

All are Guilty and None are Justified by the Law

Sermon 6 in the Romans Series

Romans 3:1-20

I. Jewish Questions/Objections Answered 3:1-8

We saw the charges Paul levied against his hypothetical Jewish opponent who does not believe that Jesus is the Christ. Now in this hypothetical debate, the hypothetical Jew is allowed to ask questions.

1. Q. What advantage is it then to be part of God's Chosen Nation? 3:1-2

The Greek word for "advantage" can be translated "over and above" or "exceeding abundantly" "We have been God's chosen people – so now we have no advantage?"

Second part -- what then is the value of circumcision?

This has the idea of the Abrahamic Covenant.

This goes back to the promise that Abraham's seed would be blessed.

Circumcision was the basis of the Jewish faith and the rock on which the first century Jew relied.

What was omitted was circumcision of the heart – Romans 2:28-29

The answer – the Jew does have an advantage.

The OT Scriptures were given to the Jews.

The rest of the nations languished in ignorance – and worshipped false gods.

Now the gospel goes into all the world – but to the Jew first.

2. For what if some did not believe?

Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God of no effect?

v. 3 -- Without hesitation Paul answers – CERTAINLY NOT!

Job 40:8 -- Will you really nullify My judgment?

Will you condemn Me so that you may be justified? (NASB)

Chrysostom wrote on v. 3, "Paul is saying something like this. 'Even if every one of the Jews was an unbeliever...God would only be more justified.' What does the word justify mean? It means that if there were a trial and an examination of the things which God had done for the Jews, and also of what they had done to him, the victory would be with God, and all the right would be on his side."

God sent the Redeemer **to** Israel to save many **in** Israel.

God, by establishing the church, did not abandon Israel.

3. If our sinfulness serves a good purpose, for it helps people see how righteous God is. Isn't it unfair, then, for him to punish us?"

This argument and the next is not said because the Jewish opponent thinks this is true.

Paul is defending himself from the misunderstood accusations about the gospel that he preaches.

Objection 3 & 4 are linked and are Paul's answer to those who were lying about his teaching.

4. **Through my lie God's truth abounds – so why am I being judged as a sinner?**
Why not say, "Let us do evil that good may come."

Judaism had become a **religion of works**, self-righteousness, and self-salvation.
Christianity is all of grace.

Every man without Christ is absolutely vile (totally depraved).
Ultimately – you cannot add to God's glory or diminish it.

II. Jew and Gentile alike are Condemned Sinners 3:9-20

A. Paul's thesis (v. 3:9) proven by numerous OT Scriptures.

1. Are we (Paul aligns himself with the Jews) better than the Gentiles?
2. For all are **under** sin. See Rom. 7:14

B. The Ugly List of Universal Guilt 10-18

1. All men, without Christ, are in a sinful condition -- v. 10-12
2. All men are vile in their speech v. 13-14
3. A concluding chiasm – v. 15-18
 - A 3:15 swift to shed blood (Prov. 1:16, Isaiah 59:7)
 - B 3:16 destruction and misery are in their ways (Isaiah 59:7)
 - B 3:17 the way of peace they have not known (Isaiah 59:8)
 - A 3:18 there is no fear of God before their eyes (Ps. 36:1)

4. The Undeniable Conclusion 3:19-20

Spurgeon "All the law can do is show us our sin. The law is a mirror and looking in it you can see your spots; but you cannot wash in a looking-glass. If you want to be cleansed from your stains you must go somewhere else. The object of the law of God is not to cleanse us, but to show us how much cleansing we need; to reveal our disease, not to find a remedy for it."

APPLICATIONS