



PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

ROMANS 3:9-20

NO ONE IS RIGHTEOUS

March 21, 2021

INTRODUCTION:

CHAPTER 3:1-8 Paul addresses the questions of the religionist Jew who would say: *if the Jew is condemned along with the heathen, then what advantage is there of being a Jew? or what profit of being circumcised?* (**3:1**).

Because they all thought they were good enough—they were the chosen nation of God and circumcision was the sign of Israel's Covenant relationship with God. The promise of God to Abraham was that his seed (the Jewish nation)—having the right nationality, the right heritage would be the children of God. But, Paul had said that there was no difference between the Jew and Gentile, or a religionist in being circumcised or baptized, or a church member. He contended that there are many privileges which God has granted to Israel, and one of them was that He committed the oracles (Laws) of God to them (**3:2**). These Laws were the custodians of these Old Testament Scriptures.

Paul continues with a second argument that was brought: *'What if some did not believe? And in their unbelief would that make the faith of God (His promise) of non-effect (break it)?'* (**3:3**). *Does unbelief void God's promises—making God a liar?*

Paul renders, **God forbid**, meaning of course not! He continues to say, *"Let God be true. Though everyone else is a liar, God is not!"* He gave them scripture from the Old Testament, **Psalm 51:4** concerning David when he confessed that *"it was only against God that he had sinned and done this evil."* Why? - *"...that thou mightiest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest"* (**3:4**) — Meaning, when we are judged we want to be justified (correct) in being right in what we say and prevail by being overcomers when we're judged.

3:5 Now consider this: *"But if our unrighteousness commend (highlights) the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance (to inflict wrath)? (I speak as a man)"* Another translation: *"If our evil deeds show how right God is, then what can we say? Is it wrong for God to become angry and punish us?"* (CEV).

Therefore, *by God judging the world because of one's sin is He showing that unrighteousness cannot stand;* it's not saying that God needs us to show Him unrighteousness. It's for us to see our unrighteousness. God does not twist scripture to say that He has to prove or confirm His righteousness. He does not void His Word by helping us out of our unrighteous. In no way does this mean that God places an approval upon sin of any nature. **God forbid!: for then how shall God judge the world?** (**3:6**).

3:7 *For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner?*

While Paul is speaking as a man; he is also speaking as a sinful man. Therefore, if he lies and the moral truth of God abounds (flourishes) for His glory, why is he (a sinful man) judged a sinner. It's because man is a sinner. Paul talks about our unrighteousness in verse 5. There are consequences to unrighteousness; there are consequences to a lie whether it shows God's glory or not. He does not give a license to sin! It's contrary to God's truth! We are not giving God glory through a lie, God would be denying His very nature of love if He did not judge the sinner.

So, (**3:8**) says *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.* Another translation: *"And some people even slander us by claiming that we say, 'The more we sin, the better it is!' Those who say such things deserve to be condemned"* (NLT). Some even say, *'if I wouldn't do some wrong, I wouldn't have anything to pray for.'* We don't want evil circumstances to come, so good may come. Paul speaks of being under grace in Romans 6:14-15 where our sins are pardoned and ourselves are justified. We would be condemned to eternal damnation if it wasn't for Jesus Christ!



PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

I. THE POWER OF SIN ROMANS 3:9

LESSON:

3:9 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;— This Scripture says, *"What does all this mean? Does it mean that we Jews are better off than the Gentiles? No, it doesn't! Jews, as well as Gentiles, are ruled by sin, just as I have said."* This accusation is against all mankind. All are under sin showing us the power of sin—in both Jew and Gentile. The words *"under sin"* means, to be subject to the power of or under the authority of, and penalty of. There are consequences when you're under sin. Just because the religionist has a Bible ▪ profess God ▪ know God's Will ▪ study the Word of God ▪ guide and teach others ▪ know the truth but do not obey God's Word is a red flag and that this is not acceptable to God. The answer is a strong exclamation: No! Not at all! The religionist Jew is under sin just as much as the Gentiles are under sin. To hear this really shocked the religionists Jew. No one is exempt. All are guilty before God. And remember, a man outside of Jesus Christ is under the power of sin, and he is helpless to escape from it by himself. There is a contrast between being *"under sin"* and being *"under grace."*

II. THE PERVASIVENESS OF SIN ROMANS 3:10-18

3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:— The Scriptures plainly endorse and prove the fact that there is not a single man that is upright, innocent, righteous; no, not one. **Ps.14:1** clinches this argument. This means no human being on his own does any good that merits salvation. There is none that's righteous (moral; good) compared with God's own perfection. There is a **"pervasive"** (widespread persistent) issue of sin. And it began to invade in the Garden through Adam's disobedience causing man to have a sinful nature.

1. A sinful nature is unrighteous. *"There is none righteous, no not one."* Our unrighteous thoughts, word, and acts come from our sinful nature. Therefore, a key word in this epistle is righteousness, which is a criterion by which sin is judged. If it wasn't for Jesus Christ, I don't know where we'd be.

3:11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. Also from **Psalm 14:2**— *"The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek."*

2. A sinful nature is ignorant. *"There is none that understand."* The world is totally lacking in spiritual discernment and incapable of spiritual understanding. We need the wooing of the Holy Spirit. Man has a sinful nature that's ignorant of spiritual truths.
3. A sinful nature is indifferent and selfish. *"There is none that seek after God."* They do not search after the only living and true God, because men want gods that allow them to do their own thing.

3:12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Still coming from **Psalm 14:3** where it covers the foolishness of men. Man has not only missed the mark, but he has also perverted the path—all turned aside. It is a picture of a camel caravan crossing the desert which has strayed from the route and cannot return to the proper path. Likewise, man has lost his way by deviating from God's prescribed route of righteousness. We find that that's what a sinful nature would do.

4. A sinful nature is crooked: meaning *"They are all gone out of the way";* lean out, turn away, turn aside from God— from the way that leads to God, to another way. *"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God"* Rom.3:23. They do not follow God nor pursue the right way to God. They are not straight with God; therefore, they take another path, another way.
5. A sinful nature is useless: meaning *"They are together become unprofitable."* This means to become worthless, useless, sour, and bad.
6. A sinful nature is evil: meaning *"There is none that doeth good, no, not one."* The word *"good"* means moral goodness, kindness, graciousness, gentleness, justice. All men fail in being good toward God and their neighbor. They fail in being kind, gracious, gentle, and just. So, when the Word says, *"No one does good, no, not one"*, it's like saying No one deserves to be saved! So, man is viewed as useless, rotten, and corrupted when compared to the righteousness of Christ. But God... But, God sent His Only Begotten Son because He so loved the world, not because we deserved that love.

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

3:13 Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:— Paul now turns his attention to men's words (3:13-14) and the chief outlets in which the sinner displays his sin. They speak through their throat, tongues, lips, and mouth.

TONGUE

7. A sinful tongue is foul and corrupt, meaning "*their throat is an open sepulchre*" (grave), and the apostle graphically portrays the conversation of the wicked by likening it to the filth that arises from their mouths with the stench of the open sepulcher. An open grave is foul, and it is a symbol of corruption. So, the man with an obscene mouth is foul (stinks), spues off-colored dirty jokes), polluted, filthy which eats and eats away at his character; and thereby kills the character, detestable, profane, dishonorable, and offensive.
8. A sinful tongue is deceitful, meaning "*their tongues have used deceit.*" "*Deceit*" is a continuous action, meaning they kept on deceiving: hiding and camouflaging their thoughts and feelings and behavior. They kept seeking to protect themselves or to get whatever they were after.
9. A sinful tongue is piercing and poisonous, meaning "*their lips were just as a deadly cobra snake.*" The poison of asps is under their lips. The idea is that the tongues of some people have a diabolical nature; they are filled with so much malice that they set out to inflict punishment. A poisonous tongue...
 - o talks and gossips about...
 - o desires to cause suffering...
 - o inserts and spreads venom...
 - o strikes out against...
 - o lies in wait to strike...
 - o seeks to hurt and destroy...

MAN'S

3:14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:— Man's mouth was created to speak the truth of God and praise Him, but Psalm 10:7 indicates that a man's mouth has continually been perverted to speak vile cursing and bitterness that swears allegiance to Satan and praises him. You do not have to teach a man to curse. It's the common expression of the bitterness within him that is rooted in personal sin.

10. A sinful tongue is full of cursing causing...
 - o Men to use profanity and swear. They curse both God and man. Their cursing may range from what society considers to be a mild word of slang, to using God's name in vain.
 - o Man's mouth to be full of bitterness. His tongue is often sharp, resentful, cynical, cold, harsh, intense, distasteful, and unpleasant. Any expression involving any of these is sin to God. God desires men to be filled with love and joy, and peace.

ACTIONS

3:15 Their feet are swift to shed blood:— Paul now turns his attention to man's deeds; his actions; and the impact of those actions. Man's feet were really created to carry the gospel to the ends of the earth (Isaiah 52:7), but just 7 chapters over in Isaiah 59:7 "*Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood...*" This meant that their feet now readily carried men violently to commit injustice and war with their fellowman. So, therefore we have a "**pervasive**" (widespread persistent) issue of sinful acts.

1. Sinful acts are murderous acts when their feet are "*swift to shed blood*" meaning men's feet jump to kill; are ready to spill, and pour out blood out of hurt and shame just to have their own way, and to get what they want.

MAN'S

3:16 Destruction and misery are in their ways:—

2. Sinful acts are oppressive (overbearing) acts that destroy and cause misery. Because of pride, selfishness, and greed, man destroys the land, cities, nations, countries, governments, people, shops, houses, and property. He destroys and causes misery wherever he goes even within his own family or by war. Calamity and misery always follow the sinner's futile search for happiness apart from Jesus Christ.

3:17 And the way of peace have they not known:—

3. Sinful acts are restless, disturbing, and warring acts. Their own souls are a civil war that experience constant conflict. Wherever men are, they disturb and bring conflict and war to others. The unregenerate man can never find peace with his fellowman until peace has been made with his Creator. The idea is that men do not experience or possess peace with himself until he is at peace with God.

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

3:18 **There is no fear of God before their eyes.** This is quoted from **Psalms 36:1** and identifies the root cause of sin as the failure to fear and honor God. Any society that commonly assumes that God will not discipline sin in this life or judge it in the next will have no fear of God and will therefore give itself increasingly to evil.

4. Sinful acts are godless, irreverent, disrespectful acts. Their eyes and attention are focused not upon God, but upon other things. They ignore and neglect God, living as though there is no God. They sense little desire or need to worship God or to study His Word or Will. They don't fear God, His anger, or His wrath, or judgment.

III. THE PRESUMPTION OF SIN ROMANS 3:19-20

3:19 **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.** When Paul says, "*Now we know*", it means that this is an obvious truth, a clear truth that cannot be missed. It is this: All that has just been said from the above Scriptures (3:9-18), were quoted from the Old Testament Scriptures. It speaks truth that cannot be dismissed.

1. The law spoke to all under the law given by Moses. But, at this particular time Paul is speaking to the Jews in particular, for they thought they were superior to the Gentiles. The law was given to men to show them their need for a righteousness which was not their own. And even though they were teachers of the law to the Gentiles (Rom.2:21), they broke the law; they could not teach themselves. They can no longer compare themselves thereby giving them no more excuses. The Jew and Gentiles were under sin.
2. The law stops all boasting; every mouth that acts self-sufficient and declares the goodness of men their mouths shall be silenced and there will be no more excuses. They were the ones opening their mouths to judge others. There is none good, no not one!
3. The law makes all the world guilty before God. They will be made accountable, for God's law declares:
 - a. There's none righteous, no not one (Rom.3:10).
 - b. There's none that doeth good (not perfectly), no not one (Rom.3:12).

Now we know; no one escapes. The Jews could not presume that they were any better but that all the world stands face to face before God; we all stand short of His glory; and we all stand guilty of sin, for man cannot save himself.

3:20 **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.** Paul is now coming to the summation of his argument and is about to make an application and draw a conclusion. He begins with "*therefore.*" "*Therefore by the deeds (works) of the law...*"

4. The law justifies no flesh.
 - a. No law and no deed of the law will ever justify a man (make him acceptable to God).
 - b. Man cannot be justified by keeping any law or work.
 - c. Man cannot be justified by any righteousness of good deed of his own.
 - d. No flesh; meaning no man by the law will be justified in God's sight.
5. The law shows man that he is sinful. The purpose of the law is not to justify, but to point out sin, to tell a man that he is a sinner. The law was given to make a man aware of his sin. Why? So that man would know he is sinful, pointing him to the only One who could save him, and that is Jesus Christ, in seeking God's forgiveness.

SUMMARY:

¹Paul has already charged that both Jews and Gentiles are guilty before God. Now he declares that all men are sinners and he seeks to prove it with references from the Old Testament. "*All are under sin*" (**3:9**).

¹ <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/romans-39/>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sunday-school.html>

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

3:10-18 This sin reaches into every area of life:

- I. Our character - "There is no one righteous, not even one" (**3: 10**)
- II. Our mind - "There is no one who understands, no one who seeks God" (**3:11**)
- III. Our heart - "All have turned away, together they have become worthless" (**3:12**)
- IV. Our speech - "Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit" (**3:13-14**)
- V. Our feet - "Their feet are swift to shed blood; ruin and misery mark their ways" (**3:15-17**)
- VI. Our eyes - "There is no fear in their eyes" (**3:18**)

Paul declares that *"Every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God"* (**3:19**). While it is true that God's standard is perfect, and that obedience to it would secure Divine blessing, the fact remains that in actual life no one is able to keep it (**3:20**). Sin has infected and affected every part of our being. But to say that, is to say nothing more than the historic Protestant doctrine of Total Depravity. It means that sin has affected every part of man's being; his mind, his emotions, his will, his intellect, his moral reasoning, his decision making, his words and his deeds. No part of man's being is exempt from the debilitating effects of sin. *"Total depravity"* means there is an evil seed inside each of us which may lie dormant for years, and pop up without warning. Wow! But God, through Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit is our only HOPE! (**3:19-20**).