

"SUMMER OF ROMANS" QUESTIONS

ROMANS 3

To prepare for CCP's weekly Bible study, read the following passages and think through the questions below. **Questions printing in bold will be discussed at the meeting, other questions as time permits.**

READ *ESV Romans 3:1 Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? 2 Much in every way. To begin with, the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God. 3 What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God? 4 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." 5 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.) 6 By no means! For then how could God judge the world? 7 But if through my lie God's truth abounds to his glory, why am I still being condemned as a sinner? 8 And why not do evil that good may come?- as some people slanderously charge us with saying. Their condemnation is just.*

- 1) Last week, chapter 2 ended with Paul stating that true circumcision wasn't outward, but inward, and that being Jewish didn't help them gain righteousness. But there is an advantage to Judaism. What is it?**
- 2) According to verse 3, who is at fault if God punishes unrighteous Jews?
- 3) One of the arguments the Jewish believers made (vs. 5) is that it would have been unrighteous for God to give them wrath. Have you ever heard someone say it would be unrighteous for God to punish with wrath? What is the biblical response to that statement?**
- 4) Verse 6 poses the question – "If God was unrighteous, how could God judge the world?" What do you think? What grounds would God have to judge?

READ *9 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 the power of sin, 10 as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; 11 no one understands; no one seeks for God. 12 All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one."*

- 5) In verse 1, it says Jews have an advantage, but in verse 9, it says Jews aren't better off. How do you reconcile these 2 statements?**
- 6) Paul here quotes from Psalm 14:1-3. What does the original Psalm begin with? What passage does that remind you of?**
- 7) In saying that 'none are righteous', he shows that there are none righteous in mind ('no one understands), in heart ('no one seeks for God'), and in action ('no one does good'). How does this compare with the great commandment found in Mark 12:30?
- 8) What is the difference between 'righteous' and 'good'? Why are there so many good people in this world, and none righteous?**

READ *13 "Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive." "The venom of asps is under their lips." 14 "Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness." 15 "Their feet are swift to shed blood; 16 in their paths are ruin and misery, 17 and the way of peace they have not known." 18 "There is no fear of God before their eyes."*

9) This passage describes in detail how nobody is righteous. How do these statements reflect the society we live in? Give examples.

10) Look up the following verses that Paul is quoting from. What is the context of each statement? What does this tell us about 'people' in general?

- a. Psalm 5:9; Psalm 140:3 (vs. 13)
- b. Psalm 10:7 (vs. 14)
- c. Isaiah 59:7-8 (vs. 15-17)
- d. Psalm 36:1 (vs. 18)

READ 19 Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. 20 For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

11) Verse 20 is the structural "pivot point" of the chapter. What is the problem that Paul has taken 3 chapters to build?

12) As a group, write a definition for what it means to be "justified"?

READ 21 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it- 22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. 26 It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

13) If verse 20 is the problem, verses 21-22 are the solution. What is the gospel of Romans?

14) How do you think verses 22b-24 addresses the Jewish-Gentile problem in Rome?

15) Most people think of sin as breaking a rule. How does verse 23 define sin? What do you think the difference is?

16) According to verse 26, what is the basis for being 'justified' by God? What do you think it means to have 'faith in Jesus'?

READ 27 Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. 28 For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law. 29 Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, 30 since God is one. He will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. 31 Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.

17) In your own words, what is the difference between a 'law of works' and a 'law of faith'?

18) "Justified by faith" means "To be declared righteous by belief". In your opinion, what do you have to believe about Jesus to be saved?