**Building A Strong Faith: A Study of the Book of Romans**

**Why I am so glad that Jesus Came? Palm Sunday**

**Romans 3:9-20 March 24, 2024**

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As we begin 2024, I can’t think of a more important asset than a “strong faith” relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Our world is filled with both great opportunities and great challenges. The apostle Paul writes, “The righteous shall live by faith.” The book of Romans will map out a path for us how we can be rightly connected to God, ourselves, and others. “Romans is a feast for one’s soul.” There is an amazing work that God desires to do in us through His Son Jesus and empowered by His Holy Spirit. My prayer is that we will grow in our understanding of the gospel of God. The result will be a strong faith that is able to draw strength from God no matter what comes our way. Today as we prepare for passion week, May our hearts rejoice that God sent his Son Jesus to do something about the human condition. May we realize afresh our incredible need for salvation by faith through Jesus.

**The Passage: Romans 3:9**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 sin,10as it is written“ None is righteous, no, not one; 11 no one understands; no one seeks for God.12All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.” 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; 16in their paths are ruin and misery, 17and the way of peace they have not known.” 18 “There is no fear of God before their eyes.” 19Now 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. 20For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

**Why Study Romans? Palm Sunday Passage Matthew 21:1-11**

**Chapter divides: 3:1-8** God’s faithfulness vs Man’s unfaithfulness **3:9-20** Our great & universal need for a Savior from the Old Testament  **3:21-31** How God makes us right with Him through Jesus Christ**.**

**Big Idea**: As God shows me the reality of my human condition, may I reach out and receive His great salvation. Jesus, I am so glad you came to save us!

1. Show me \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on the human condition.

Romans 3:9What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin,

1. I was born with a tragic \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**Spiritual Growth Questions for March 24**

**Opener**: What is the most meaningful part of the Passion Week (Palm Sunday, arrest and betrayal of Jesus, trial and sacrificial death, burial and silence, or the resurrection of Jesus after three days?)

1. **Read Romans 3:9-12** Paul opens this section of his letter with the words “What then?” What is his conclusion about what he has said thus far? Why does he use the word “none” four times?
2. **Read Romans 3:13-18.** What images do these words bring to your mind? Notice the various parts of the body that Paul describes. What impact does this have on the way you think about sin? Verse 18 speaks about the “fear of God.” What kind of fear is appropriate? How do you feel about seeing yourself described in the words of this passage? If you are convicted, confess and ask for help to turn from those sins.
3. **Read Romans 3:19-20.** According to these verses, what are the main purposes of the law and what is an appropriate response to the law? Suppose someone said, “Since no one will be declared righteous by obeying God’s law, why bother to pay any attention to it all?” How would you respond? What hope would you offer someone who felt a constant nagging sense of guilt?
4. Many people today do not like to use the words *right*, *wrong and sin.* They value personal freedom and believe that they should do whatever seems appropriate in a particular setting. In view of the first three chapters of Romans, how do you respond to this kind of thinking?

**To get the most out of these questions, form pairs or trios and take turns answering these questions**. In what specific ways does this section of Romans speak to your story? In what ways are you guilty as charged? How do you respond to Paul’s words? Are you humbled? Challenged? Inspired? Explain. What are the secrets of your heart (**Romans 2:16)**? How does your heart compare to your outward expression of your faith? If there is a disconnect, what is causing the disparity? What would your outward expression look like if they perfectly matched your heart? **Pray for one another! Consider Psalm 143:1-2, 8-12 and Romans 7:24-25.**

**Reflection:** Dear Lord Jesus, I am so glad that you came to this earth and became a human to redeem, recreate and restore my relationship with you. I realize that my heart is drawn to many things on this earth. I turn completely to you and ask your Holy Spirit to continue to reveal truth from these first three chapters of Romans. Transform my mind, my thoughts, my words, my actions, and inactions to glorify You completely in my life. May my outward expression match my inward beliefs. Thank you, Lord, for revealing my constant need for you and transforming my life moment by moment. May you reveal yourself to me in a fresh and new way this week.

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D. Let the perfect law of God \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ my \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ without Christ and my utter \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and need for justification through faith in Jesus.

Romans 3:19Now 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. 20For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. Psalm 143:3b for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.

Every mouth may be stopped-

Held accountable-

**Prayer**: Lord, help me to see my condition without you in the way that you do! Release me from the prison of my sin, shame, and guilt. Show me the greatness of salvation that is available through Jesus.

**I am guilty and nothing I do could ever acquit me. I am so glad that Jesus is my defense attorney and served my sentence for me!**

II. Let my heart be overwhelmed this week by the amazing \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of all that Jesus has done to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for my sins and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of my lostness.

Romans 1:16For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 17For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”

Romans 7:24Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? 25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

Romans 3:21**But now** the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— 22the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction:

Ephesians 2:4 **But God**, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—

**I am greatly humbled by the amazing gift of righteousness and salvation given to me. I do not deserve it but I receive it by repentance and faith. I am so glad that Jesus came to save me!**

Psalm 51:5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Psalm 58:3 The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray from birth, speaking lies. (Lord, show me the truth of my condition).

God’s viewpoint vs. man’s viewpoint

**I was born spiritually dead according to the Scriptures**. **I am so glad that Jesus came to bring new life to my dead spiritual heart.**

B. Reveal to me my \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to live righteously on my \_\_\_\_\_.

Romans 3:10as it is written “None is righteous, no, not one; 11 no one understands; no one seeks for God.12All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.” (See Ques.1)

None 4x-

Ephesians 4:18They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, (see question 2)

Paul is referring to Psalm 14:1-3. “No one is righteous means no one is innocent.” Every person is valuable in God’s eyes because God created us in his image, and he loves us. But no one is good enough (that is no one can earn right standing with God). Though we are all valuable, we have fallen into sin. But God through Jesus his Son, has redeemed us and offers to forgive us if we turn to him in faith. (Life Application Bible Studies)

Matthew 19:16 And behold, a man came up to him, saying, “Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?” (Matthew 22:37-39)

C. Expose my \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in words, thoughts, actions and inactions.

Romans 3:13 “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; 16in their paths are ruin and misery, 17and the way of peace they have not known.”

Why might we not see this? We have our own private opinion of what sin is and what righteousness is, and as to what satisfies God’s demands. Jones

**Reflective Questions**: Have you ever lied? Have you hurt someone’s feelings by your words or tone of voice? Are you bitter toward anyone? Do you become angry with those who strongly disagree with you?

It is the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Ps.111:10, Romans 3:18 It is the lack of fear of God that is the cause of human sinfulness.

**My sin debt is way beyond my ability to pay on my own. I am so glad that Jesus came to pay a debt that he did not owe.**