

Romans Chapter Three

Read Romans 3:1-8 – Special Privileges of the Jews

v1. "WHAT ADVANTAGE THEN HATH THE JEW? OR WHAT IS THE PROFIT OF CIRCUMCISION?" (ASV)

Based upon the evidence presented in the prior verses Paul now asks what we call a rhetorical question; a question that the evidence presented or facts already known and readily accepted answers for us. The Jewish nation had every advantage that God would provide. They were given law, they were given land, they were preserved by God for the completion of His purpose of bringing redemption to mankind.

v2. "MUCH EVERY WAY: FIRST OF ALL, THAT THEY WERE INTRUSTED WITH THE ORACLES OF GOD." (ASV)

The specific advantage that the Israelite nation had over the Gentiles is that they were the keepers of the oracles of God. The oracles of God denote or consist of the whole of God's revelation to mankind, from the beginning of the world until the time of Moses when His words began to be recorded for future generations and whatever other laws, instructions, teachings and or doctrines God provided to mankind down through God's revelation up until this time. The Jews knew or should have known God's will because they were those people who:

"...BEAREST THE NAME OF A JEW, AND RESTEST UPON THE LAW, AND GLORIEST IN GOD, AND KNOWEST HIS WILL, AND APPROVEST THE THINGS THAT ARE EXCELLENT, BEING INSTRUCTED OUT OF THE LAW,,"
Romans 2:17-18 (ASV)

"FOR WHAT GREAT NATION IS THERE, THAT HATH A GOD SO NIGH UNTO THEM, AS JEHOVAH OUR GOD IS WHENSOEVER WE CALL UPON HIM? AND WHAT GREAT NATION IS THERE, THAT HATH STATUTES AND ORDINANCES SO RIGHTEOUS AS ALL THIS LAW, WHICH I SET BEFORE YOU THIS DAY?" **Deuteronomy 4:7-8** (ASV)

"HE SHOWETH HIS WORD UNTO JACOB, HIS STATUTES AND HIS ORDINANCES UNTO ISRAEL. HE HATH NOT DEALT SO WITH ANY NATION; AND AS FOR HIS ORDINANCES, THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN THEM. PRAISE YE JEHOVAH." **Psalms 147:19-20** (ASV)

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v3. "FOR WHAT IF SOME WERE WITHOUT FAITH? SHALL THEIR WANT OF FAITH MAKE OF NONE EFFECT THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD?" (ASV)

There were a great many among the Israelite nation who rejected God's statutes, doctrines and teaching that were provided to them; and then rejected the Messiah when he came.

"BUT THEY DID NOT ALL HEARKEN TO THE GLAD TIDINGS. FOR ISAIAH SAITH, LORD, WHO HATH BELIEVED OUR REPORT?" **Romans 10:16**,
(**Isaiah 53:1**)

"FOR INDEED WE HAVE HAD GOOD TIDINGS PREACHED UNTO US, EVEN AS ALSO THEY: BUT THE WORD OF HEARING DID NOT PROFIT THEM, BECAUSE IT WAS NOT UNITED BY FAITH WITH THEM THAT HEARD.." **Hebrews 4:2**

Did that make God's word of no effect? Did that mean that God's promises had failed? Did that prove God to be a false God? This is what the Premillennialists teach. Christ came, the Jews rejected him so he did not establish his kingdom but will return to do so and reign on earth for 1,000 years. In other words God failed and will have to try again.

v4. "GOD FORBID: YEA, LET GOD BE FOUND TRUE, BUT EVERY MAN A LIAR; AS IT IS WRITTEN, THAT THOU MIGHTEST BE JUSTIFIED IN THY WORDS, AND MIGHTEST PREVAIL WHEN THOU COMEST INTO JUDGMENT." (ASV)

God forbid -- man may prove to be false but God NEVER.

The Jews refusal to accept and obey God's body of teaching did not make it false or prove that God is a liar but rather indicated their (the Israelites) failure. God made a covenant with them; gave them his law - God was true and faithful to his part; the fact that this people rejected him did not make God unfaithful or untrue when he punished them for their sins

When David prayed for remission of his sins with Bathsheba "AGAINST THEE, THEE ONLY, HAVE I SINNED, AND DONE THAT WHICH IS EVIL IN THY SIGHT; THAT THOU MAYEST BE JUSTIFIED WHEN THOU SPEAKEST, AND BE CLEAR WHEN THOU JUDGEST." **Psalms 51:4**; in this passage David in his prayer declares that God was right in his judgment. Do we remember what brought about David's grief? Nathan had come and told him of the things (**II Sam. 12**) that would be visited upon David's house as a result of his sin and the crowning promise was that the child born of their sin would die.

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"HE THAT HATH RECEIVED HIS WITNESS HATH SET HIS SEAL TO THIS, THAT GOD IS TRUE." **John 3:33** (ASV)

v5. "BUT IF OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS COMMENDETH THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD, WHAT SHALL WE SAY? IS GOD UNRIGHTEOUS WHO VISITETH WITH WRATH? (I SPEAK AFTER THE MANNER OF MEN)." (ASV)

Man frequently has a major problem with God's justice and Paul addresses this problem in these verses. Is God, the one who inflicts his wrath upon the disobedient - even those who disobey him in ignorance - unrighteous? Is it just of God to punish the sin that confirms the glory of his righteousness? Since sin is the reason for God's mercy - the reason he gave his son to die that we might be cleansed - is God unrighteous when he punishes those who sin?

He speaks after the manner or using the reasoning of men, just as he did in other places in his writing:

"I SPEAK AFTER THE MANNER OF MEN BECAUSE OF THE INFIRMITY OF YOUR FLESH: FOR AS YE PRESENTED YOUR MEMBERS AS SERVANTS TO UNCLEANNES AND TO INIQUITY UNTO INIQUITY, EVEN SO NOW PRESENT YOUR MEMBERS AS SERVANTS TO RIGHTEOUSNESS UNTO SANCTIFICATION." **Romans 6:19**

v6. "GOD FORBID: FOR THEN HOW SHALL GOD JUDGE THE WORLD?" (ASV)

If it were unrighteous of God (whom we know cannot be unrighteous) to seek vengeance against those who reject Him and His Son; then God could not judge the world. God as ruler of all intelligence, will judge those who are capable of being judged -- as children of men, all of them assuredly ought to be judged.

v7. "BUT IF THE TRUTH OF GOD THROUGH MY LIE ABOUNDED UNTO HIS GLORY, WHY AM I ALSO STILL JUDGED AS A SINNER?" (ASV)

Paul asks that if he would tell a lie that would cause God to be glorified; would Paul sin by telling that lie? We all consider Judas betrayal of Jesus as treason and the cause of Jesus being crucified at that time. Well, since this fulfilled the plan and intentions of God; since Jesus' death must happen in order for God to provide the proper blood sacrifice to redeem mankind; why is Judas regarded as a sinner? **MOTIVE!!** Judas did what he did; not because that it was God's plan, God's purpose to sacrifice his Son but because of his own reasons. God used the evil in Judas to accomplish His purpose – he didn't put it there. He knew it would be there when needed.

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v8. "AND WHY NOT (AS WE ARE SLANDEROUSLY REPORTED, AND AS SOME AFFIRM THAT WE SAY), LET US DO EVIL, THAT GOOD MAY COME? WHOSE CONDEMNATION IS JUST." (ASV)

Some were perverting what Paul and others were teaching to the extent that they were insisting that since through man's sin God is glorified, it could not be wrong to sin. How is it that through man's sin God could be glorified? God would be glorified because it gives God an opportunity to exercise his mercy and compassion in the act of forgiveness. His enemies falsely accused Paul of teaching that we should do evil that good may come.

Romans 3:9-18 – Sin is Universal

v9. "WHAT THEN? ARE WE BETTER THAN THEY? NO, IN NO WISE: FOR WE BEFORE LAID TO THE CHARGE BOTH OF JEWS AND GREEKS, THAT THEY ARE ALL UNDER SIN;" (ASV)

Both the Jews and Gentiles were under sin. Even though the Jew enjoyed greater privileges and advantages bestowed upon them because they possessed the oracles of God. Law had been given them because of the faith of their fathers. The Israelite nation or the Jews were no better than anyone else. The Jews had forfeited their privileges by their sin and therefore were in the very same situation as the Gentiles.

"BUT THE SCRIPTURES SHUT UP ALL THINGS (*HATH CONCLUDED ALL, KJV*) UNDER SIN, THAT THE PROMISE BY FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST MIGHT BE GIVEN TO THEM THAT BELIEVE." **Galatians 3:22** (ASV)

v10. "AS IT IS WRITTEN, THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NO, NOT ONE;"

In picturing the widespread wickedness of his day, David said:

"JEHOVAH LOOKED DOWN FROM HEAVEN UPON THE CHILDREN OF MEN, TO SEE IF THERE WERE ANY THAT DID UNDERSTAND, THAT DID SEEK AFTER GOD. THEY ARE ALL GONE ASIDE; THEY ARE TOGETHER BECOME FILTHY; THERE IS NONE THAT DOETH GOOD, NO, NOT ONE." **Psalms 14:2-3** (ASV)

This language is used to show how things appeared to one that would stand on the outside and look in at those who were supposed to be God's people. In proportion to the whole, very few honored God, and no nation honored him.

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v11. "THERE IS NONE THAT UNDERSTANDETH, THERE IS NONE THAT SEEKETH AFTER GOD;" (ASV)

There is none whose thoughts and endeavors are directed toward God. The first thing that man has to do in order to please God is to believe that he is; that he exists.

Hebrews 11:6 "AND WITHOUT FAITH IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO BE WELL- PLEASING UNTO HIM; FOR HE THAT COMETH TO GOD MUST BELIEVE THAT HE IS, AND THAT HE IS A REWARDER OF THEM THAT SEEK AFTER HIM." (ASV)

This and the following quotations from David that Paul quotes here tells us of the sinfulness of the Jewish people.

v12. "THEY HAVE ALL TURNED ASIDE, THEY ARE TOGETHER BECOME UNPROFITABLE; THERE IS NONE THAT DOETH GOOD, NO, NOT, SO MUCH AS ONE:" (ASV)

Their understanding has become dark, they're groping blindly and consequently they have turned aside from the way that leads to God. Is the world or this country any different today? In the world when Paul was writing there was a universal corruption of morals as a consequence of apostasy from God. This very much describes, as well, the general condition of the world and this country today.

v13. "THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN SEPULCHRE; WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY HAVE USED DECEIT: THE POISON OF ASPES IS UNDER THEIR LIPS:" (ASV)

Paul here quotes from **Psalms 5:9**

"FOR THERE IS NO FAITHFULNESS IN THEIR MOUTH; THEIR INWARD PART IS VERY WICKEDNESS; THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN SEPULCHRE; THEY FLATTER WITH THEIR TONGUE." (ASV)

An open sepulcher, an open tomb, emits a foul odor from the corruption that is in it, this is used to depict the evil that comes out of the mouths of the wicked. Their words were deceitful and misleading. This makes me think of some of our prominent politicians of today.

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"THEY HAVE SHARPENED THEIR TONGUE LIKE A SERPENT; ADDERS' POISON IS UNDER THEIR LIPS. SELAH" **Psalms 140:3** (ASV)

The words of these people are like the poison of an asp or adder or, in Texas we would perhaps say a rattlesnake. The rattler apparently has more manners than these people that Paul is talking about. I'm told that the rattlesnake will warn you to leave it alone and will normally not strike if you do so.

v14. "WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS:" (ASV)

These people are full of blasphemies, malignant words against God and man. Thus the mouth, which God created to bless and honor him, is used to grieve him. Bitterness is used to indicate those wounding, stinging words which some people have a knack for using.

v15. "THEIR FEET ARE SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD;" (ASV)

They frequently and without any consciousness of wrongdoing commit murder and violence of various sorts, seeking to gratify their malice or take vengeance. Our TV news, even in this city, is full of this kind crime daily.

v16. "DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR WAYS;"

Frequently people with this kind of mindset will self-destruct. We see these families in the local news and grieve for their children. We ask; how can God tolerate such sin? And even if they don't self-destruct and destroy their lives here, their judgment will be the fires of hell. For these and other reasons the wise man writes:

Proverbs 1:10 "MY SON, IF SINNERS ENTICE THEE, CONSENT THOU NOT." **15-16** "MY SON, WALK NOT THOU IN THE WAY WITH THEM; REFRAIN THY FOOT FROM THEIR PATH: FOR THEIR FEET RUN TO EVIL, AND THEY MAKE HASTE TO SHED BLOOD." (ASV)

People like these leave only destruction and misery behind them.

v17. "AND THE WAY OF PEACE HAVE THEY NOT KNOWN:"

They are strangers to the way of peace. Those who would be peaceable or try to not become involved in their hate and discontent are looked upon with scorn as weak or simply seen as making themselves easy victims.

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v18. "THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES."

These people have no fear of God; therefore they think nothing about what God would be displeased with. This is what I think about when I see one of the cars or trucks that has the decal on its windshield or back glass that reads "NO FEAR". Someone who has No Fear usually has no common sense either.

Isaiah in writing about the children of Israel describes these people this way:

"THEIR FEET RUN TO EVIL, AND THEY MAKE HASTE TO SHED INNOCENT BLOOD: THEIR THOUGHTS ARE THOUGHTS OF INIQUITY; DESOLATION AND DESTRUCTION ARE IN THEIR PATHS. THE WAY OF PEACE THEY KNOW NOT; AND THERE IS NO JUSTICE IN THEIR GOINGS: THEY HAVE MADE THEM CROOKED PATHS; WHOSOEVER GOETH THEREIN DOTH NOT KNOW PEACE." **Isaiah 59:7-8** (ASV)

Romans 3:19-20 – Purpose of the Law

v19. "NOW WE KNOW THAT WHAT THINGS SOEVER THE LAW SAITH, IT SPEAKETH TO THEM THAT ARE UNDER THE LAW; THAT EVERY MOUTH MAY BE STOPPED, AND ALL THE WORLD MAY BE BROUGHT UNDER THE JUDGMENT OF GOD:" (ASV)

Since the law that Paul is writing about here is that contained in the Old Testament scriptures it applies to the Jew; who were to have obeyed that law. God's law is perfect, demands obedience, and will make the man who conforms to it perfect in his obedience. But no man could give a faultless obedience to a perfect law.

When man fell short in his obedience to divine law, he was condemned by that same law and could not boast of perfection before God. Therefore, the whole world, both Jew and Gentile, was brought under condemnation.

v20. "BECAUSE BY THE WORKS OF THE LAW SHALL NO FLESH BE JUSTIFIED IN HIS SIGHT; FOR THROUGH THE LAW COMETH THE KNOWLEDGE OF SIN." (ASV)

Since under the Law of Moses all had fallen short and found themselves in this state of sin and condemnation, we learn that no flesh can be justified by law alone. This is the reason that it was necessary to send a saviour, a sacrifice:

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"AND BY HIM EVERY ONE THAT BELIEVETH IS JUSTIFIED FROM ALL THINGS, FROM WHICH YE COULD NOT BE JUSTIFIED BY THE LAW OF MOSES." **Acts 13:39** (ASV)

"YET KNOWING THAT A MAN IS NOT JUSTIFIED BY THE WORKS OF THE LAW BUT THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST, EVEN WE BELIEVED ON CHRIST JESUS, THAT WE MIGHT BE JUSTIFIED BY FAITH IN CHRIST, AND NOT BY THE WORKS OF THE LAW: BECAUSE BY THE WORKS OF THE LAW SHALL NO FLESH BE JUSTIFIED." **Galatians 2:16** (ASV)

By the law we learn what sin is; mankind, because he has a free will, has a tendency to be rebellious. Therefore when he knows what the law is he has a tendency to rebel against its restraints; its prohibitions. Paul says (partial quote)

Romans 7:7 "WHAT SHALL WE SAY THEN? IS THE LAW SIN? GOD FORBID. HOWBEIT, I HAD NOT KNOWN SIN, EXCEPT THROUGH THE LAW: FOR I HAD NOT KNOWN COVETING, EXCEPT THE LAW HAD SAID, THOU SHALT NOT COVET:" (ASV)

In leading us through all the discussion of sin and emphasizing that no man is without sin Paul has been leading us up to the realization that without Christ, the salvation promised through him, the redemption that is in Christ NO ONE in this world could ever be made perfect or be justified in God's sight. His sacrifice was necessary; our faith in his word is necessary; our obedience to his law is also necessary but more about that later.

Romans 3:21-25 – Righteousness by Faith

v21. "BUT NOW APART FROM THE LAW A RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD HATH BEEN MANIFESTED, BEING WITNESSED BY THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS;" (ASV)

God's plan for justifying man is separate and apart from the law given to Moses and is revealed unto us through Christ, His Son.

Peter in his discourse before the Jerusalem elders and apostles on the occasion of those from Jerusalem trying to require circumcision of the Gentile Christians, spoke of Cornelius and the conversion of his household:

Acts 15:11 "BUT WE BELIEVE THAT WE SHALL BE SAVED THROUGH THE GRACE OF THE LORD JESUS, IN LIKE MANNER AS THEY." (ASV)

All men are eligible for the grace of God, both Jew and Gentile.

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The law given to Moses and the writings of the prophets helped lead the Israelite nation and point us toward that salvation, toward that redemption. It helps lead us to the realization that we must accept the teachings and doctrines of His Son and his Apostles.

Paul in his defense before Agrippa confirmed this

"HAVING THEREFORE OBTAINED THE HELP THAT IS FROM GOD, I STAND UNTO THIS DAY TESTIFYING BOTH TO SMALL AND GREAT, SAYING NOTHING BUT WHAT THE PROPHETS AND MOSES DID SAY SHOULD COME;" **Acts 26:22** (ASV)

We can be just like Paul in that regard. In fact we can be just like Abel; remember the lesson pointed out to us in the Hebrew letter?

"BY FAITH ABEL OFFERED UNTO GOD A MORE EXCELLENT SACRIFICE THAN CAIN, THROUGH WHICH HE HAD WITNESS BORNE TO HIM THAT HE WAS RIGHTEOUS, GOD BEARING WITNESS IN RESPECT OF HIS GIFTS: AND THROUGH IT HE BEING DEAD YET SPEAKETH." **Hebrews 11:4** (ASV)

We can be just like Peter encouraged all those who would read his epistles:

"WHOM NOT HAVING SEEN YE LOVE; ON WHOM, THOUGH NOW YE SEE HIM NOT, YET BELIEVING, YE REJOICE GREATLY WITH JOY UNSPEAKABLE AND FULL OF GLORY: RECEIVING THE END OF YOUR FAITH, EVEN THE SALVATION OF YOUR SOULS. CONCERNING WHICH SALVATION THE PROPHETS SOUGHT AND SEARCHED DILIGENTLY, WHO PROPHESED OF THE GRACE THAT SHOULD COME UNTO YOU:" **I Peter 1:8-10** (ASV)

v22. "EVEN THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST UNTO ALL THEM THAT BELIEVE; FOR THERE IS NO DISTINCTION;" (ASV)

This righteousness of God had been ordained or appointed to be given to all mankind. Thereby righteousness is given to all those that believe through faith in Jesus Christ. Not by faith only - that's the trap that man has devised as a result of trying to isolate this scripture from the rest of the New Testament. But to those people whose faith causes them to obey God's commandments.

Paul ends the verse saying that there is no difference; no difference between whom; comparing whom to whom?

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"FOR THERE IS NO DISTINCTION BETWEEN JEW AND GREEK: FOR THE SAME LORD IS LORD OF ALL, AND IS RICH UNTO ALL THAT CALL UPON HIM:" **Romans 10:12** (ASV)

Why is there no difference between Jew or Greek in God's sight?

v23. "FOR ALL HAVE SINNED, AND FALL SHORT OF THE GLORY OF GOD;" (ASV)

All mankind have sinned, will sin, do sin; it doesn't matter who we are; how good we might think we are; what our ethnic ancestry might be; we all fall short of the law and cannot be justified by it. So how are we justified?

v24. "BEING JUSTIFIED FREELY BY HIS GRACE THROUGH THE REDEMPTION THAT IS IN CHRIST JESUS:" (ASV)

God created the world and all that is in it for his glory and honor. He then created man to rule the world under His direction, in harmony with His laws for his glory.

But man betrayed that trust; rebelled against God as his Counselor and Ruler and chose to follow and obey the devil instead. As a consequence of his betrayal; sin, sorrow, sickness, care, desolation, ruin and death became our lot.

In order to rescue mankind from himself and the quagmire he generated through his rebellion; Jesus came and gave his blood as a suitable sacrifice, gave his life for the lives of mankind and bought us the privilege to live as the servants and sons of God.

"IN WHOM WE HAVE OUR REDEMPTION THROUGH HIS BLOOD, THE FORGIVENESS OF OUR TRESPASSES, ACCORDING TO THE RICHES OF HIS GRACE," **Ephesians 1:7** (ASV)

"FOR BY GRACE HAVE YE BEEN SAVED THROUGH FAITH; AND THAT NOT OF YOURSELVES, IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD;" **Ephesians 2:8** (ASV)

"IN WHOM WE HAVE OUR REDEMPTION, (THROUGH HIS BLOOD, KJV) THE FORGIVENESS OF OUR SINS:" **Colossians 1:14** (ASV)

"WHO GAVE HIMSELF A RANSOM FOR ALL; THE TESTIMONY TO BE BORNE IN ITS OWN TIMES;" **I Timothy 2:6** (ASV)

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I Peter 1:18-19 " KNOWING THAT YE WERE REDEEMED, NOT WITH CORRUPTIBLE THINGS, WITH SILVER OR GOLD, FROM YOUR VAIN MANNER OF LIFE HANDED DOWN FROM YOUR FATHERS; BUT WITH PRECIOUS BLOOD, AS OF A LAMB WITHOUT SPOT, EVEN THE BLOOD OF CHRIST:" (ASV)

v25. "WHOM GOD SET FORTH TO BE A PROPITIATION, THROUGH FAITH, IN HIS BLOOD, TO SHOW HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS BECAUSE OF THE PASSING OVER OF THE SINS DONE AFORETIME, IN THE FORBEARANCE OF GOD;" (ASV)

What does the word redemption mean? How do we redeem something? If we took a diamond ring to the local pawn shop, what would we have to do to redeegm it? Go buy it back.

God, who is perfectly and totally righteous cannot, will not, have anything to do with anyone who has sinned. All have sinned (verse 23). In this work of rescuing (redeeming) mankind from the wrath of God because of his sin; we can understand that God would need to be propitiated (made favorable). There was a price that must be paid in order to redeem or re-purchase mankind -- God's perfect justice must be satisfied; the Almighty has been snubbed and as the supreme ruler of the universe someone must answer for that slight. Jesus through the shedding of his blood paid that price. When life was forfeited (that is eternal life with God) it could only be redeemed by life.

In this verse also we find another doctrine that is mentioned here and more clearly in the Hebrew letter. During the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations sins could not be forgiven. The sacrifices of bulls and goats did not purge or cleanse man's sins and under the Mosaic Law the sins of the people were just rolled forward from year to year on the Day of Atonement when the high priest took the blood into the Most Holy Place in the temple or tabernacle. But now that's changed - those sins have now been purged by the blood of Christ. The blood of Christ which sealed the everlasting covenant has been shed.

"FOR IF THE BLOOD OF GOATS AND BULLS, AND THE ASHES OF A HEIFER SPRINKLING THEM THAT HAVE BEEN DEFILED, SANCTIFY UNTO THE CLEANNESS OF THE FLESH: HOW MUCH MORE SHALL THE BLOOD OF CHRIST, WHO THROUGH THE ETERNAL SPIRIT OFFERED HIMSELF WITHOUT BLEMISH UNTO GOD, CLEANSE YOUR CONSCIENCE FROM DEAD WORKS TO SERVE THE LIVING GOD? AND FOR THIS CAUSE HE IS THE MEDIATOR OF A NEW COVENANT, THAT A DEATH HAVING TAKEN PLACE FOR THE REDEMPTION OF THE TRANSGRESSIONS THAT WERE UNDER THE FIRST COVENANT, THEY THAT HAVE BEEN CALLED MAY RECEIVE THE PROMISE OF THE ETERNAL INHERITANCE." **Hebrews 9:13-15** (ASV)

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Romans 3:26-31 – Divine Justice

v26. "FOR THE SHOWING, I SAY, OF HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS AT THIS PRESENT SEASON: THAT HE MIGHT HIMSELF BE JUST, AND THE JUSTIFIER OF HIM THAT HATH FAITH IN JESUS."

Again God's justice, as well as his love, is perfect. God's plan of justifying mankind is righteous, perfect, just and provides that God will act with justice to all. That justification is limited to those people who believe in His son Jesus. Believe how – believe to obedience; no one is justified out of Christ and no one can be in Christ except to do the things that will bring them into Christ. Including being baptized into Christ – **Galatians 3:26-27**

v27-28. "WHERE THEN IS THE GLORYING? IT IS EXCLUDED. BY WHAT MANNER OF LAW? OF WORKS? NAY: BUT BY A LAW OF FAITH. WE RECKON THEREFORE THAT A MAN IS JUSTIFIED BY FAITH APART FROM THE WORKS OF THE LAW." (ASV)

Part of the problem with the most religious people of the time of Jesus (the Pharisees, Sadducees and Jewish elders) was that the Mosaic Law was a law of works. If a man did those works, then he thought that he was righteous and an acceptable child of God regardless of the condition of his heart.

Man's salvation is not something that comes of things that mankind can boast about. All opportunity for boasting or glorying has now been excluded. It doesn't come by the Jewish law or any law that would be devised of man because then there would be occasion for glorying or boasting. It comes by what the Holy Spirit through the pen of Paul calls the "LAW OF FAITH". What does that mean?

Ephesians 2:8-9 "FOR BY GRACE HAVE YE BEEN SAVED THROUGH FAITH; AND THAT NOT OF YOURSELVES, IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD; NOT OF WORKS, THAT NO MAN SHOULD GLORY." (ASV)

Does this mean that we are saved by FAITH ONLY?? This is what a great number of our denominational neighbors would have us believe. Martin Luther in his reaction to the human system of works promoted by the Roman Catholic church in his day by adding "alone" to the word "faith" in this verse. Others have followed suit down through the centuries, I will site only a couple: Charles Hodge in his "Commentary On the Epistle to the Romans" published in 1883 stated "From the nature of the case, if justification is by faith, it must be by faith alone. Luther's version, therefore...is fully justified by the context." Another was Floyd Hamilton in his "The Epistle to the Romans" in 1958 says "the central thought of the Reformation truth, justification by faith alone.

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The works here mentioned are not merely Mosaic Law works, but moral law works as well." This is not only put forth by the denominations today but by some of our brethren beginning as much as 20 years ago as well: "Wineskins" a journal edited by Rubel Shelly and Mike Cope put forth in the June, 1993, issue, an article written by Roy Osbourne of San Antonio, Texas, entitled "Dead Men Don't Climb Ladders." The essay is based upon the fact, prior to conversion, men are said to be "dead in transgressions" (**Ephesians 2:1**). Since dead men can't do anything, the implication is that we have nothing to do with receiving our salvation. Osborne writes "We seem unable to give up the idea that we must DO SOMETHING to effect our justification (P. 17-3-emp R.O.) This brother goes on to allege that "justification is totally by God's grace." And thousands of our brethren have joined him in that doctrine since that date. Let's turn to **James 2** and read **14-26**.

We are saved through God's grace and that is a free gift by God given unto mankind. But is our salvation by grace or faith alone? I can bring you lesson after lesson of those things that we must DO in order not only to come into a right relationship with God but things that we must DO in order to remain in that relationship. Our study of Romans chapter 12 will do just that.

Finally, if salvation and forgiveness of sins was by grace or faith alone without any requirement for action on man's part why would the people on the day of Pentecost to ask Peter "MEN AND BRETHREN, WHAT SHALL WE DO? And why would Peter to tell them to "REPENT AND BE BAPTIZED". If the grace only or faith only doctrine is true then it wouldn't have been necessary for them to repent and be baptized because they believed, they had faith and would already have been saved.

v29. "OR IS GOD THE GOD OF JEWS ONLY? IS HE NOT THE GOD OF GENTILES ALSO? YEA, OF GENTILES ALSO:" (ASV)

Paul assures the Roman brethren and all those who would read his word down through the centuries that the law of faith is addressed to all men - he accepts all those who trust and obey him.

v30-31. "IF SO BE THAT GOD IS ONE, AND HE SHALL JUSTIFY THE CIRCUMCISION BY FAITH, AND THE UNCIRCUMCISION THROUGH FAITH. DO WE THEN MAKE THE LAW OF NONE EFFECT THROUGH FAITH? GOD FORBID: NAY, WE ESTABLISH THE LAW." (ASV)

The same God will justify both the Jew and Gentile, both the circumcised and the uncircumcised through the same rule of faith in Christ Jesus.

The end or purpose of the law could never be accomplished without bringing in faith, the gospel, the reign of Christ.

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This is what the law prepared mankind to receive. Through the law that was established came the purpose for which it was confirmed, fulfilled, completed and finished; the purpose for which it was intended in the first place - to preserve a nation of people through whom God could bring Christ into the world. In whom mankind, through an obedient faith, might be saved from their sins.