

# ROMANS - #3

## ANTIOCH BIBLE CLASS

### LESSON TOPIC

# NONE RIGHTEOUS, NO, NOT ONE

### SCRIPTURE TEXT: ROMANS 3:1-31

MEMORY VERSE: ROM. 3:10 & 23. As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one. For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

### INTRODUCTION

In Romans chapter one, Paul emphasized the depravity and gross perversion of mankind, specifically the Gentile world. In chapter two, his emphasis was on the depravity of the Jew, notwithstanding the fact that they had been given the law and circumcision. He specifically pointed out that the mere fact of a Jew having been circumcised in the flesh was absolutely no sign of righteousness; righteousness was not imputed by virtue of fleshly circumcision or by being the nation to whom God gave the law. His doctrine was that the Jew was as sinful as the Gentile, and yet they were boasting of being the possessors of the law and thereby assumed a self righteousness it in no wise gave them. In fact, no righteousness could be obtained by the works of the law.

As we come to chapter three, Paul's emphasis is still on the subject of the utter unrighteousness of mankind, both Jew and Gentile. With this in mind, the words of the memory verse from verses ten and twenty three stand out in bold application to this fact. There is none righteous – Jew or Gentile. That is the message – the only message – to be gleaned from the language of these verses as well as the rest of the chapter.

The combined chapters, 1, 2 and 3 send an unequivocal, emphatic and unquestionable message that **“THE JEWISH NATION OF PEOPLE HAVE NO PREIMINENCE ABOVE THE GENTILE WORLD AND ARE DEEMED TO BE UNDER THE SAME CURSE OF SIN AS THE GENTILES AND IN NEED OF THE EXACT SAME MESSAGE OF SALVATION AS DO THE GENTILES”**. God is no respecter of persons! No special favors; no special dispensations; no special ministries; no special kingdom rights and no special standing before God. Adam's blood flows through their veins just as it does anyone else. It seems that theologians, trying to set the Jews apart for some special dispensation of grace, have totally forgotten that outward favors and privileges saves no one; only the application of grace by the faith of the gospel to the human heart. This coupled with the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, is the only path or plan by which anyone can be redeemed from the curse of sin which passed upon all men through Adam.

For ALL have sinned and come short of the glory of God. The "notion" that God has set aside a time (millennium) of peace, when the source of man's temptation will be bound so as to prevent that source from having any influence upon any portion of humanity (especially Jews) living in that select era, is ludicrous and totally unsustainable by any fair interpretation and application of sacred scripture. Man's temptations come from the lusts of his flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of live and until and unless those lusts are crucified, mortified, put to death, there is no chance of salvation, no matter what era of peace or war one might live in.

### DAILY SCRIPTURES AND THOUGHTS.

#### MONDAY. ROM. 3:1-4. THE ADVANTAGE THE JEW HAD IN GOD.

##### SCRIPTURES.

V1. What advantage then hath the Jew? Or what profit is there of circumcision? 2. Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. 3. For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? 4. God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar: as it is written, that thou mightiest be justified in thy sayings, and mightiest overcome when thou art judged.

##### Comments

Does the Jew have an advantage over the Gentile? We have stated in the introduction that they are on the same level as the Gentiles. Why is it then, that Paul asks this question in verse one which implies that there is an advantage to the Jew? They did have an advantage in Paul's day and prior to the ushering in of the gospel era. That advantage was not in national, preferential treatment for all time but it was contained in the opportunity which they had by having been God's people, knowing his law and experiencing his blessings throughout their history. They should have been well prepared to receive Christ as their Messiah and to believe his gospel, but they were not. Their table (of the law) was a snare unto them (Rom. 11:9). It is a point of scriptural fact that if the people of Israel had been in obedience to God's law and also his prophets, they could not have missed the fact that Jesus was their Messiah. The fact that they missed him and as a result were visited with the wrath of God and the destruction of their nation and with the termination of their priesthood and national life is overwhelming proof that they were, in fact, rejected of God. This notwithstanding, God will still receive every Jew who comes to him by faith in Christ, apart from which there is no means or plan for anyone in all time and history to be saved.

Because the Jews, generally, did not believe in and accept Christ, did not in any way dissolve or destroy the availability of faith in God. That faith flows from Christ unto everyone who hears the gospel and repents and believes without regard as to the standing of the Jew with Christ.

#### TUESDAY. ROM. 3: 5-8. GOOD DOES NOT COME FROM AN EVIL SOURCE.

### SCRIPTURES.

V5. But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man) 6. God forbid; for then how shall God judge the world? 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? 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.

### COMMENTS.

Paul has taught to believers everywhere that the grace of God has appeared to all men, teaching us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. He also has taught that the perfunctory duties of the law were not sufficient to save anyone and that even those who were the doers of the law needed the grace of God and the forgiveness of sins which could be obtained through that grace. This infuriated the Jew and in their jealousy and pride turned against Christ and his message and his messengers. From this anger they accused Paul of claiming that they could continue in their sins and unrighteousness and they would still be okay before God. That was not what Paul was preaching. While he did teach that their obedience to the duties of the law could not save them, neither did he teach that they could remain in their unrighteousness and God would just apply “grace” to their sins. Instead he taught that the grace of God provided them the opportunity of faith in Christ by which they could be delivered from their sins by their repentance and obedience unto it.

He was accused of teaching that when we do evil that good would come from that. Nothing could have been further from Pauline doctrine. Likewise, those who today teach “grace minus works of righteousness” fostered by that grace, are also falsely accusing Paul’s ministry. Grace is not to be substituted for righteousness, it is to be the means by which we come into the righteousness of God.

### WEDNESDAY. ROM. 3: 9-18. THE DEPRAVITY OF ALL HUMAN NATURE, JEW AND GENTILE.

### SCRIPTURES.

V9. 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; 10. As it is written, (Ps. 53:1-3), there is none righteous, no, not one: 11. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. 12. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. 13. Their throat is an open sepulcher; with their tongues they have used deceit; 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 ways: 17. And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes.

### COMMENTS.

First, a note completely aside from the lesson in verses 8 & 9. Paul uses the word “we” four times in these verses in the singular form, referring to himself alone.

The verses before us now emphasize that Jew and Gentile are both profligate sinners, one as depraved and as worthy of condemnation and judgment as the other. There are none (of the entire human family) righteous, none that understandeth (by and of their own will), none that seek God (none have a nature that reaches out to God), and none that doeth good (by the impulse of human desire and will).

There was a feeling among the Jews, that because they were God's chosen people under the law and because they were the recipients of the law, that it stamped them with righteousness. They were God's chosen and they could do no wrong and were content, even proud, to remain that way. Paul is showing that sin, wrong, ungodliness and utter depravity of every kind is a product of fallen human nature and the law did not alter that. Jew and Gentile are both under the blight of the curse on Adam and the law would not redeem them from it.

#### **THURSDAY. ROM. 3:19-23. THE LAW WAS NOT AN INSTRUMENT OF SALVATION.**

##### **SCRIPTURE.**

V19. 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. 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. 21. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets. 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. 23. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

##### **COMMENTS.**

The law, including the Ten Commandments, was not given as an instrument of salvation. The law only made men aware of what was evil and provided penalties for its violation. There was no redeeming virtue in its statutes, only in the one which those statutes pointed to. If salvation could have been obtained by obedience to the commands of the law there would have been no need of Christ. People came to think of the law in terms of a ritualistic salvation without any power to purge a sin-inclined heart and flesh. People do about the same with Christianity. We assign the work of redemption to the act of calvary and a host of pursuant rituals and professions and refuse to replicate calvary in our own flesh by way of repentance from sin. Christ died for us vicariously so that we, through faith in his atoning death, could also mortify the deeds of our human flesh in order that we might be purged from our own works of unrighteousness. The righteousness of God is not automatically applied because Christ went to calvary, otherwise every human being on earth would be saved. The righteousness of God was "MADE AVAILABLE" to us through the redemptive work of calvary, that we might, through hearing, believing and obedience to the gospel, receive that righteousness in our own heart and life. That is why the Christian experience is a daily, growing, crucifying, believing and obedient walk with God. Christ and his death at calvary is of no saving affect unto those who refuse to hear, obey and follow the precepts of the gospel. But unto those who do hear and obey, it is the power of God unto salvation.

All, Jew and Gentile, have sinned and come short of the glory of God. The Jews' obedience to the law does not alter that condition; only their obedience to Christ and his gospel.

**FRIDAY. ROM. 3:24-31. JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH AND NOT THROUGH THE LAW.**

**SCRIPTURE.**

V24. Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; 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; 26. To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. 27. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. 28. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. 29. Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes; of the Gentiles also: 30. Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the un-circumcision through faith. 31. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

**COMMENTS.**

The message of these verses is well summarized in verse 28: "A man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law". The entire argument of "works vs. faith" is explained in that verse. "Works" when condemned here as unmeritorious for salvation refers exclusively to the deeds of the law. (You can add to this the works of the flesh described by Paul in Gal. 5:19-21, for a complete agenda of "works" which are of no value towards our salvation). The suffering of Christ was a "vicarious" (endured for somebody else) suffering, since there was no way we could "suffer" for our own sins and still live. This suffering of Christ established grounds for faith in someone who was capable of and who did, in fact take our place in death, so that we, through that medium of faith, might obtain everlasting life. Note that "faith" is a medium through which salvation can be efficacious in our lives. That is, it becomes effective by the condition of faith and not by the conditions of the law. In other words, offering animal sacrifices and performing other commands of the law, could not in any manner produce salvation and the necessary resultant righteousness that should be its fruits. On the other hand, "believing" the truths and principals of the gospel (the death, burial and resurrection of Christ on our behalf) and obeying them continually, could produce salvation and the necessary resultant righteousness God expects in us. The point where this becomes misunderstood and therefore misapplied is when we interpret faith. Some want us to believe that all we must do is to simply acknowledge that Christ went to calvary and died there and was subsequently resurrected, in a narrowly confined application of faith. However, "faith" is a very active process that brings us into "all things, whatsoever he has commanded us". Thus, it is not some mental acknowledgment of a past act, but the replication of that act in our own "death, burial and resurrection", by which we thenceforth walk in a new life (by faith).

It comes down to our believing, obeying and practicing whatever the Bible teaches about the manner of living the Christian life. To exclude that in the framework of salvation is to make it less than a mere religious ritual, totally incapable of producing any of the fruit (works) of the Spirit in us.

## SUMMARY

Paul has gone to great lengths in Romans chapters 1,2, and 3, to proclaim the sinfulness of all humanity, including both Jew and Gentile. He has put much emphasis on the perversion of human nature to the point that God gave them up to a reprobate mind. He has given equal testimony to the depravity of the Jewish nation of people, while pointing out their proclivity to boasting because God had given them the law. But God gave them that law to lead them to (faith in) Christ, so that they might be saved by him through that faith. The fact which he uses these three chapters to prove is that there is NONE RIGHTEOUS, NO NOT ONE. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God and no one has any means or hope of salvation except through the propitiation of Christ.

Due to the religious boasting of the Jewish nation, Paul declares emphatically that the deeds of the law have no redemptive power in them. This is not a matter of which you think is the most desirous, performing the works of the law or believing in the atoning sacrifice of Christ. God did set the law aside just so that he could provide a more glorious, glamorous and gracious plan of salvation. He set the law aside because it never was intended or capable of producing righteousness in the human heart and soul. He didn't set "faith" up just to make it easier than the law (it could be argued that performing the deeds of the law is easier than faith), but because there simply was no other means by which salvation could be ours and the works of righteousness which God desired from us could only be possible. Through the continual obedience to the principals of biblical faith, day by day, precept upon precept, faith upon faith, is it possible to produce the "works of righteousness" (fruit of the Spirit), which "IS" salvation. That is Paul's doctrine as he introduces the gospel to the Roman Christians. Jew nor Gentile, circumcision or un-circumcision avails nothing with God; but righteousness which is produced only by living the faith which we have through the gospel.

## QUESTIONS

1. When Paul says that there are none righteous, who is he talking about?
2. Why is there no redemption in the total obedience to the duties of the law?
3. Wherein is there the possibility of salvation in our obedience to faith?
4. What is the only source of righteousness in the human life?
5. What is meant by the statement, "justified by faith"?