

[Romans 2:21 – 3:9]

~ Some people have an advantage over others in this world. Whether we like that truth or not, it's a fact of our existential reality. For example, the Jews were given the Scriptures – the Oracles of God; whereas others were not. Well, advantage brings responsibility. So, whoever possesses the Word of God is responsible to see that it is taught properly, correctly and completely to those who don't have it. That's why I consider it my tremendous responsibility to take the entire Word of God to the entire world. I take my calling deadly seriously. That's what this Spiritual Safari is all about, friends. I know I am not popular. I know most consider my style too - -. I know most do not believe I have any love in my heart. Well, this report won't make it any easier not to think those things about me; but, if I didn't love the Lord Jesus Christ and His people – and the Word of God – then I would be out fishing or golfing or counting my wealth right now instead of giving you these reports for free! Consider all of that as you read what I have to say in this report.

I have reminded you dear readers several times that I have a very real sense of inadequacy and inability teaching the Bible; and that is particularly true in the Book of Romans. I feel that inadequacy especially as I write this particular report. I hope you are all praying for me because we come to one of the most difficult passages in the Word of God in this section of Scripture; and that would be the beginning of the third chapter. So, it is necessary that we briefly revisit some of our previous report's premises to carry into this report.

Even so-called “good people” are sinners; and the basis on which God will judge them will have nothing to do with good deeds. I don't care how much you tithe or give to the community – and I don't care how many Sunday school classes you teach – which is all well and fine; but you're going to be judged relative to your thought life, your gossip, and all those things that you think no one else knows – but God knows. God knows our mind is just not a clean thing. There will be no respect of persons with God, as we read also in our last report.

We also learned how God will judge the religious man. Paul knew what he was talking about because, as a Pharisee, he had been a very religious man. Paul had been a devout member of Judaism. Judaism is, in my estimation, the *ONLY* God given religion this world has ever had. Christianity is not a religion – and it is technically not even a personal relationship with Christ; Christianity is a *Person*, and that *Person* is Jesus. We either have Christ or we have nothing. So, Paul looks at the religious man and asks some questions. One of those questions was: thou that teachest another, teacheth not also thyself? Do you really practice what you preach, friends? There are many of us teachers whose teaching is a whole lot better than our living. Yes, I am just as guilty as the next man....

II

21 Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?

22 Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?

~ To bring this up to date, the question would be: do you rob temples? The Jews carried the gold-cure to Babylon because, as far as I can tell, they never practiced idolatry in captivity. But, they didn't mind handling the proceeds and profiting from secular business, either. There are many Christians who make a living doing business in a questionable trade that should be condemned by the church. They never seem to realize the rank contradictions with Scripture they profess profusely. The three common sins Paul lists are common sins of believers today. One is *immorality*; a sin against others. Another is *sensuality*; a sin against self. The other is *idolatry*; the sin against God!

In chapter one, we examined these three common sins in reverse order. Idolatry was the climax of sin; a Jew could not debase themselves more than that. Today, anything that makes a mockery of the Lord Jesus Christ is a complete and abject failure; and how many times each day in our lives do we do that? Most of you know I do not like pictures of Jesus; but we are all

a Gospel written on fleshly tablets of someone's heart – and that is what the world is reading. You are writing a Gospel every day of your life. Men read what we write whether it is faithful or true – or not. So, what is the Gospel according to you? It is all too common and way too easy to make a mockery of the cause of Christ by our lives. That's what Paul is talking about....

23 Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?

24 For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.

25 For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.

~ Circumcision revealed identification for a Jew with the True and Living God in the Mosaic System of Levitical Law; but there was no merit in the rite itself. It was *the act* which indicated that individual believed something. So, to transgress the law and yet be circumcised was a twisting that brought Judaism into severe disrepute! That which should have been sacred became profane.

Let's bring that up to date, also – and some of you should probably stop reading at this point, because this is going to hurt. Water baptism is rightly a sacrament of the church *IF – IF – IF* it is the outward expression of the work of God in the heart. Baptism is a complete mockery of the Lord Jesus Christ if the person being baptized gives no evidence of a genuine conversion according to Scripture. A whole lot of church membership by people who constantly join something brings the cause of Christ into absolute disrepute! It also makes a mockery of church membership, in general; and it has literally killed the evangelistic effectiveness of the sincere Bible teacher; but I digress, sort of....

26 Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?

27 And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law?

28 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:

29 But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

~ See, if a wife or a husband loses their wedding ring, that doesn't mean they are no longer married. The ring is just the symbol of marriage, but marriage is more than wearing a ring. If you wear a wedding ring, but you are unfaithful to your wife or husband, you make the wedding ring a disgrace. If that is what you do, the wedding ring is meaningless. Paul is saying circumcision should stand with meaning. The Mosaic Law had already stated circumcision was a matter of the heart. Here is what God said to Israel about circumcision:

Deuteronomy 10:16 Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked ~

Romans Chapter III

1 What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?

~ The word "profit" means "surplus" or "that which is of excess." So, this question has to do with that outward badge of this special covenant God had made with His own people, the Jews. It appears Paul was dangerously close to erasing a distinction God had made. See, if the Jew and the Gentile were on the same footing before God, then what was the advantage of being a Jew, and why be circumcised?

Dr. James Stifler said, “... if circumcision, in and of itself, does not give righteousness; and if uncircumcision does not preclude it – then what profit was there ever in it? A distinction God made among men seems, after all, not to be any distinction at all!” That is the same statement we hear all the time that proclaims church membership has no merit in salvation. They say all rites and ceremonies are meaningless. Well, God certainly does have this world shut up to the cross, and God isn’t asking us to join or do anything – that’s true. Until the sin question is settled, God doesn’t have anything else to say to man. However, after one is saved, I am confident God wants us to serve in the church body of believers in some capacity. After one is saved, I think God wants them to identify with Him and be baptized by water, too. Of course, none of that counts towards salvation; but if you are saved, then those things are our badge of honor! They are our fraternity pins. These things are the only means of communicating to the world who we are. So, Paul goes on to answer his own question now....

2 Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.

~ This is where Paul tells them they had an advantage, and that advantage created a responsibility. This advantage and resulting responsibility is something we need to examine carefully as there is likely more confusion over this doctrine than any other. There are men teaching the Bible in seminary who make no distinction whatsoever between Judaism in the Old Testament and the church in the New Testament. Paul makes it clear that Scripture was given to the nation Israel who was commanded to communicate the Word of God to the world. Moreover, Paul is saying the Jews were not only given the Word of God, but within the Word of God was something exclusively special for them.

See, friends, God is not finished with the nation Israel. This particular point regarding whether or not God has a future plan and purpose for the Jew is the common breaking point amongst theologians. If God doesn’t have a future plan and purpose for Israel, then God doesn’t have a future plan or purpose for *you*, either, my friends. That would be impossible; because we base it *ALL* on the *SAME* Word of God. God is going to make John chapter three verse sixteen good; and He is going to make the covenant He made

with Abraham in the twelfth chapter of Genesis good, too. Anyone teaching that God's plan and purpose for Israel as a nation is complete is unworthy of thoughtful consideration, according to the apostle Paul.

Here is another quote from Dr. Stifler regarding Israel: *"... their advantage was not that God sowed Judaism and the world reaped Christianity because that blots out Judaism. It was, first of all, that unto them were committed the Oracles of God; not that they were made a mere Bible depository, but that God gave them, as Jews, promises not yet fulfilled – and peculiarly their own! The Old Testament record of these oracles contains not a single promise either of or to the church as an organization. There is no prediction of the church in the Old Testament, but it foreshadows a kingdom in which the Jews shall be the head and not lose their national distinction, as the church does."* That just happens to be one of the most important and profound statements that has ever been made concerning rightly dividing the Word of God.

This is precisely where the so called "great" theologians – who really only label each other great – have totally and completely derailed proper, correct and complete Bible teaching. It boggles my mind how doctorate degrees are being handed out by one theologian to another theologian while patting them on the back; and then the man that was patted on the back turns around and gives the man that patted him on the back another degree! I'll be very frank with you readers – this is why the Bible is in such disrepute and disarray as far as teaching goes; and it is the reason there is so much disagreement and confusion about the Word of God!

Dr. Adolph Safar was a converted Jew who made the following tremendous statement: *"... the view that is so prevalent that Israel is the shadow of the church and that the type is now fulfilled and vanished from our horizon is altogether unscriptural. Israel is NOT the shadow fulfilled and absorbed in the church, but it is the basis on which the church rests."* That is another critical statement, by the way. The Jew had a great advantage; and God has a future for them. Their current faithlessness will not destroy God's promises, either....

3 For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?

~ Verse three can be better translated, “... if some were without faith shall their lack of faith cancel out the faithfulness of God?” This is another objection that had been presented to Paul. Paul meets this by returning to the first statement he made. If the advantage of God’s people, the Jew, did not serve the intended purpose, then is God’s faithfulness to His people annulled? In other words, if the Jew failed, then didn’t God fail? No, because God’s promise to send the Redeemer was *NOT* defeated – not even in their willful disobedience and rejection of Him as their Messiah! Every promise God made to Israel will be fulfilled to His glory in spite of their present-day unbelief. I, personally, thank God that His promises to *ME* are not contingent on my faithlessness! Oh, glory to God for that! If that were the case, I would have been lost a *LONG, LONG* time ago....

4 God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.

~ Unbelievers and critics who raise these types of doubts and questions are liars. They will be exposed by God for what they are because the faithfulness of God to His elect is true and will not be changed. I cannot urge you strongly enough to read this report again and comprehend it fully.

1 John 5:10 *He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. 11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.*

How bad is it to disbelieve God when He proclaims to mankind that His Son died for our sins? Well, let me tell you how bad it is: you are calling God a liar! If you think you can tolerate the judgment that goes along with that level of pride, then I must accept that this safari has failed you and has no message for you, my beloved....

5 But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man)

~ Alright, if my unrighteousness reveals the marvelous, wonderful and infinite faithfulness of God's grace, then why does God even have the right to judge me? Dr. David Brown said, "... this makes it very clear that the unsaved world of Paul's day understood Paul was preaching salvation by the grace of God!" This is a very rich section of the Bible we are studying today, friends....

6 God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?

~ See, the Jew in Paul's day believed God would judge the Gentile. Anyone arguing the absurd notion that God won't judge because we reveal His grace in our unrighteousness is exactly that – absurd! If that were the case, God would have no right to judge because all reveal something of the common grace of God in some fashion. And all will glorify God, both lost and saved, but everyone reading this report – even unbelievers – *DO* believe *SOME* people must be judged. You probably don't think *YOU* should be judged; but you *DO* think the rapist and child molester – or the person who killed your mother – should be judged; if you are honest, that is. Man has an innate sense of judgment, and God placed it there for a specific healthy purpose. His purpose. Again, this is critical to understand if we want to understand the Word of God in any capacity....

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.

9 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;

~ Remember, Paul makes no attempt to prove man is a sinner. It is asserted as a premise statement of obvious fact! We have been charged

properly, and Paul has stated the case against us completely. It makes absolutely *no* difference who you are today – high or low, rich or poor, simple or wise, good or bad – we are *ALL* under the condemnation of sin! I know many of you are going to jump up and down and tell me I'm wrong, and many of you will stop reading these reports as a result of proper Bible teaching; but that's not my problem. See, man is a sinner in *four* different ways. God gives man four strikes, whereas, in baseball, we only get three. One, man is a sinner *by acts*. Second, man is a sinner *by nature*. Sinning does not make us sinners; we sin because we are sinners! Third, man is a sinner *by imputation*, and we'll get to that later. Fourth, our estate itself is under the judgment of sin – *we are naturally in a sinful state*.

I'm sure this report does not sit well – at all – with many people. I can't help that. We are under condemnation and living in a world where *ALL* men – *ALL MEN* – are under said condemnation of sin. That is our existential state. If you don't believe the Bible, then that is your prerogative; but what this report teaches is exactly what God teaches ~