERE ARE GREAT BENEFITS! FIRST OF ALL, THE JEWS WERE ENTRUSTED WITH THE WHOLE REVELATION OF GOD.

ROMANS 3:2 NLT

Read chapter 3 verses 1-2.

Paul proves the point that God has no favorites. Whether Jew or Gentile, all stand guilty before Him. But why then, did God lower Himself and make the Jewish nation His own special possession? What advantages, if any, were there to being Jewish? This was the question some Jews were asking.

Honestly, we can ask this same question today. Is there an advantage to being a Baptist, Catholic, or Presbyterian? As the Jews were questioning the point in circumcision, we could ask, what's the point in baptism? Is there an advantage in going to church, partaking in the Lord's Supper, and any other religious activities?

Basically, the answer to all these questions is yes. There are many advantages to these things as they are signs that point to Who we belong to, and are meant to draw us closer to Him. But the advantage that Paul says trumps them all, is possessing the holy Word of God. The explanation that Paul gives to these Jews applies to us as well. God called and chose us, to give us the revelation of Himself through His holy Word that through us, the world would come to know Him too.

In your own words, describe why God's word is the most valuable possession we own and our greatest advantage.

Look up the following verses and write one fact next to each that describes God's Word.

Isaiah 40: 8 _____

Psalms 119: 105 _____

Psalms 33:4 _____

Psalms 119: 111 _____

Psalms 119: 89 _____

Psalms 119: 114 _____

Psalms 119: 103 _____

John 1:1 _____

1 John 1:1 _____

Isaiah 55: 10 -11 states that God accomplishes all that He desires through His holy Word and that it will achieve the purpose for which it was sent. These verses tell us that God is constantly working through His Word.

Now that we have seen what God's word is, let's see what God's word does and how He works through His Word.

Look up the following verses. Describe what God's word has the power to do.

James 1: 18 and 1 Peter 1:23:

2 Timothy 3: 16-17 and Hebrews 4: 12:

John 17: 17:

Psalms 16: 11; 119: 104; and 143: 10:

In light of these verses, how have you seen God's work in your life through His Word?

When it comes to growing in our knowledge of God and deepening our relationship with Him, how crucial is God's word?

Given the importance of spending time in His word, what's the value in making time for it every day or at least on a consistent basis?

When we truly recognize the Bible for its worth and proclaim it as the inerrant revelation of God Himself, we will desire it like a hungry baby crying for its bottle. The word of God will become our daily substance for life. Just as babies need milk and we need food, when the Bible becomes our *daily nourishment*, we as believers will grow in our knowledge of God, discern His will for our lives, and our relationship with Him will deepen.

Even Jesus—who is both the Word of Life and the Bread of Life—told the devil, “The Scriptures say, ‘People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

In doing so, God will not be this far off deity, but instead, become our heavenly Father, revealing His love for us in real and tangible ways.

PRAYER MOMENT |

In your prayer time today, thank the Lord for the gift of His holy Word. Reflect and assess whether or not you revere His Word as your most precious possession. Ask God to reveal more of Himself through His Word that you would grow and deepen in your relationship with Him, craving more and more of Him every day.

DAILY REMINDER |

As you go about your day, remember all what God's Word has the power to do. Know that God who began a good work in you will see it to completion. Seek Him for the work that He wants to continue to do in and through you.

FURTHER READING |

Romans chapter 3

Psalm 119: 33-48; 72-80; 80-112

"I believe the Bible is the best gift God has ever given to man. All the good from the Savior of the world is communicated to us through this book."

Abraham Lincoln

DAY TWO

ROMANS 3:3-8 | God's Faithfulness, Fairness, & Righteousness



TIMELESS TRUTH |

TRUE, SOME OF THEM WERE UNFAITHFUL; BUT JUST BECAUSE THEY WERE UNFAITHFUL, DOES THAT MEAN GOD WILL BE UNFAITHFUL? 4 OF COURSE NOT! EVEN IF EVERYONE ELSE IS A LIAR, GOD IS TRUE. AS THE SCRIPTURES SAY ABOUT HIM,

“YOU WILL BE PROVED RIGHT IN WHAT YOU SAY, AND YOU WILL WIN YOUR CASE IN COURT.”

ROMANS 3:3-4 NLT

Read Romans 3:3-8

Since the Jewish nation was called and set apart for God, and had retained His laws from the time of Abraham, they thought they had God all figured out. But when Jesus came, He changed everything! So now comes their questions and misunderstandings. Since everything in their lives revolved around God's law, it makes perfect sense that His law was at the center of all their concerns and issues. They didn't fully understand that through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, He fulfilled the law and formed a better covenant.

The Jews were essentially saying, if some Jews don't believe in Jesus and put their faith in Him, then would God not keep His eternal covenant He made to the Jews, proving Him unfaithful.

The Jews insisted that God must save them because of His promises to their nation. But God is faithful and He will save those He has promised to save, but not apart from faith in Christ.

Have you ever questioned God's faithfulness? I'm sure at one time or another we all have, or at least have been tempted to. Especially in those dark, hard times, when we didn't know how we would make it through. But somehow, we did. We always do. Why? Because, **God is faithful**. Exodus 34: 6 says: The LORD passed in front of Moses, calling out, “Yahweh! The LORD! The God of compassion and mercy! I am slow to anger and filled with unfailing love and faithfulness.

Read Deuteronomy 7: 7-11

In verse 9, God says that He is the faithful God who keeps His covenant for a _____ generations and lavishes His _____ love on those who _____ Him and _____ His commands.

Not only does God, Himself, (who cannot lie) declare Himself faithful, but all throughout Scripture His faithful servants like Moses, Abraham, David, Isaiah, and Paul to name a few all attest to His faithfulness. He is who He says He is and does what He says He will do!

In fact, it's through Christ that God can and will make good on all His promises. As 2 Corinthians 1: 20 says: For all of God's promises have been fulfilled in Christ with a resounding "Yes!" And through Christ, our "Amen" (which means "Yes") ascends to God for his glory. Paul is reminding the Corinthian church of God's faithfulness!

In what ways can you attest to God's faithfulness in your life?

Explain how Jesus is the embodiment of God's faithfulness. In other words, how did Christ fulfill God's promises to humanity?

Another fact of God that the Jews questioned was God's fairness. The thought was that since God established these high moral demands, knowing that humanity would ultimately fail, then isn't His wrath unjustified, making Him unfair.

Look up the following verses about God and His justice. Deut. 32:4; Psalm 9:8; Psalm 45:6; Psalm 97:2; and Psalm 119: 142.

In light of these truths about God, how did His law point to His just and righteous character?

By God giving them His holy law, explain why this was actually an act of grace on God's part.

Living in an evil world makes life hard and confusing at times to the point many ask: Where is the God of justice? Life can throw some pretty tough punches and some low blows, making us very susceptible to doubt God's faithfulness and fairness. But *God is always faithful, fair, and righteous.*

Read Psalm 36.

How can knowing these truths in this Psalm help us in the difficult trials of life to trust and rely on God's faithfulness, fairness, and righteousness?

PRAYER MOMENT |

In your prayer time today, spend time reflecting on the vastness of God's unfailing love and faithfulness, the immenseness and mightiness of His righteousness, and the depth of His justice. Ponder the ways He daily demonstrates each one to you personally. Praise Him for His amazing, wonderful love and care for you.

DAILY REMINDER |

Remember that no matter how evil this world becomes, we have a loving, just, and righteous King who will one day soon right every wrong and restore what the enemy has stolen.

FURTHER READING |

The faithfulness of God: Exodus 6: 2-8
Nehemiah 9: 5-37

"Our God and Father is the same faithful God that he ever was—as willing as ever to prove himself the living God, in our day as formerly, to all who put their trust in him."

George Miller

DAY THREE

ROMANS 3:9-20 | Our Only Cure



TIMELESS TRUTH |

AS THE SCRIPTURES SAY, “NO ONE IS RIGHTEOUS—NOT EVEN ONE. NO ONE IS TRULY WISE; NO ONE IS SEEKING GOD.

ROMANS 3:10-11 NLT

Read Romans 3:9-20

This section in chapter 3 depicts the condition of every human heart void of Jesus Christ and the grace He offers. It conveys what theologians fittingly call man’s “total depravity”. We as humans do not have the ability to understand, please, or seek God in any way. Not even in just one way.

What’s worse, not only we do we not seek Him, but are inclined to turn away from, even run from Him. All because of what innately resides in each of our hearts. Sin.

How is sin like an incurable disease?

Read Genesis 3: 17-19.

We see the seriousness of sin based on the consequences in God’s judgment of it. All of creation, including the environment was affected by it. If God took sin so seriously, then why is it important that we do the same?

As Christians saved by grace, why is it crucial to continually acknowledge and confess our sins before God?

Read the short event in Matthew 8:1-3

What incurable disease did the man have? _____

As the man came before Jesus, what was the attitude of his heart and how can you tell?

What was Jesus' response to the man? _____

How was the man healed? _____

From this short scene, we behold the similarities of this man's plight with leprosy, and ours with sin. Just as the man recognized his sad, miserable state and inability to cure himself, he also understood the seriousness of his condition. Not only could he infect someone else, but death was imminent. It was upon acknowledgement of this truth that he sought out the only One who could cure him. *Jesus is our only Cure.*

If we never see the seriousness of our sin, we will never fully turn to our Savior for help and forgiveness. Like this man, we must come humbly before Him, fully believing that He is able. And when we do so, Jesus doesn't just show us He is able to heal, help, and forgive us, but that He is more than willing to.

In Romans 3: 19 and 20, what does Paul say is the reason as to why God gave us His law?

On judgment day, all will stand silent before a just and holy God. Just as Job was silenced. As Isaiah was silenced. As Habakkuk was silenced. No one will be able to offer up excuses as did Adam and Eve. Only those who have put their faith and trust in Jesus will be able to enter into the gates of heaven.

Lastly, read John 9: 39-41.

What was meaning behind Jesus' words? What lesson is to be learned here?

PRAYER MOMENT |

In your prayer time today, ask God to point out anything in you that offends Him. Then reflect on why it's an offense against Him and its seriousness. Acknowledge those sins before God and ask for His help to rid them from your life.

DAILY REMINDER |

As you go about your day remember how Jesus is always ready, able, and willing to help and forgive us when we call on Him in times of need. Also with each time you recall His faithfulness and goodness, give Him the praise He deserves!

FURTHER READING |

Romans chapter 3

Genesis chapter 3

John 9: 1- 41

*"Be assured that there is no sin you have ever committed
that the blood of Jesus Christ cannot cleanse."*

Billy Graham

DAY FOUR

ROMANS 3:21-31 | God's Undeserved Kindness



TIMELESS TRUTH |

FOR EVERYONE HAS SINNED; WE ALL FALL SHORT OF GOD'S GLORIOUS STANDARD. YET GOD, WITH UNDESERVED KINDNESS, DECLARES THAT WE ARE RIGHTEOUS. HE DID THIS THROUGH CHRIST JESUS WHEN HE FREED US FROM THE PENALTY FOR OUR SINS.

ROMANS 3:23-24 NLT

Read Romans 3:21-31.

As we enter into this section of chapter 3, Paul shines some glorious rays of hope on the darkness of sin in our hearts. He does so by illuminating the way on how to be made right with God (justification). When God justifies sinners, it's not that He miraculously transforms us from bad people into becoming good people, rather, God our Judge, has declared us legally righteous freed from the responsibility of the law we broke. His Son, Jesus has taken our punishment upon Himself for the injustice we committed. For if we have broken one law, we have broken them all.

How does knowing this truth make you feel?

In your own words, explain how the gift of salvation demonstrates the goodness of the Giver and not of those who receive it.

Read Psalm 32: 1-2.

What emotions were David feeling when he wrote these verses?

These verses speak of justification. When we are made righteous in God's sight, our relationship with Him is restored, our guilt is removed, and our sins are put out of sight, never to be remembered again. How can this gift **not** bring us joy and fill our hearts with gratitude for our Savior!

Now read verse 24 in our text again.

What is this undeserved kindness of God called and why is it underserved?

Grace is a gift and the source of our justification. In other words, our justification (our righteousness) would not be possible without the grace shown to us by Christ. He shows us this grace in two ways.

Think of the salvation triangle I showed last Tuesday. The first act of grace is redemption. Christ redeems (purchases) us through the shedding of His blood. The concept of redemption goes way back to Exodus in the Old Testament, when God commanded that firstborn sons and firstborn male animals be presented to Him, and then be bought back from Him.

Read Exodus 13: 11-16

In verses 14 -16 what does God say is the reason or purpose behind this requirement?

This process of having to redeem their first born sons also pointed to a future day, when Christ would buy us back by paying the price for our sin once and for all, through the shedding of His own blood.

Read Ephesians 1: 6-8

Explain why our redemption is both free and costly.

The second act of grace shown to us by Christ is known as **propitiation** (atonement for our sin). Although propitiation means to turn God's wrath aside, this doesn't mean that we sinners somehow appease God's divine wrath and He looks the other way. No, God, Himself, satisfies His own wrath through the death of His Son on a cross. Jesus became the atonement for our sin. He took our place on that cross, becoming our substitute—dying the death we deserve. We first see the concept of propitiation in Leviticus chapter 16 in the Old Testament.

Read Hebrews 9: 11-15 and 1 John 2: 2 to compare the difference in our being made righteous under the old system of law versus when Jesus fulfilled the law.

Why is Jesus a better high priest and a better mediator of a better covenant?

Without the gracious acts of redemption and propitiation, our justification (our righteousness) would not be possible. Again, notice that in regards to our salvation, both of these acts are done on Christ's part. Tomorrow, we will look at the concept that brings this gift of grace to life in our lives (our part).

PRAYER MOMENT |

In your prayer time today, thank God for His undeserved kindness that is His grace. Thank Him for His gracious acts of redeeming you and becoming your substitute on the cross, taking your sin and shame upon His sinless body. May your prayer time ignite a burst of joy and thankfulness inside your heart that overflows from you throughout your day!

DAILY REMINDER |

As you go about your day, remember that Christ set you free from the penalty of your sins. Reflect on His goodness (the fact that he has taken your punishment upon Himself for the injustice you committed) and the freedom you have in Him.

FURTHER READING |

Redemption in the Old Testament Exodus 6: 1-8; 13: 2; 11-16

Propitiation in the Old Testament Leviticus 16: 1-19

"I hold firmly that the justification of a believer is a finished, perfect, and complete work; and that the weakest saint, though he may not know and feel it, is as completely justified as the strongest."

J. C. Ryle

DAY FIVE

ROMANS 3:25 | A Personal & Powerful Faith



TIMELESS TRUTH |

WE ARE MADE RIGHT WITH GOD BY PLACING OUR FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST. AND THIS IS TRUE FOR EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES, NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE.

ROMANS 2:22 NLT

Today's focus is how our faith becomes *personal* and *powerful*, and it all hinges on a genuine, active belief in Jesus. I know we are in Romans, but today, I want to start off by taking a brief detour and travel to 2 Corinthians.

Read 2 Corinthians 1:20-24

These verses reveal so very much about faith being personal and powerful. Paul is reprimanding the Corinthian church for not following his instructions in his previous letter and tries to help the church correct its many problems, which ultimately stem from the Corinthians not practicing the Truths of the gospel they've been taught. Therefore, Paul encourages them to stand firm for Christ and put their faith into practice.

In verse 21, who does Paul say helps us to stand firm for Christ? _____

In verse 22, Paul says that *God identified us as his own* by placing the _____ in our hearts as the first installment that guarantees everything He has promised us.

Basically, it's through Christ that God can and will make good on all His promises. (vs. 20)

How does our faith become personal and powerful with the presence of God, His promises, and the help of the Holy Spirit in our lives?

The Spirit continually draws us closer to Christ and helps us serve Him in the ways that God has personally and purposefully created us for.

Paul encourages them to put their *faith into practice*—not by his or anybody else's authority, but by Christ's authority over them. God is the Author and Finisher of our faith. He alone is our Lord. The Corinthians were known for jumping from one fad to the next. And Paul did not want their faith in Christ to become their next fad. Our faith is not to be domineered or influenced by anything or anyone.

Why is it important to take ownership of our own faith?

Paul says, “For it is by *your own faith* that you stand firm.” *Faith becomes personal* when we take ownership of the gift we’ve been given. One clear way to do that, is allowing only God’s authority and the power of the Holy Spirit to direct our lives.

Though Christ offers the gift of salvation to everyone, how does this gift become personal to and for you?

What does it mean to put your faith into practice?

Now, let’s travel back to Romans chapter 3.

Read Romans 3: 25.

For me, the word in this verse that jumps off the page is, *believe*. Do we believe what we know to be true, because it’s what we’ve been taught? Or, do we believe what we know to be true, because we have personally experienced those truths come to life in our lives?

For example, we’ve been taught the alphabet early on in life from A to Z. We’ve been taught what each letter looks and sounds like. But these facts, these truths didn’t mean anything until we put them into action/practice. Once we did, words came to life. We were able to read and write—something we couldn’t do before. We’ve become enlightened and empowered. Our whole world completely changed!

In the same way, maybe you’ve been taught about Jesus and the gospel since childhood. But do you believe these truths to be true, because that’s what’s been ingrained in you—it’s all you know? Or, have you actually applied these facts (the gospel of Jesus Christ) by faith, and experienced Jesus come to life in your life? Have you experienced personally the enlightenment and empowerment that only Jesus can bring? Has your whole world been completely changed by Him?

If you have put your faith in action, applying the facts of the gospel in your life, list the ways you have personally seen Jesus come to life in your life? In other words, how is Jesus real to you?

What personal attributes of His have you experienced?

The beautiful thing about faith, is that when we put it into practice in our lives, it does something for us. Read verses 27 and 28. What do these verses say that faith does?

Faith empties us of our pride (no one can boast). Faith frees us from the law and good works (as means to salvation). And faith releases us from being slaves to sin. Rather, faith compels us to be slaves for Christ Jesus.

When we place our faith in Jesus Christ (believing and trusting in Him to save us) faith becomes *personal* and *powerful*. It is the Lord who personally handed you this personalized gift of salvation. He is wanting you, to receive it, unwrap it, and enjoy it with Him now, and for all of eternity.

When our faith is personal and powerful, it becomes an ongoing, interactive relationship with God, our Heavenly Father. And it's through this relationship that we gain our purpose in this life, and our destiny in eternity with Him forever.

PRAYER MOMENT |

In your prayer time today, spend some time reflecting on your own faith. Is your faith based on knowledge or personal experience of that knowledge? Is there evidence in your life of an ongoing, active relationship with God?

DAILY REMINDER |

Remember that at the end of each day (and at the end of your life) all that really matters to God is your personal faith in Him. For no one will be able to offer up excuses.

FURTHER READING |

Romans chapter 3

The Holy Spirit: John 14: 16-18; 15:26; 16: 8-11; Ephesians 1: 13-14

*"Unless God is revealed to us through
personal experience, we can never really
know God."*

Billy Graham