

Romans 2.17 - 3.8

"Squandered Opportunities"

THEME 1.17 "a righteousness from God...freely given by FAITH"

WHY? DO WE NEED this RIGHTEOUSNESS? "I'm OK, You're OK"

DARKEST DESCRIPTION OF HUMAN CONDITION IN ALL LITERATURE

How DESPERATELY ALL People NEED GOD'S Gift of RIGHTEOUSNESS

Gentiles with No Religion > Suppress the Truth of God's Natural Revelation

Self-Confident Moralists > Guilty before God based on their own Broken Rules

2.17 "Now you, if you call yourself a Jew" RELIGIOUS PERSON

Fundamentalist – Christian, Islamic, or Hindu / Faithful Church Member

1 Privileges we Possess 2. Our Practice and our Preaching 3. Paul's Polemic

1. Privileges We Possess

Paul Lists NINE SPECIFIC Blessings / Group into THREE CATEGORIES

a. Commandments – Privilege of HAVING GOD'S SACRED WORD

2.17 "you rely on the law" LAW WAS THEIR TREASURE

2.20 "you have in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth"

3.2 "they have been entrusted with the very words of God."

"The deposit of revelation in the Scripture is called 'the oracles of God'

...Scripture is no less the speech...of God than were the divine utterances which prophets received directly from the mouth of God. Scripture itself is a "thus saith the Lord."...For Paul the written word was God's speech" John Murray

MOSES ASKED "What other nation is so great as to have such righteous decrees and laws as this body of laws I am setting before you today?" Deuteronomy 4.8

"He has revealed his word to Jacob, his laws and decrees to Israel. He has done this for no other nation; they do not know his laws." Psalm 147.19,20

2.18 “instructed by the law” LAW WAS THEIR TEACHER

2.18 “you know his will...approve of what is superior”

UNDERSTOOD THAT OTHERS NEEDED THIS TEACHING

2.19 “you are a guide for the blind, a light for those who are in the dark, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of infants”

IMPORTANT TRUTH PRESENTED IN A TONE OF SARCASM

TRUTH – THIS TREASURE WAS FOR THE NATIONS

SARCASM – BEST WAY TO TEACH IT TO THE NATIONS, LIVE IT OUT

SIMILAR FRUSTRATION OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST – Israel’s Messiah

“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as you are. Woe to you, blind guides!” Matthew 23.15

b. Covenant – Privilege of BEING GOD’S CHOSEN PEOPLE

2.17 “your relationship to God” Relationship DEFINED BY COVENANT

PAUL AMPLIFIES THEME “the people of Israel. Theirs is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises.” Romans 9.4,5

RELIGION INTENDED to be MORE than RITUAL – Covenant Relationship

DANGER OF ANY RELATIONSHIP – Loss of Joy, Purpose, and Meaning

Couple Married for 20 years – Wife: Hurt & Sad – “Do you still love me?”

HUSB “Told you 20 years ago I loved you, if that changes, I will let you know!”

NOT ONLY do WE NEED Marriage Renewal / Israel needed Covenant Renewal

UNDERSTANDING THIS – God Instituted Covenant Renewal Ceremonies

3 X’s a yr Jew to Jerusalem for Feast / Every 7 yrs the LAW OF GOD Read

Deut 31 – Joshua 24 – Ezra 8 – examples of GOOD DAYS of RENEWAL

GREATEST IRONY – Lord of the Covenant – Israel’s Divine Lover

Fulfillment of All God’s Covenant Promises / Spurned by HIS OWN Nation

ENDS SERMON OF WOES AGAINST PHARISEES WITH his Own WOE

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing." Matthew 23.37

c. Circumcision – Privilege of BEARING GOD’S COVENANT SIGN

God’s COVENANT w/Abraham, "As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you for the generations to come. This is my covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised." Genesis 17.9

CUTTING AWAY FORESKIN ON ORGAN OF MALE REPRODUCTION

Covenant Promises for ALL Generations / Sign of Covenant

AGAIN – Relationship grown Cold - "Squandered Opportunities"

2.25 "Circumcision has value if you observe the law, but if you break the law, you have become as though you had not been circumcised."

SHOCKING WORDS – JEW CONVINCED Circumcision was MEAL TICKET

YOU HAD IT – You’re IN! – GUARANTEED – NO QUESTIONS ASKED

"Circumcised men do not descend into Gehenna"... "Circumcision will deliver Israel from Gehenna" Jewish Rabbi’s

BUT PAUL SAYS – "There is No Free Lunch" / SIGN EMPTY w/out Reality

2.25 "Circumcision HAS VALUE IF you observe the law, but if you break the law, you have become as though you had not been circumcised."

NOT SALVATION by OBEDIENCE > OBEDIENCE as SIGN of SALVATION

IDEA DOES NOT COME FROM PAUL – way back in the Old Testament

MOSES TO ISRAEL – "Circumcise your hearts...and do not be stiff-necked any longer. For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes."

Deuteronomy 10.16,17

UNCIRCUMCISED GENTILE WHO OBEYS IS EVEN MORE RIGHTEOUS

2.27 “The one who is not circumcised physically and yet obeys the law will condemn you who, even though you have the written code and circumcision, are a lawbreaker.”

ANOTHER GREAT SHOCK – Jews convinced they would Judge the Gentiles

PAUL SAYS GOD HAS REVERSED THE ROLES – They will Condemn You

ECHOES WORDS of JESUS to JEWS "Have you never read in the Scriptures: ‘The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone ; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes’? Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit.

Matthew 21.43

“The ultimate sign, the bona fide evidence, of membership in the covenant of God is neither circumcision nor possession of the law, but the obedience which both circumcision and law demand. Their circumcision did not make them what their disobedience proved they were not. This is not salvation by obedience, but obedience as evidence of salvation.”

John Stott

APPLICATION – What we done with our God given spiritual opportunities?

Christian Family Heritage? God has no Grandchildren – Family pointed the way,

But WE must Decide for Him, YOU will face Him as Lord and Judge

Christian Sacraments: Baptism & Lord’s Supper – Signs of Blessings and Grace

WILL NOT REPENT – become signs of Judgment and Cursing

Christian Church and Worship – Great opportunity to Meet God, Worship, Word

PURPOSE of Meeting – Enter into Living and Loving Relationship with Him

2. Our Practice and our Preaching

a. Symbols Communicate Truth / Commandments, Covenant, Circumcision

GOD GIVEN RITUALS TO REPRESENT PRECIOUS TRUTHS about Him

FALSE Message “these things DO NOT MATTER” / GOD SAYS THEY DO!!

Symbols Important = What They Symbolize / SIGN of GOD, Mercy, Covenant

2.26. “If those who are not circumcised keep the law's requirements, will they not be regarded as though they were circumcised?”

REALITY REPRESENTED MORE IMPT than SYMBOL ITSELF

CIRCUMCISED – Covenant Symbol = OATH OF OBEDIENCE, LOYALTY

God is more honored by True Obedience – even from the Uncircumcised

God Dishonored by BLATANT DISREGARD FOR THE SYMBOL WE BEAR

2.29 “circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit...Such a man's praise is not from men, but from God.” PLAY ON WORDS: JEW / Jacob & Leah’s Son = JUDAH

JUDAH = “Praise the Lord” > God is most praised by Covenant Faithfulness

b. Symbols convey Responsibility

2.16 “God will judge men’s secrets through Jesus Christ”

FAILURE TO DO WHAT SYMBOL POINTS TO EMPTIES ITS MEANING

2.21-23 “you, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal? You who say that people should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? You who brag about the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law?”

YOU JEWS ARE THE KEEPERS OF GOD’S COMMANDMENTS

Let’s Look at a Few –

1. 8th Commandment – “You shall not steal” – Do you steal?

2. 7th Commandment – “You shall not commit adultery” – Do you?

3. 2nd Commandment – “Do not make idols” SOME robbed pagan temples

SIMILAR TO THEFT OF NATIONAL TREASURES by Rich People Today

FAILURE TO DO WHAT SYMBOL POINTS TO EMPTIES ITS MEANING
 HIGHWAY Sign – “10 Kilometers to Beijing” with Arrow Pointing the Way
 GREAT SIGN – ENCOURAGE TRAVELERS who are LOST or WEARY
 IMAGINE if Someone turned Arrow Around / POINTING WRONG WAY
 BLESSED SIGN / TURNED INTO A TRAVELER’S CURSE

TRAGEDY OF JEWISH APOSTASY / HEARTBREAKING TO PAUL

10.1 “my heart's desire & prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved”

DOES THIS LOOK A PICTURE of –

Our Church Headquarters, Our Fellowship, Our Family, Our Hearts?

HOW BITTER THESE WORDS OF PAUL TO THE JEWS

2.24 "God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you."

c. Symbols create Humility – or at least THEY SHOULD

COVENANT – made by Grace, not based on OUR MERIT or WORTH

“I will confirm my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers.” Abram fell facedown
 Genesis 17.2,3

GOD MADE A COVENANT WITH DAVID Then King David went in and sat before the LORD, and he said: "Who am I, O Sovereign LORD, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far?...Is this your usual way of dealing with man, O Sovereign LORD?
 2 Samuel 7.18

WHO are WE that GOD WOULD INVITE US INTO SOLEMN COVENANT?

COMMANDMENTS – should create Humility > We have BROKEN THEM

John 8 – WOMAN CAUGHT IN ADULTERY / brought before Jesus – no Man?

ZEALOUS MEN WANT TO BEGIN HER EXECUTION – Clearly Guilty!!

Jesus "If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground. At this, those who heard began to go away" John 8.7,8

WHY? – Many Theories / Some say he wrote Sins of Each One in the Sand
NOT ENOUGH SAND / NOT ENOUGH TIME

PERHAPS ANSWER IS NOT IN THE MESSAGE BUT THE MEDIA
WHAT IS SAND? BROKEN ROCK! Duh!!

FINGER of God > Which Once Wrote Holy Law on Tablets of Stone
NOW STIRS the EVIDENCE of How they have Shattered His Righteousness

3. Paul's Polemic

IMPRESSED IN ROMANS – tightly reasoned arguments of Apostle Paul

SOMETIMES WE CAN SAY TOO MUCH > GO TOO FAR

Lawyer defending man accused of biting off another man's ear in bar brawl
TO EYEWITNESS "Did you actually see my client bite off the man's ear?" NO!
GOOD PLACE TO STOP – THAT WAS EXACTLY ANSWER HE NEEDED
FOOLISHLY CONTINUED "What did you see?" / "I saw him spit the ear out"

Some THOUGHT PAUL had GONE TOO FAR – being a Jew means Nothing

2.28,29 A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code.

IF GOD TREATS Jew and Gentile Alike – No Favoritism / Why be a Jew?

a. God's Word 3.2 "the very words of God"

3.1 "What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew, or what value is there in circumcision? Much in every way! First of all, they have been entrusted with the very words of God."

PRIMACY OF SCRIPTURE / conveys all Blessings

ONLY SOURCE OF ETERNAL TRUTH – all else is Human Speculation

Only Light of Grace – Only Word of Hope – Infallible source of Guidance

Prophecy Over Beijing

By: Apostle David Morgan

May 29, 2016

You are going to see the miracles, that going to see the dead raised and eyes that are blinded would be healed, deaf ears will hear and that will be an understanding in my spirit for I am releasing prophetic unction and prophetic revelation for the enemy has put the spirit of stupor and blindness over the city of Beijing but I have come to bring to release the prophetic and to release and challenge visitations shall be visitation from God, yea, I shall visit the people in Beijing, I will raise up new leaders in this place and I will bring forth the unity that needs to be upheld by my Spirit and by my grace says the Spirit of the Lord, so think it not strange the things that you had gone through and behold I will do a new thing for you and yea, you have heard it said, you have heard it said, that you not yet seen it done, now is not the time to give up, now is not the time to quit, now is the time not to grow weary in well doing for surely you will see all that I have promised shall come to pass. For I am he that is able, repent, from your wicked ways turn to me humble thyself and continue to pray, and surely you will see that I am the Lord your God, able to bring it to pass, says the Spirit of the Lord. In the mighty name of Jesus.

“Scripture, although also written of men, is not of men nor from men, but from God”

Martin Luther

“This is the principle that distinguishes our religion from all others, that we know that God has spoken, to us and are fully convinced that the prophets did not speak of themselves, but, as organs of the Holy Spirit, uttered only that which they had been commissioned from heaven to declare.”

John Calvin

“The authority and truth of Scripture is not an obscure issue reserved for the private debate and entertainment of theologians; it is relevant, indeed critical for every serious Christian – layman, pastor, and theologian alike. My convictions have come from...behind prison walls where Christians grapple in hand-to-hand combat with the prince of darkness. In our prison fellowships where the Bible is proclaimed as God’s holy and inerrant revelation, believers grow and discipleship deepens. Christians live their faith with power. Where the Bible is

not so proclaimed faith withers and dies. Christianity without biblical fidelity is merely another passing fad in an age of passing fads.” Charles Colson

Prophecy, Dreams, Hearing from God ???

b. God's Faithfulness

IF GOD MADE AN ETERNAL COVENANT WITH THE JEWS,
AND THE SIGN OF THAT COVENANT IS CIRCUMCISION,
HOW COULD ANY CIRCUMCISED JEW BE LOST IN THEIR SIN?

PAUL devotes THREE CHAPTERS (9-11) to FULLY ANSWER THIS ??

3.3 What if some did not have faith? Will their lack of faith nullify God's faithfulness?

1. God is Sovereign > All He does is JUST

3.4 “Not at all! Let God be true, and every man a liar.”

2. God is FAITHFUL > He will not BREAK HIS PROMISES

3.4 “As it is written: "So that you may be proved right when you speak and prevail when you judge."

GOD NEVER PROMISED TO SAVE ALL JEWS, OR

ALL PROFESSING Xtians, OR ALL BAPTIZED Xtians

GOD'S PROMISE IS TO SAVE ALL WHO CALL UPON HIM IN FAITH

If you are to be Saved, it is will not be apart from Faith in Jesus

GOD the SON / GOD the SAVIOR / GOD the SOVEREIGN

c. Our Sin

SINCE our Sin Displays God's Righteousness > Why are we Punished?

3.5,6 "But if our unrighteousness brings out God's righteousness more clearly, what shall we say? That God is unjust in bringing his wrath on us? (I am using a human argument.) Certainly not! If that were so, how could God judge the world?"

A GOOD END DOES NOT JUSTIFY A BAD MEANS > Utilitarianism

How can GOD PUNISH SIN if my Falsehood ENHANCES GOD'S GLORY?

3.7 Someone might argue, "If my falsehood enhances God's truthfulness and so increases his glory, why am I still condemned as a sinner?" Why not say--as we are being slanderously reported as saying and as some claim that we say--"Let us do evil that good may result"? Their condemnation is deserved.

ANTINOMIANISM – Saved by Grace / therefore more sin displays more grace

Paul does not dignify this with a thorough Answer, THEY ARE CONDEMNED

JAMES BOICE makes a point from John 9 – Man Born Blind

CONSIDER – Man Born Blind CANNOT IMAGINE what HE IS MISSING

NEVER HAD SIGHT DID NOT KNOW WHAT BLESSING SIGHT IS

WAS BEGGING – Not for Sight – UNIMAGINABLE – But for Sustenance

BLIND – UNAWARE of What He was Missing – BANKRUPT / Any Worse?

ONE ADVANTAGE – IN the Right Place at the Right Time > Where Jesus Was

HOW ABOUT YOU? Can you See? Can you Understand? Are you Filled?

WITHOUT the LORD JESUS – You're in a similar MISERABLE CONDITION

3.1 "What advantage, then, is there?" FOR YOU "Much in every way!"

You Hear VERY WORDS OF GOD – Words of Life, Healing & Sight in Jesus

Romans 2.¹⁷Now you, if you call yourself a Jew; if you rely on the law and brag about your relationship to God; ¹⁸if you know his will and approve of what is superior because you are instructed by the law; ¹⁹if you are convinced that you are a guide for the blind, a light for those who are in the dark, ²⁰an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of infants, because you have in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth -- ²¹you, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal? ²²You who say that people should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? ²³You who brag about the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law? ²⁴As it is written: "God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you." ²⁵Circumcision has value if you observe the law, but if you break the law, you have become as though you had not been circumcised. ²⁶If those who are not circumcised keep the law's requirements, will they not be regarded as though they were circumcised? ²⁷The one who is not circumcised physically and yet obeys the law will condemn you who, even though you have the written code and circumcision, are a lawbreaker. ²⁸A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. ²⁹No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a man's praise is not from men, but from God. Romans 3.¹What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew, or what value is there in circumcision? ²Much in every way! First of all, they have been entrusted with the very words of God. ³What if some did not have faith? Will their lack of faith nullify God's faithfulness? ⁴Not at all! Let God be true, and every man a liar. As it is written: "So that you may be proved right when you speak and prevail when you judge." ⁵But if our unrighteousness brings out God's righteousness more clearly, what shall we say? That God is unjust in bringing his wrath on us? (I am using a human argument.) ⁶Certainly not! If that were so, how could God judge the world? ⁷Someone might argue, "If my falsehood enhances God's truthfulness and so increases his glory, why am I still condemned as a sinner?" ⁸Why not say--as we are being slanderously reported as saying and as some claim that we say--"Let us do evil that good may result"? Their condemnation is deserved.