

ROMANS 3



Jesus Christ Prison Ministry

P.O. Box 770
Lucerne Valley, CA 92356

PUBLISHER
Jesus Christ Prison Ministry
P.O. Box 770
Lucerne Valley, CA 92356

E-mail: ministry@icpm.com
Web Page: www.icpm.com



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Romans chapter three is another one of those “oops” chapters. What do you do with it? Let’s take a look at the texts that seem to be such a problem in the “Christian” world today. As quoted by most of the churches, it goes something like this, “There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.” Verses 10 through 12.

According to this quote no one can be perfect. No one can be sinless. All are destined to be no-good, rotten, worthless sinners. Wow, is that really what it is saying? Remember Peter in his letter to the believers? Let’s review what he said about Paul. “His (Paul) letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.” 2 Peter 3:16.

There are two basic concepts we must keep in mind when reading the Bible. Jesus and Jesus only is the Way and the Truth to the one eternal life. Jesus and Jesus only is the Rock that we are to build on. Remember what Paul said about that? “My brothers, some from Chloe’s household have informed me that there are quarrels among you. What I mean is this: One of you says, ‘I follow Paul’; another, ‘I follow Apollos’; another, ‘I follow Cephas’; still another, ‘I follow Christ.’ Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into the name of Paul?” 1 Cor. 1:11-13. Since Paul did not die for me, I must first look to the teachings of Jesus. I can only read and agree with Paul if Paul agrees with Jesus. If he does not agree with Jesus then I must remove Paul’s writings from the Bible. Jesus can’t change His eternal truths.

Jesus tells us to “be perfect”, “stop sinning”, “go and sin no more”. Matthew 5:48; John 5:14 and John 8:11. Not even Paul

can change that. So the next question is, What is Paul saying in Romans chapter three?

We start by looking at it with intelligence. Let's look at this section that deals with what Paul is talking about. First, we must understand that Paul is not the author of this text. Wow, what a startling discovery. You see, Paul is quoting, not originating the thought. That is a big difference. Verse 10 states it quite clearly, "As it is written." That should set off flashes of lightening in your mind. Written from where?

Paul is quoting verses 10 through 18 from the following areas of Scripture. Psalm 51:4; Psalms 14:1-3; 53:1-3; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Psalm 5:9; Psalm 140:3; Psalm 10:7; Isaiah 59:7, 8; Psalm 36:1. Anytime there are quotes in the New Testament that are borrowed from the Old Testament we need to be very careful about how we treat them. Our first move should be to go back and check out the context of the text to find out what the original author was writing about. (Remember, there was no New Testament at the time of Paul. He only taught Old Testament. The New Testament as we have it today did not exist until 300 years after Jesus.)

When we do this with Paul, we make a very interesting discovery. Paul is not talking about "everyone". He is talking about "everyone" of the wicked. Yes, we were all wicked at one time. Yes, we were all sinners at one time. But some of us have accepted the promises of Jesus and have stopped sinning through the Power of Christ that He offers us.

Let's start with verse 14 and go through verse 18. "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood; ruin and misery mark their ways, and the way of peace they do not know. There is no fear of God before their eyes."

Now let me ask you, is that YOU? Is there no fear of God before your eyes? If not, you are wicked and not a Christian. A Christian has great fear of God before his eyes. He worships God and reverences Him. If you don't, I suggest you change real fast. God has warned us what will happen to those who do not change.

And that is what Romans is all about: Change! Chapter three and Chapter seven of Romans talk about our past. They talk about what we used to be like. The rest of Romans, and especially chapters six and eight, talk about what we can be with Christ.

If chapter three and chapter seven are what we are as Christians, I don't want to be a Christian. Secondly, Paul would be a liar. Thirdly, he would be making a liar out of Christ. And remember, no liar will be in Heaven. No! Paul is not doing any of those things. Paul is simply contrasting the old way with the new way of living.

“What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?... For we know that our old self was crucified with Him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin – because anyone who has died has been freed from sin... But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness... But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.” Romans 6:1, 2, 6, 7, 17, 18, 22.

When God says “STOP”, we would do well to listen. Listen to Jeremiah 37:2. “Neither he nor his attendants nor the people of the land paid any attention to the words the Lord had spoken through Jeremiah the prophet.”



“Again and again I sent all My servants the prophets to you. They said, ‘Each of you must turn from your wicked ways and reform your actions; do not follow other gods to serve them. Then you will live in the land I have given to you and your fathers.’ “I spoke to them, but they did not listen; I called to them, but they did not answer.” Jeremiah 35:15, 17. Are you listening to this study? The Spirit of God dictated and directed this book. Listen very carefully.

Over and over again God calls out to us to stop sinning. Why? Is it for Him? Does it do Him any good if we live righteously or sinfully? No. It is for us. He wants to keep us from dying. The wages of sin is death. He loves you and me so much that He warns us not to die. But do we listen to Him?

“Listen to the terms of this covenant... Cursed is the man who does not obey the terms of this covenant... I said ‘Obey Me and do everything I command you, and you will be My people, and I will be your God... Listen to the terms of this covenant and follow them... Obey Me.’ But they did not listen or pay attention; instead, they followed the stubbornness of their evil hearts. Do not pray for this people nor offer any plea or petition for them, because I will not listen when they call to Me in the time of their distress.” Jeremiah 11:2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 14.

How sad. With the Bible before us to warn us and to show us the examples of what happens when we continue to sin, are we listening? Are we taking the warning and changing our lives? Are we listening to God, or are we listening to the churches? Are you listening to your pastor? Or are you listening to Jesus? Are you rebelling against the plain statements of God and living your own rebellious, sinful, hardhearted way? Your choice. Obey and live, disobey along with the worldly churches and die. God's love can't save you. He did His part in opening up the plan of Salvation. He did not have to die on the cross. That was “grace”. Now you must do your part. God has opened the way to eternal life but you must walk in it. There are only two roads: A broad way to death that all the churches are on, and a narrow way to life. Few are on the narrow way. Are you?

We are drowning in sin. Jesus has warned us not to go swimming in the lake of sin. Even after we disobeyed He still loved us enough to throw us a lifeline. But only we can save ourselves. We must listen, grab on to the lifeline and let Jesus pull us out. He can't force us out of the lake. He stands and invites us out. Yelling out His name and claiming His name won't save you either. Even the devil does that. You must do exactly what He tells you to do. Obey; not speak, to get eternal life.