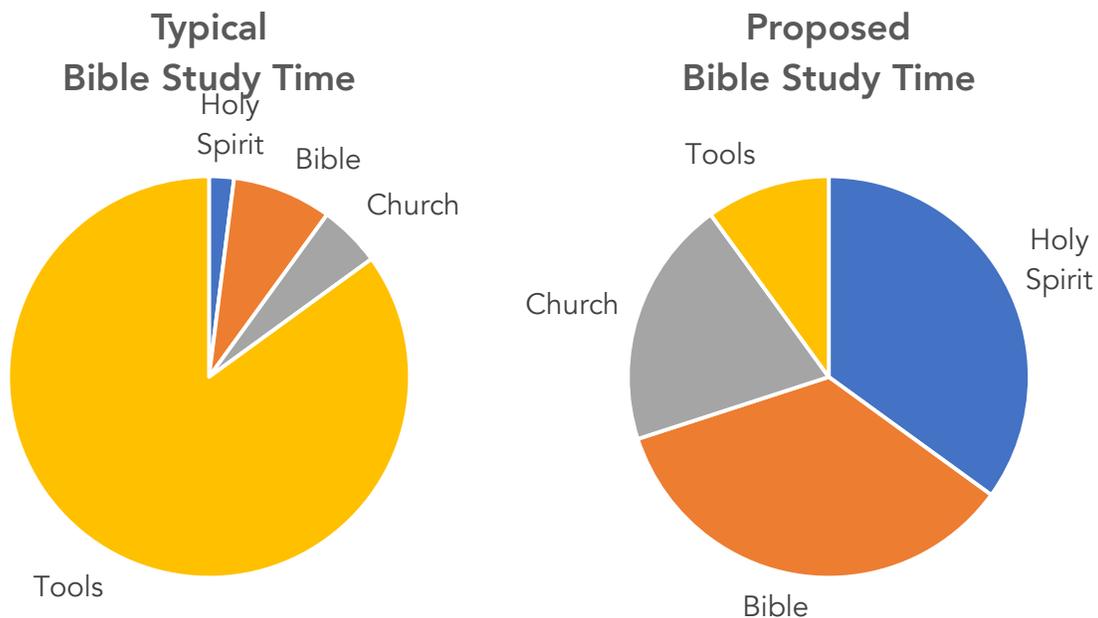


Romans

God's Righteousness Upheld ([Romans 3:1-8](#))

Introduction

A gentle review: **Did we do this?** Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.



Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Let's read the text that leads into this week's text.

Greeting

1 Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, 2 which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, 3 concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh 4 and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, 5 through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, 6 including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

7 To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints:

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

Longing to Go to Rome

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world. 9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention you 10 always in my prayers, asking that somehow by God's will I may now at last succeed in coming to you. 11 For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you— 12 that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine. 13 I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented), in order that I may reap some harvest among you as well as among the rest of the Gentiles. 14 I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. 15 So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

The Righteous Shall Live by Faith

16 For 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. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

God's Wrath on Unrighteousness

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. 19 For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. 20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. 21 For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

24 Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, 25 because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

26 For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; 27 and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for

one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

28 And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. **29** They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, **30** slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, **31** foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. **32** Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

God's Righteous Judgment

1 Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things. **2** We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who practice such things. **3** Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God? **4** Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? **5** But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.

6 He will render to each one according to his works: **7** to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; **8** but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. **9** There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, **10** but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. **11** For God shows no partiality.

God's Judgment and the Law

12 For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. **13** For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified. **14** For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. **15** They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them **16** on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

17 But if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast in God 18 and know his will and approve what is excellent, because you are instructed from the law; 19 and if you are sure that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, 20 an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth— 21 you then who teach others, do you not teach yourself? While you preach against stealing, do you steal? 22 You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? 23 You who boast in the law dishonor God by breaking the law. 24 For, as it is written, “The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.” 25 For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. 26 So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? 27 Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. 28 For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. 29 But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.

Read: God’s Righteousness Upheld (3:1-8)

1 Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? 2 Much in every way. To begin with, the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God. 3 What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God? 4 By no means! Let God be true though every one were 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 serves to show the righteousness of God, what shall we say? That God is unrighteous to inflict wrath on us? (I speak in a human way.) 6 By no means! For then how could God judge the world? 7 But if through my lie God’s truth abounds to his glory, why am I still being condemned as a sinner? 8 And why not do evil that good may come?—as some people slanderously charge us with saying. Their condemnation is just.

Now to the observations

Explain: God’s Righteousness Upheld (3:1-8)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let’s ask some questions.

Introduction

I do not have the gift of teaching but I do have the gift of command.

- 1 After 36 + years in military, I learned how to tell people what to do.
- 2 Mr. Jay Arnold
- 3 Show slide __ then slide __

Are there any literary/structural observations?

Seven times Paul remarks in the form of questions.

This is called the Socratic method.

The principle underlying the Socratic Method is that students learn through the use of critical thinking, reasoning, and logic, finding holes in their own theories and then patching them up. In law school, specifically, a professor will ask a series of Socratic questions after having a student summarize a case, including relevant legal principles associated with the case. Professors often manipulate the facts or the legal principles associated with the case to demonstrate how if even one fact in a case changes, the resolution of the case can change greatly.

Are there any repeated words?

“What” - four times Paul is trying to be specific in driving his point home

Exclamation! - two times

Are there any repeated topics?

“What shall we say” – Paul uses this phrase seven times in [Romans](#). He is used to introduce a conclusion Paul rejects or one that he accepts.

What are some observations of the text?

Previously Paul lays out his argument in [Romans 2](#).

Romans 2:12: For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law.

Romans 2:17: But if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast in God

Romans 2:20: an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth

At this point, there is no guesswork as to who Paul is talking about.

Now in [Romans 3](#), Paul is upholding the righteousness of God.

God Is Faithful

1 Then what advantage [*perissos*, rank or need, superior, extraordinary, surpassing, uncommon; **What makes a Jew better than anyone else?**] **has the Jew? Or what is the value** [usefulness, advantage, profit] **of circumcision?** [Paul begins his argument by leveling the playing field both Jew and Gentile. If both are guilty before God, then what is the superiority of the Jew or of circumcision? **Robertson's New Testament Word Pictures: What does the Jew have over and above the Gentile? It is a pertinent question after the stinging indictment of the Jew in chapter 2.** Here Paul wants the Jews to put the emphasis in the proper place. In **Romans 2:12-28** Paul is explaining God's judgment and the Law. But he is driving to the point of **Romans 2:29.**] **2 Much in every way** [*panta*; Adj-AMS 1. individually, each, every, any, all, the whole, everyone, all things, everything; 2. collectively-some of all types]. **To begin with** [proton, firstly (in time, place, order, or importance), before, at the beginning, chiefly, (at, at the) first (of all); pointing out the most important fact; **Robertson's New Testament Word Pictures: As in Romans 1:8; 1 Corinthians 11:18 Paul does not add to his "first." He singles out one privilege of the many possessed by the Jew.**], **the Jews were entrusted** [of the thing believed, in a moral or religious reference to entrust a thing to one, i.e., his fidelity; **Robertson's New Testament Word Pictures: First aorist passive indicative . . . to entrust, with accusative of the thing and dative of the person in the active. In the passive as here the accusative of the thing is retained as in 1 Thessalonians 2:4.**] **with the oracles** [brief utterance, a divine oracle (doubtless because oracles were generally brief); in the NT, the words or utterances of God; of the contents of the Mosaic Law (the word)] **of God.** [**Why do you think God called Israel the "apple of His eye?"** They were the ones entrusted with sharing the word of God. Paul is emphasizing the privileges they were entrusted with. **1 Thessalonians 2:4: but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts.** We should look just how off the mark the Jewish nation became. **What was their attitude then and how different is it today? Exodus 19:3-6 (HCSB): 3 while Moses went up to God. The LORD called to him out of the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel: 4 'You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. 5 Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; 6 and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.'** These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel." **Romans 9:4; Romans 4:11: He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well. Romans 4:3: For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham**

believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.”] **3** What if some were **unfaithful** [first active aorist indicative; to have no belief, be unfaithful; **1 Thessalonians 2:4**]? **Does their faithlessness nullify** [to render idle, unemployed, inactivate, inoperative, to cause to cease, put an end to, do away with, annul, abolish] **the faithfulness of God?** [Expositor’s Commentary: What inference shall we draw? Surely not that God, He who inflicts the wrath due to unrighteousness at the last day (**Romans 1:18**), is Himself unrighteous. Again, Paul is bringing up a question which demands an answer: **by no means!** **2 Timothy 2:13: if we are faithless, he remains faithful.** Again, the apostle Paul is referring to God’s character and not ours.] **4** **By no means** [to become, to come into existence, begin to be, receive being; Keith Krell: The phrase “**May it never be**” (*me genoito*) is a very potent phrase. This is the first of ten times this phrase is used in **Romans**. This phrase has been variously translated: “**Absolutely not**” (NET); “**By no means**” (ESV); “**God forbid**” (KJV); and “**Perish the thought!**”]! **Let God be true though every one were a liar, as it is written** [Keith Krell: The phrase translated “**it is written**” occurs fifteen times in **Romans**. It’s a formula that alerts the readers that the writer is making a significant point from the Old Testament.],

“That you may be justified in your words, and prevail when you are judged [present passive infinitive, “In the being judged”; **Psalm 51:4**].”

God’s Righteousness Upheld

5 **But if our unrighteousness** [wickedness, evil, wrongdoing] **serves** [verb; V-PIA-3S KJV: commend, NAS: demonstrate] **to show the righteousness** [righteousness, what is right, justice, the act of doing what is in agreement with God’s standards, the state of being in proper relationship with God] **of God, what shall we say?** [Krell: The phrase “**what shall we say?**” is found seven times in **Romans** and nowhere else in the New Testament. It may be used to introduce a conclusion Paul rejects or one that he accepts. . . . When this word begins a Greek sentence, a negative reply is to be anticipated. This is one of Paul’s familiar literary devices.] **That God is unrighteous to inflict wrath on us? (I speak in a human way.)** **6** **By no means!** [to become, to come into existence, begin to be, receive being; same phrase used in **Romans 3:4** to describe bringing out the big guns] **For then how could God judge** [*krino*] **the world?** **7** **But if through my lie God’s truth abounds** [Strong’s, from G4053; to superabound (in quantity or quality), be in excess, be superfluous; also (transitively) to cause to superabound or excel, (make, more) abound, (have, have more) abundance, (be more) abundant, be the better, enough and to spare, exceed, excel, increase, be left, redound, remain (over and above)] **to his** [God’s] **glory, why am I still being condemned as a sinner?** [same as in **Romans 6:1, 15**] **8** **And why not do evil that good may come?—as some people**

slanderosly [V-PIM/P-1P *blasphemeo*, **Mouce: to blaspheme, insult, slander, curse**]
charge us with saying. Their condemnation is just.

Apply (What is the point?)

1. Everyone is doing it. Look to the Scripture.
2. Daily Bible study. Bathe yourself in God's word.
3. **Do we talk to God?** Prayer is essential?

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. Does our reasoning **align** with Scripture?
2. Where do we get our theology?

Quotes

Tom Wenger (Pastor of Trinity Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Crofton, Maryland):
Commands are the railroad tracks on which the life empowered by the love of God poured into the heart by the Holy Spirit runs. Love empowers the engine; law guides the direction.

What themes do we take from this?

How do we let these truths soak in to the fabric of life?

Next week: No One Is Righteous (3:9-20)

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, 10 as it is written:

"None is righteous, no, not one;

11 no one understands;

no one seeks for God.

12 All 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;

16 in their paths are ruin and misery,

17 and the way of peace they have not known."

18 "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

19 Now 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. **20** For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: **Romans** (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS
- Tools: bit.ly/romans2017

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read (**Romans**)
- Talk (about **Romans**—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com) by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Albert Whiting (Calvin)

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

He starts this chapter out by talking about the fable of "The Emperor's New Clothes". He uses this story as it relates to how the Jew's that Paul is addressing see themselves, clothed in a mighty garment of righteousness when in fact the "garment" is nonexistent.

"They were duped by misleading religious confidence. So Paul...stripped away their layers of delusion. They believed that because they possessed the Word of God they were safe. They saw themselves as guides to the blind, correctors of the foolish, teachers of the immature. But Paul undresses them, proving that having God's word is no guarantee of life."

"God is always true, no matter how much man falls short." How blessed are we that God is always true and remains faithful to those that are called to be His, even when we fall.

"God's word teaches us that God is the all-powerful Creator and completely sustains the universe. It reveals the He is perfect in holiness, in righteousness, in love, in justice." They were entrusted with the oracles of God. It was a help to them then as it is for us today. God made everything, the Bible tells me so . . . said in my best Puggle teacher voice.

Chris Arnold (Barclay)

Christen Barber (Luther)

Darla Skinner (Mounce)

Of all the nations on earth God had chosen the Jews to be the custodians of his redemptive plan for the human race.

David Barber (his college notes)

Doug Skinner (Phillips)

George Jackson (Murray)

Romans 3:2

George Jackson: The Church looks at the Jewish community's rejection of Christ and shakes our head. And that is rightfully so, except we as believers struggle daily to follow the precepts of His teaching.

That said, the Jewish community preserved (through God's providence) the "oracles of God" [the Old Testament]. Their high view of scripture, memorizing it, writing it, teaching it, are all traits we as the Church would do good to enact.

We are now trusted with the "oracles of God" let us not fail.

John Murray: For Paul the written Word is God's speech, and God's speech is conceived of as existing in the form of a "trust" to Israel. . . . When we think of what, above all else, was the Jew's privilege as an abiding possession it was his entrustment with the Word of God.

Romans 3:5-8

George Jackson: These verses must be viewed in context and not isolated or a misunderstanding of Paul's intentions could be drawn.

When a vile sinner is dramatically saved and life changed it draws attention. We are not called to abuse God's grace but called to proclaim it.

I am again reminded of John Newton's words near his death **"Although my memory's fading, I remember two things very clearly: I am a great sinner and Christ is a great Savior."**

Also another of John Newton's famous quotes: **"I am not what I ought to be, I am not what I want to be, I am not what I hope to be in another world; but still I am not what I once used to be, and by the grace of God I am what I am."**

John Murray: Paul appeals to the fact of universal judgment and he does not proceed to prove it. He accepts it as an ultimate datum of revelation, and he confronts the objection of verse 5 with this fact. About the certainty of God's judgement there can be no dispute.

Jessica Miller (Stott)

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

I see that Paul's "lawyer" is really showing in this section. A good attorney always prepares not only his side of the case but the opposing counsel's side of the case as well, anticipating the next question, and being prepared to tackle any potential speed bump thrown in your way. Paul is an excellent defense attorney, handling questions with ease that the Jews are most likely thinking. I love his responses.

Notes from my author:

"If men prove unfaithful to God's oracles, He is nevertheless faithful in His promises to them. Why? Because He is God and cannot ever be unfaithful to himself."

Paul quotes David in Psalm 51:4 **“So that Thou art justified when thou dost speak and blameless when Thou dost judge.”** David had broken covenant of God and had found in himself no righteousness or integrity of any kind. Paul quotes this so that his readers may clearly see the difference between the faithfulness and integrity of God and the lack of the same in man.

When he states he is “speaking in human terms” he is using a form of human reasoning to express this inspired truth about God. God’s justice cannot be called into question and Paul indicates that only foolish reasoning would attempt to do so. Paul uses the Jews’ own logic to turn the tables on them. They could not admit that God’s teachings were true. But if they claimed them to be false, by their own logic, they would have to say that divine good arose out of Paul’s doctrine.

Justin Harness (Wiersbe)

Jim Fleming (Moo)

Julia Gregg (Schreiner)

I found this week’s study interesting for many reasons—the thought that stuck me from scripture this week was that there can be no salvation without judgment. Essentially, there would be no need unless there was a standard of righteousness against which we were examined. . . . This week’s passage was a visual aid for me in Paul’s argument that God is faithful despite the unfaithfulness of man. Interestingly, my commentary summarized the thought in a paraphrased list—and then defended it in an exegesis. My author likened this passage to a bridge, but the more I read it—the more it seemed a supporting visual aid to further emphasize Paul’s position on God’s faithfulness. The use of Israel’s history of unfaithfulness makes an undeniable point to the Jewish people Paul was speaking to. (The pink elephant if you will . . .) One of my faves from this section... (150) **The Jews were faulted with anthropological and salvation-historical reasons for unfaithfulness. . . . The incapacity of the Jews to practice the Law and the ability of the Gentiles to do so indicates that the old covenant was deficient because of human weakness, while the new covenant is superior because of the gift of the Spirit. This is the eschatological triumph of God in the justification the ungodly!** Packs a big punch for me. My author also used the phrase **unconditional election** of God (151) with regards to discussing the entrance of man into a covenant with God by GRACE not works. I loved the pair . . . unconditional election . . . the “whosoever”. There really is a lot in these eight verses, but the emerging theme of the impartiality of God is still very present. In my opinion, God’s mercy, grace, and judgment are all impartial.

Julie Fleming (Keller)

Karrie Harness (MacArthur Bible Study)

Michelle Erickson (MacArthur)

Olivia Swint (MacArthur)

Rachel Samsel (McGee)

Sean McGarvey (Ironsides)

Wish this guy would be more poetic and show his Byron side.

“In Romans 3:1-20 we have the great indictment, the summing up of all that has gone before. There is no moral distinction between Jew and Gentile. All are bereft of righteousness. All are shut up to judgment, unless God has a righteousness of His own providing for them.” (p. 29)

Otherwise, all will die of dysentery . . . and hellfire . . . in a rather charred and odiferous fashion.

God will remain righteous through it all, no matter what argument man could think up with which to indict Him.

Stephen Archer

Stephen Mays (Stott)

Stephen Samsel (Stott)

Tim & Mila Archer (Maclaren—but Wiersbe since Maclaren was silent on this passage)