

Introduction

The writer in Chapters 1 & 2 has proven the world to be under sin; guilty of sin and man can not free themselves. But God. In Chapter 3, righteousness comes by believing; a righteousness from God Himself and man is thus counted righteous.

Verse Commentary

Verse 1 *What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?*

Circumcision was a sign or token of the Abrahamic Covenant; an expression of separation unto God. As a result of being set apart unto God, they were given the law and oracles and therefore the promises and covenants.

Verse 2 *Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.*

To be given these oracles opened Israel up to any number of blessings such as guidance, protection, various teachings of health and learning. They learned to communicate with God and to share the blessings of God with others.

Verse 3 *For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?*

So does our unbelief make God unfaithful? Absolutely not.

2 Timothy 2:13 *If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.*

Let God be true (sovereign). What we do or do not do does not change the faithfulness of God.

Let God be true and every man a liar.

Romans 2:2 *But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.*

Psalms 51:4 *Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.*

Verse 4 *God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in Thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.*

God forbid! It is impossible for God to be otherwise than true.

Romans 3:26 *To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*

We must or should always behold the reality that God is absolute truth and sovereign; God should be viewed as justified in all He does. God is proven righteous in

Verse 5 *But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man)*

Our unrighteousness establishes, by comparison, the righteousness of God. Does this mean that our unrighteousness has merit? No, God is correct to take vengeance.

Verse 6 *God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?*

“God forbid” meaning “by no means!” It is by these principles of righteousness in God that He will judge the world, and the church. All men will understand that God is absolute in His righteousness and integrity.

Verse 7 *For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto His glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner?*

The lie Paul is accused of teaching is that man is saved by grace without the works of flesh. These Jews were upset because he said "God was going to pour out wrath on them." (**Romans 1:18**). Paul is teaching them to repent and turn to God but these deny being sinners.

Verse 8 *And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just.*

The teaching of grace was that if they would repent, they would be forgiven; but they slanderously said of Paul, "you are saying let us do evil that grace may abound!" Their condemnation/judgment is just because of their refusal to repent.

Verse 9 *What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;*

Many moral Jews were accusing immoral brothers and Gentiles of being sinners, feeling of themselves they were righteous because of morality. Paul states that he had proved in chapters 1 & 2 that all are under sin.

- **Galatians 3:22** *But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.*

Verse 10 *As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:*

This indictment is God's conclusion; this is why Jesus came to bear our sin and make us righteous. Man is unrighteous and philosophy or science will never solve sin problems.

- See **Ps 14:2&3** *The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*

Verse 11 *There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.*

The solemn point here is man did not recognize their problem. The same is true today and God is gracious and sends preachers to show us ...and we will not receive them.

- **Ezek.22:30** *And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.*

Verse 12 *They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*

- **1 Corinthians 2:14** *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

The condition of man is that he is blind to his sin; but God has given His spirit to guide us into truth

- **John 16:13** *Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth; for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak; and He will shew you things to come.*
- **Is 58:1** *Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.*

Verse 13 *Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:*

Paul is quoting from **Psalm 5:9** and **140:3**. Medical doctors say the throat and tongue denote the state of health of individuals. These scriptures are seeing man through God's eyes.

- **Psalm 5:9** *For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is very wickedness; their throat is an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue.*
- **Psalm 140:3** *They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; adders' poison is under their lips.*

Verse 14 *Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:*

- **Ps.10:7** *His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity.*
- **James 3:8-10** *But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. 9. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. 10. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.*

Verse 15 *Their feet are swift to shed blood:*

- **Isaiah 59: 7** *Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths.*

Verse 16 *Destruction and misery are in their ways:*

We have seen this in the Middle East. Terrorist gangs rage and kill until they drive peace loving people out of country

Verse 17 *And the way of peace have they not known:*

- **Is 59:8** *The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.*

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

If anyone doubts the fall of man and his total depravity, one only needs to read these passages of Romans 3. The Old Testament speaks of the same.

- **Gen 6:11** *The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.*

Verse 19 *Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.*

This is summarizing the expression of the last chapter and applying it to the whole world, thus proving the whole world is guilty of sin before God.

Verse 20 *Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*

The law required the effort of the flesh to keep it and scripture says no good thing is in the flesh. This verse is telling us what the rest of Romans will be saying: Righteousness cannot be achieved by self effort, only by faith.

Verse 21 *But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;*

The effort and purpose of the Apostle Paul in chapters 1:28 to 3:20 was to show the world guilty of sin and helpless to set themselves free as well as find the righteousness of God. But God came on the scene through Jesus and brought righteousness to mankind.

Verse 22 *Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:*

This describes the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ. It is given to all who believe whether Jew or Gentile. It is God's righteousness given freely to man. I think this is wonderful!

Verse 23 *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*

- **Romans 11:32** *For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all.*
- **Gal.3:22** *But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.*

Verse 24 *Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:*

Through faith, we participate in this righteousness which is by grace alone. This is a great blessing of God that we can never repay.

Verse 25 *Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;*

Propitiation ... In this word there are two Greek meanings

- 1: "Hilasterion" which is the place of sacrifice
- 2: "Hilasmos" which is sacrifice

The reason to consider the two meanings in the Old Testament was because the hilasterion was used of the mercy seat.

- **Hebrews 9:5** *And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.*
- **Leviticus 16:14** *And He shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall He sprinkle of the blood with His finger seven times.*

Also this same word used in the following:

- **1 John 2:2** *And He is the propitiation(mercyseat) for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*
- **1 John 4:10** *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation(mercyseat) for our sins.*

Therefore we conclude that this sacrifice included those under law (**Hebrews 9:15**) and those from Adam to Moses.

- **Romans 5:13** *For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.*

- **Hebrews 9:15** *And for this cause He is the mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.*

As one who is sacrificed for sin, Jesus gave Himself for the whole world,

- **John 1:29** *The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*

Verse 26 *To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*

That the righteousness of Christ becomes ours.

- **1 Corinthians 1: 30** *But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:*
- **2 Corinthians 5:21** *For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.*

This doesn't mean we become righteous independently of Christ, but because we are IN Christ, we are righteous.

Verse 27 *Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.*

Without faith, it is impossible to please God. Faith is a gift of God and becomes our access to all God has for us.

- **Romans 5:2** *By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

Verse 28 *Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.*

The word "justified" and the word "righteous" come from same word. Man is declared righteous by believing!

- **Ephesians 2:8-9** *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

Verse 29 *Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:*

Verse 30 *Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.*

Verse 31 *Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law*

Looking at these last three together, we see God justifying all who will believe, both Jew and Gentile; making them righteous by faith in Christ. The Law could not justify because in order to keep the law, man would need divine strength. Scripture says the law was weak through the flesh. Therefore God sent His Son in likeness of sinful flesh and condemned sin in flesh. Thus, as we obey and walk in the spirit, we are not only pleasing to God but righteous in our walk.