**Round Top Church Christian Fellowship**

Sermon

*Roman Series*

*Romans 3*

 *God is Not Dead -Man Needs a Savior*

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July 21th In the Year of Our Lord 2019

(Unless otherwise noted, NAS quoted)

No doubt that Romans 3 can be studied from a Jewish-Gentile, Christian perspective in the context of the first century. However, throughout the centuries, Romans calls to all people that there is “The” God who desires to reach-out to us in order for us to respond to His grace, love, mercy and offer of forgiveness through our faithful surrender to Him. God seeks a spiritual response but not one of works.

**Principles in Romans 3.**

1. **God exists.**
2. **God has a desire to reach-out to us.**
3. **God seeks to work through those like Paul who spiritually respond to Him.**
4. **God has the same outreach plan for everyone to come to Him.**
5. **In other words - God is an equal opportunity Savior.**
6. **Man’s fallen condition is the same as in the Old Testament.**
7. **The Jews are God’s chosen people to be entrusted with His Word to faithfully pass it down throughout the ages.**

**In Genesis 12:3, God’s covenant with Abram is to all the nations.**

 **I will bless those who bless you, I will curse anyone who treats you with contempt, and all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you. (CSB17)**

After this distinction is made, Paul writes, “What then?”, as if there is no other advantage the Jews have. Paul then goes to lay-out that the Jews are treated the same by God regarding unbelief and faithfulness to God. The point is made that God never wavers, but the Jews and all people will not keep their end of the covenant.

Romans 3:9 Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin;

Then there is one of the most quoted verses in all the Bible:

10 as it is written, **"THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE;**

**Romans 3:1-31**

**1** Then what advantage has the Jew?

Or what is the benefit of circumcision?

 2 Great in every respect.

First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God.

 3 What then?

If some did not believe,

their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it?

 4 May it never be!

Rather, let God be found true,

though every man *be found* 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 demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say?

The God who inflicts wrath is not unrighteous, is He?

 (I am speaking in human terms.)

 6 May it never be! For otherwise, how will God judge the world?

 7 But… if through my lie…. the truth of God abounded to His glory, why am I also still being judged as a sinner?

 8 And why not *say*

(as we are slanderously reported and as some claim that we say),

 "Let us do evil that good may come"?

Their condemnation is just.

 9 What then? Are we better than they?

**Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin;**

 10 as it is written,

**"THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE;**

11 THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS,

THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD;

 12 ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE,

TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS;

THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD,

THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE."

13 "THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN GRAVE, WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY KEEP DECEIVING,"

"THE POISON OF ASPS IS UNDER THEIR LIPS";

14 "WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS";

 15 "THEIR FEET ARE SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD,

 16 DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR PATHS,

 17 AND THE PATH OF PEACE THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN."

 18 "THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES."

Old Testament Sources for Paul’s Statements –

Psalm14:1 (For the choir director. Of David.) The fool says in his heart, "There's no God." They are corrupt; they do vile deeds. There is no one who does good.

Psalm 53:1 (For the choir director: on Mahalath. A Maskil of David.) The fool says in his heart, "There's no God." They are corrupt, and they do vile deeds. There is no one who does good.

Ecclesiastes 7:20 There is certainly no one righteous on the earth who does good and never sins.

Job 14:4 Who can produce something pure from what is impure? No one!

Job 15:14 What is a mere human, that he should be pure, or one born of a woman, that he should be righteous?

Job 15:16 how much less one who is revolting and corrupt, who drinks injustice like water?

 19 Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God;

 20 **because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight;** for through the Law *comes* the knowledge of sin.

 21 But now apart from the Law *the* righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,

 **22 even *the* righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction;**

 **23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,**

 24 being **justified as a gift by His grace**

**through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;**

 25 whom God displayed publicly as a **propitiation** in His blood through faith. *This was* to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed;

 26 for the demonstration, *I say*, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one **who has faith in Jesus.**

 27 Where then is boasting? It is excluded.

By what kind of law? Of works? **No, but by a law of faith.**

 28 For we maintain that a man 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 indeed God who will justify the circumcised by faith

and the uncircumcised through faith is one.

 31 Do we then nullify the Law through faith?

May it never be! On the contrary, we establish the Law.

**Summation:**

 In Romans 3, Paul brings things together for both Jews and Gentiles. The complete statement is that all of mankind is guilty of sin. No one can claim a sinless life. Thus, the need for a Savior. Paul references Old Testament passages with this teaching (see above list). From a Biblical perspective, the observation that no one has ever died sinless is a fact (save Jesus, and young children or infants – who God claims them in Mark 10:14). Therefore, all the rest of mankind needs a Savior. There is the need to have God reconcile people to Him, because the human race is not capable of reconciling themselves to God or anyone else. Peace for the human race is an illusion without God reaching-out to us. History is our witness.

 However, looking back from our vantage point in the Year of Our Lord, being 2019, the understanding that man needs a Savior took a blow during and after the Enlightenment/Age of Reason. By the end of the 19th century, philosophers like Fredrich Nietzsche were very public with their view that God is dead. Meaning that the God represented in the Bible either no longer existed or never existed.

 **"God is Dead"** (German: About this sound„Gott ist tot“ (help·info); also known as the Death of God) is a widely quoted statement by German philosopher **Friedrich Nietzsche**. Nietzsche used the phrase in a figurative sense, to express the idea that the Enlightenment had "killed" the possibility of belief in God or any gods having ever existed. However proponents of the strongest form of the Death of God theology have used the phrase in a literal sense, meaning that the Christian God who existed at one point, has ceased to exist.

 After Nietzsche published his ideas, and note that he was not alone – he just published – the 20th century produced more deaths due to wars than all the other centuries of mankind added together. On-line sources range from 114 -123 million https://www.quora.com/How-many-people-died-in-all-the-wars-in-the-20th-century to 231 million. <https://www.clingendael.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/20060800_cdsp_occ_leitenberg.pdf>

Anyone can see that human death due to war is a direct result of mankind’s inability to love their neighbor. They did not love their neighbor, because they did not love God. How can a person love God, if they do not acknowledge he exists?

 Well into the 20th century, psychologists had *“thinked-tanked”* themselves into an explanation of why God came into existence. Philosophers and secularists were eager to point to man himself as the original creator of God.

 In January of 1977, Princeton University psychologist, Julian Jaynes (1920–1997), put forth a bold new theory of the origin of consciousness and a previous mentality known as the bicameral mind in the controversial but critically acclaimed book ‘The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind’. Jaynes was far ahead of his time, and his theory remains as relevant today as when it was first published.

Jaynes asserts that consciousness did not arise far back in human evolution but is a learned process based on metaphorical language. Prior to the development of consciousness, Jaynes argues humans operated under a previous mentality he called the bicameral ('two-chambered') mind. In the place of an internal dialogue, bicameral people experienced auditory hallucinations directing their actions, similar to the command hallucinations experienced by many people who hear voices today. These hallucinations were interpreted as the voices of chiefs, rulers, or the gods.

 Forget about Adam and Eve desiring to be like God. Forget that man is not right with God. There wasn’t any God to be like or with which to get right. There isn’t any more foundation for good, for bad, for all things become relative to each individual to decide for himself. This is what the H.A.S. world has delivered to the human race. (Humanist, Atheist, Secularist) To them, this is better than the thousands of years of government based upon theocracy (State Church) when people killed other people in the name of their God. They had reasons for abandoning the **god** represented by the state church. However, the state church did not represent God. They were a god within themselves. With man doing away with the god that he created, at least now mankind does not have God to blame and man is more efficient at killing-off himself than those Theocracies of the state church.

 In fairness to those who actually pursued God, it is my observation that many of the wars in the 20th century were started by people who did not believe in the God of the Bible. Obviously, this is the case with Nazi Germany and Shinto-driven Japan. It was the Judeo-Christian cultures who were defending themselves against the evil tyranny of those aggressor nations.

 **So,** when modern eyes read Romans, there must be a conclusion that God exists, and He desires to reach-out to all of us regardless of our nationality, culture, religion or race.

 The other conclusion is that man in not right with God and that God has a plan of “FAITH” (not Law or merit) to give a person a right standing before Him.

**22 even *the* righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction;**

 **23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,**

 24 being **justified as a gift by His grace**

**through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;**

 Just looking at Romans three, anyone paying attention can see that there is a departure in understanding of what God is aiming towards. God knows the Jews misunderstood the Law and what it takes to make a person righteous, approved by God. Even though God declares not one person is righteous, He points to faith in Jesus Christ as the conveyor of salvation. God points to His grace as the conveyor of the gift of justification. Man, on his own, will never have the works to earn his salvation. So, God points to himself as Jesus Christ, whose perfect sacrifice paid the price for all of mankind’s redemption. This is propitiation. Pay the debt that was owed. But then, man could never obtain the value of the price to pay the debt owed. People have to come to the conclusion that God is owed a debt. This is what sticks in people’s minds. But then again, this is why it is all about Jesus. This propitiation declarative comes with understanding that it is God who created us and chose to love us first. Propitiation comes with the understanding that God chose to apply His grace to us. Grace means unmerited favor. The very use of the word negates justification under the Law or justification under any work of man.

 We have talked about Islam in the past. Islam denies that God came in the flesh and died on The Cross for the sins of the World. It is a big lie, the biggest lie, that Christians and Muslims pray to the same God. Christians pray to God. Muslims pray to a man-made god who calls for people to be judged based upon their works, and even at that, Allah can, at the last second, decide by his will that a person goes to hell regardless of their good works. However, one way to guarantee a place in Allah’s heaven is to kill another human being in a holy war. We have noted previously that the God of the Bible never asks or directs a person to kill another human being to gain their salvation. Hence, the Cross. Jesus paid it all. As brutal and ugly as the Cross is, God accomplished, paid the price with His earthly life, for all people to have the opportunity to be with Him for an eternity in His heaven. God has the power to overcome an earthly death on the Cross, thus the power to create is the power to resurrect. By us surrendering to His will, we too will be resurrected by His power to an eternal life.

It is obvious to me, that it is not an accident that Islam, being an enemy of God, denies God’s sacrifice on The Cross but requires people to earn their own salvation even calling for the killing of another person. Their teaching brings eternal separation between God and people. The exact opposite of the mission of the Cross. This is what Satan wants. This is why Christians only pray to the God of the Bible whose grace paid our price for sin. Muslims teach that Allah is an impersonal God who never interacts with people much less, by his grace, pays the price for sin.

**In conclusion:**

 Paul is directed by God to write to the church in Rome which is occupied by Jews and Gentiles. Paul is an equal opportunity mouth piece for God. He does not discriminate one party over another. All the world is guilty and, at the same time, eligible to be saved.

 For the non-Christian or the unknowing Christian, it is most valuable to know that Paul was a Pharisee of Pharisees an unlikely spokesperson for God. The one who sought members of The Way with arrest warrants issued by the Temple authorities in Jerusalem is the one who now proclaims that people can be justified, made righteous, saved from their sins through faith.

 3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,

 4 who gave Himself for our sins so that He might rescue us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,

 5 to whom be the glory forevermore. Amen. (Gal. 1:3-5 NAU)