

Start your study here

Read Read, Record, Reflect, Respond		Observation										
Prayerfully	Conscious dependence	<input type="checkbox"/> What does it say? <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Probe</td> <td>Mark—people, place, key word</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Discover</td> <td>List—observations</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Detect</td> <td>Summarize—main point</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Explore</td> <td>Identify—what you learn about God</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Apply—“So what?”</td> </tr> </table>	Probe	Mark —people, place, key word	Discover	List —observations	Detect	Summarize —main point	Explore	Identify —what you learn about God		Apply —“So what?”
Probe	Mark —people, place, key word											
Discover	List —observations											
Detect	Summarize —main point											
Explore	Identify —what you learn about God											
	Apply —“So what?”											
Reflectively	Constantly											
Extensively	Background issues Big Idea Basic structure and flow Broad strokes											
Creatively	Imagination and View points											
Intensively	Questions: Who, What, Where, When, Why, How . . . Repeated Alike Different Accentuated Related											
Specifically	Purposefully—with the view of the author in mind											
Effectively	By unit of thought— Think Context! Details, ask questions											

Romans 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. (ESV)

Review: The Gospel, the power of God for Salvation reveals God's righteousness—by means of showing man's need—God's wrath is on all who suppress the knowledge of Him and replace it with idolatry, immorality and any sin, this judgment is true of Jews as well as Gentiles, God is impartial in judging all based on their works not heritage, religious rights or religious rites.
 Observations: 1) the attributes of God and their contrasts in man 2) the questions raised, what are they trying to justify? 3) which questions Paul answers and which ones he didn't, why?
 Key Question:

This passage will address self-justification for sin or in other words—a belief in immunity from sin based on heritage

Observation: Notice the three references to Jews
 3:1 Individuals (part of the whole)
 3:2 The whole, Old Testament Israel
 3:3 Part, Unbelieving Jews

Structural observations—key terms

	Israel	God
3	unfaithful faithlessness	faithful
4	liar	true
5	unrighteousness	righteousness
7	lie	truth (truthfulness)

"therefore" Having shown that possession of the law and circumcision (signs of special relationship with God) are not enough—that obedience is necessary, Paul turns to answer the natural question, but gives an unexpected answer.

As in 2:25 "salvific advantage" (see also Galatians 5:2) Paul puts the question in the mouth of imaginary opponent—who in context (law and circumcision) wants Paul to defend his view, because the OT promise salvation to the Jews (Psalm 36; 89:1-2, 5, 8, 24, 33, 49; 98:3)

Romans 3:1-8

1 **Then** what advantage has the Jew?

Or what is the value of circumcision?

Not what is expected after 2:1-29—Paul is seeking to balance two truths: OT promises to Israel and requirements of obedience

2 Much in every way.

To begin with,

Normally used for a list—here Paul leaves it a one item list

the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God.

3 What **if some** were unfaithful?

Probably includes both failure to obey God (transgression of the Law) and failure to believe in Jesus

Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God?

4 **By no means!**

μη γένοιτο (may it never be) Paul's strong refutation of a false conclusion (Romans 3:6, 31; 6:2, 15; 7:7, 13; 9:14; 11:1, 11)

Let God be true though every one were a liar,

Interesting use of an imperative—rather than a command to God, it is a confession about God

as it is written,

"That you may be justified in your words, and prevail when you are judged."

Psalm 51:4 where David confesses his sin and admits God's right to judge—and that His judgment would be just

God is righteous when He judges not just as when He saves

5 **But if** our unrighteousness serves to show the righteousness of God, what shall we say?

God's character, specifically in context, his faithfulness are seen not only in keeping His promises but in judging those who don't keep His commands

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?

We know He does, so your "argument" is senseless

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. (ESV)

Too absurd to answer

Working Idea (this is to help you see how the main idea was developed)

This is a short but difficult section, but our goal is not to solve all the exegetical questions, our goal is to understand it and apply it.

The basic point Paul is making, again using the diatribe (interaction with a make-believe opponent), is that having shown that the Jews who did not obey law, could not, based on their possession of the Law or practice of circumcision, claim immunity from judgment.

In this section Paul will seek to balance two sets of truth, that in the world of Judaism and too often in Christian circles are not always in balance.

#1 The promises of God—which are irrevocable

#2 The responsibility of man—which Paul has maintained is required

#1 God's faithfulness to His promises of salvation reveals His character

#2 God's judgment reveals His character

Main idea:

God's giving of a promise and fulfilling that promise shows His faithfulness to His Word

God's judgment of those who do not obey His commands shows His faithfulness to His Word

God is faithful by fulfilling promises of salvation and judgment.

Teaching idea:

Because this passage is shorter (to fit into the church calendar) it should give you time to not only complete the teaching of this passage but pick up thoughts from the last section that you were not able to complete. The next section (3:9-20) will serve as a conclusion to the first section of Romans and will require summarization of the section. This shorter passage should help set that up.

After leading the class through the observation and interpretation phase of the study, I would suggest you try to create significant tension for sake of true application. You will see as you work your way through the passage and this lesson one way to create tension is the issue of eternal security and obedience. There are other tension issues in the Christian walk where two truths about God and our relationship to God cause us tension. The normal response to these "difficult" issues is to either try to minimize the tension, thereby not taking either issue seriously. Or by simply focusing on one issue rather than both, thereby not being honest with the text.

In order to create these tensions, the right kinds of questions are needed. But you will also need to be willing to let people make statements that are not complete without immediately trying to correct. Assigning different groups passages that highlight only one of the issues is an effective way to create this tension.

Introduction

I'm not a fan of reality TV shows. But I have watched several different ones. Many of the shows that put people on teams and then "vote" a team member off through different trials/games have one thing in common—"immunity." It seems that there are different ways to "win immunity" from being voted off that week.

We also see this concept of "immunity" in our court system. Someone who has been involved in something illegal and is caught, but who isn't the main target of an investigation, will try to get "immunity" from prosecution by testifying about what they know.

In some respects people want life to be like the game Monopoly, where you can get a "get out of jail" free card. A life where choices, including sin, don't have consequences. Where immunity is either: inherited, earned or assumed.



Talk about it

What would you like immunity from?

Is the Christian life inherently a life lived with immunity?

Review

In the previous section (2:17-29) Paul addressed the two major distinctives of the Jew: The Law and circumcision.

Possession of the law and the covenant sign of circumcision were perhaps the two most distinguishing marks of being Jewish. Given to Israel by God himself, they signaled the fact that the Jews were a special people, elevated above all other peoples. In discussing their value in these verses, then, Paul is discussing the ultimate value of being Jewish.¹

Overview

The Jew Condemned			
Section	2:17	2:25	3:1
Condemnation For	Hypocrisy	Ritualism	Unbelief / Unfaithfulness
Jewish Distinctives	Law	Circumcision	Word of God
Response	Disobedience	External not Internal	Took them for granted
Result	Dishonor God	God regards uncircumcised law keeper higher than circumcised lawbreaker—and praises them	Condemnation Deserved
The Condemnation is Absolute			

Having challenged the Jewish understanding of their special relationships with God through possession of the Law and practice of circumcision, Paul opens chapter 3 by preempting an anticipated objection—“then what benefit is there to being a Jew?”

As Paul writes this section of Romans (as with much of the books) he is writing things he has probably preached. And he knows the kind of objections his readers will have, having heard them many times.

“Two main developments are discernible in this passage. In 2:17-29 the advantage of the Jew in terms of his possession of the law and the distinctive mark of circumcision is seen as offset by his boastfulness and his fruitlessness. In 3:1-8 a new factor is introduced: Israel’s failure to respond to God in terms of trust and obedience, justifying the visitation of his wrath upon them.”²

In 3:1-8 the subject of the guilt of the Jew is continued, but now with an emphasis on the element of unbelief and also on a sophisticated claim of immunity from divine judgment on the plea that God’s faithfulness is thrown into bolder relief by human failure. What reasonable basis remains for acting in judgment?³

This might be a good place to remind people of the big picture
 The Message of the Bible: God desires to glorify Himself by blessing man.
 Man’s appropriate response: Man can experience God’s blessing by trusting and obeying.

¹ Douglas J. Moo, NIV Application Commentary, New Testament: *Romans*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, © 2000) p. 91.

² *Expositors Bible Commentary*, Harrison, p. 33.

³ *Expositors Bible Commentary*, Harrison, p. 34.

Outline

- I. Doctrine: Justification—The Righteousness of God Revealed 1:18–11:36
God's Gracious Provision of Righteousness is Acquired by Faith in Jesus Christ
- A. The Need of It 1:18–3:20 *What a Mess!*
The Righteousness of God revealed in Condemnation: The Universal Need of Righteousness
The bad News: All Condemned for sin—no exceptions
1. Condemnation of Pagan (Unrighteous): The Panorama of Sin Described 1:18-32
 2. Condemnation of the Self-Righteous Moralists: God's standard not theirs 2:1-16
 3. **Condemnation against unfaithful Jew: Privileged 2:17–3:8**
Condemnation because of. . .
 - a. Hypocrisy: A focus on externals 2:17-24
 The Jews possession of the law is not sufficient
External possession of religious rights
 - b. Trust in Ritual 2:25-29
 The Jews possession of circumcision not sufficient
External practice of religious rites
 - c. Unbelief: The Jews problem exposed 3:1-8
 - (1) First Objection 3:1-2
 - (a) Question: Do Jews have any (salvific) advantage? 3:1
 - (b) Answer: Jews have God's oracles (promises) 3:2
 - (2) Second Objection 3:3-4
 - (a) Question: Does Jewish unbelief nullify God's faithfulness? 3:3
 - (b) Answer: God is faithful 3:4
 - (3) Third Objection 3:5-6
 - (a) Question: If the sin of Jews shows God's righteousness, wouldn't His judgment/wrath be unrighteous? 3:5
 - (b) Answer: That would prevent God from judging anyone 3:6
 - (4) Fourth Question 3:7-8
 - (a) Question: If the sin of Jews enhances God's glory, why should God condemn them? And why not do more evil? 3:7-8a
 - (b) Answer: Too absurd to answer, Paul never taught that 3:8b

Key Phrase / Catch Phrase:

Immunity

Key Exegetical Issues to be aware of/Teaching Ideas:

Though the section is short, a number of commentators call this one of the most difficult passages in the book, but as stated in the "working idea" section; our goal will be to see the big picture and application. So there are more "details" here than you need.

3:1-4 serve as the first section

Main point: God is faithful to His Word in both saving and judging.

Observation: Notice the three references to Jews

- 3:1 Individuals (part of the whole)
- 3:2 The whole, Old Testament Israel
- 3:3 Part, Unbelieving Jews

3:1 "Then what advantage has the Jew?"

Chapter 2 as a whole functions as a sustained attack on the adequacy of the Mosaic covenant since Jews failed to keep the Mosaic law. The chapter climaxes with the assertion that being an ethnic Jew and physically circumcised is insignificant (2:28–29). What matters is being a Jew internally and experiencing the circumcision of the heart. Indeed, Paul asserts in 2:26–29 that uncircumcised Gentiles who keep God's commands reveal that they are true Jews and are circumcised in heart. If one can be a true Jew and truly circumcised without being an ethnic Jew and physically circumcised, then (οὐν, *oun*, therefore, v. 1) what is the benefit (περισσόον, *perisson*) of being an ethnic Jew and the profit (ὠφέλεια, *ōphēleia*) of physical circumcision? I argued earlier

that the verb *ὠφελεῖ* in 2:25 signifies “saving advantage,” and it is likely that the same connotation is present with the noun *ὠφέλεια* in 3:1. Paul inquires whether there is any salvific advantage in being a Jew or possessing physical circumcision.⁴

3:2 “Much in every way”

This is not what you expect based on what Paul taught in chapter 2. What Paul is doing is trying to balance two truths.

- The Old Testament teaches that Jews were God’s special people and would be saved
- The Old Testament also taught, as Paul has shown that heritage alone does not save and that disobedience brought judgment

From chapter 2 we expect the answer to be that there is no saving advantage whatsoever in Jewish descent or physical circumcision. After all, God is impartial and judges everyone, whether Jew or Gentile, by the same standard. Thus we are startled when the answer given in 3:2 is “much in every respect” (*πολὴ κατὰ πάντα τρόπον, poly kata panta tropon*). . . The OT Scriptures themselves witnessed to the election of Israel as God’s special covenant people and promised them future salvation. To broach the question of ethnic Israel’s relationship to the OT promises anticipates Rom. 9–11, which examines the whole issue much more thoroughly. Thus Räisänen (1986) says correctly that these verses have further light shed on them by Rom. 9–11. To impose the argument from Rom. 9–11 on this text is methodologically flawed, yet the two sections should not be hermetically sealed from one another. I will argue that Rom. 9 in particular furnishes significant help in understanding this section.⁵

3:3-4 Second Objection

Question: Does Jewish unbelief nullify God’s faithfulness? 3:3

The point—lack of belief and behavior consistence with those they are
Their lack of proper behavior was evidence of lack of belief.

Answer: God is faithful 3:4

Issue here is: If the Jew does not believe God’s promises, or God’s faithfulness to His promises, does that mean that God is not faithful. No. God is faithful regardless of whether men believe, trust Him or not.

3:3 “the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God”

But the list is reduced to one member: the advantage that the Jews have is that they were entrusted with “the oracles of God” (*τὰ λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ, ta logia tou theou*). To what do *τὰ λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ* refer? Paul certainly refers to the OT Scriptures, which were vouchsafed to Israel (Doeve 1953; Hall 1983: 185; G. Davies 1990: 74; Dunn 1988a: 130–31). Even though *τὰ λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ* is a comprehensive way of describing the OT Scriptures, Rom. 3:3 suggests that the promises of salvation for Israel are uppermost in Paul’s mind.¹ The advantage should not be restricted merely to the possession of the Scriptures and the stewardship required because of their possession. This would scarcely advance the argument beyond chapter 2 since the possession of the law by Israel, although an advantage in some respects, ensures only that Israel will be judged because of their failure to obey it. Rather, Paul declares something more profound about the “saving advantage” that ethnic Israel possessed: they had promises from God ensuring them of future salvation.⁶

The concept of “entrusted” probably includes more than just possession, but the requirement to faith and obedience that are in the “oracles.”

⁴ Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, Baker exegetical commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1998), 147.

⁵ Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, p. 148.

¹ Müller 1964: 49; Zeller 1973: 87; Piper 1983: 105, 258; Räisänen 1986: 188. Doeve (1953: 122–23) rightly says that promises are involved but wrongly relates the promises to the coming of the Messiah rather than the future salvation of Israel. Similarly Williams (1980: 266–67) agrees that promises are intended, but understands the promises to focus on the inclusion of Gentiles into the people of God. Stuhlmacher’s (1994: 52) theory that the focus is on the “commandments” that Israel violated misses the point of the text.

⁶ Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, p. 148.

As observed above, the structure reveals a contrast between God’s character/attributes and those of man, Schreiner depicts it this way⁷:

Verse	Israel	God
3	ἠπίστησαν (<i>ēpistēsān</i> , were unfaithful) ἀπιστία (<i>apistia</i> , unfaithfulness)	τὴν πίστιν τοῦ θεοῦ (<i>tēn pistin tou theou</i> , the faithfulness of God)
4	ψεύστης (<i>pseustēs</i> , liar)	ἀληθής (<i>alēthēs</i> , true)
5	ἀδικία (<i>adikia</i> , unrighteousness)	θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην (<i>theou dikaiosynēn</i> , righteousness of God)
7	ἐμῷ ψεύματι (<i>emō pseusmati</i> , my lie)	ἡ ἀλήθεια τοῦ θεοῦ (<i>hē alētheia tou theou</i> , the truthfulness of God)

God’s Character

This structure and the use of terms helps Paul make the point that God’s faithfulness is supported by the fact that He is true (v 4), righteous (v 5) and truthful (v 7).

Faithfulness

It denotes his faithfulness to his covenantal promises, particularly the pledge that the Jews would experience eschatological salvation. The salvation promised in the OT would eventually be realized. The fulfillment of this promise is communicated in the assertion that “all Israel will be saved” (11:26). Already in chapter 3 Paul implies that the fulfillment of the saving promises to Israel will be a miraculous and gracious work of God. They currently disbelieve and disobey, but in faithfulness to his covenant God will turn them from unbelief to belief and bring to fruition the salvation promised in the OT. The foreshadowing of Rom. 9–11 here is unmistakable.⁸

In **verse 3**, the Jews’ “lack of faith” [*apistia*] is probably, in light of the contrast with God’s “faithfulness” (*pistis*), not so much their failure to believe as their failure to be true to their covenant obligations. God, through his law, had imposed on Israel requirements they needed to fulfill in order to maintain the covenant relationship. But Israel as a whole failed to keep these commands. How would God respond? Would he cease to be faithful because Israel has not been faithful? With an emphatic negation characteristic of the diatribe style and of Romans, Paul rejects any such idea — “Not at all!” (*me genoito*; see also 3:6, 31; 6:2, 15; 7:7, 13; 9:14; 11:1, 11).⁹

3:4

Summary

In verse 4b Paul introduces the theme that God’s faithfulness and truth cannot be confined to his saving righteousness. God is also faithful to his promises in the judgment of his people. In other words, the saving righteousness of God does not exclude his judging righteousness (Hall 1983: 187–88; Piper 1983: 111; Moo 1991: 185). Even though God has promised salvation to the Jews, no individual Jew could presume upon those promises and think that he or she was guaranteed salvation. God is still just and righteous when he judges sin among the Jews, for no individual is automatically granted God’s covenantal mercies (see Cranfield 1975: 177–78; Hall 1983: 185; F. Watson 1986: 127–28; G. Davies 1990: 77; Moo 1991: 189).¹⁰

3:5-8 serve as a second section

Paul defends the need for present godliness inspired by the free gift of salvation by grace through faith. See 1:5.

Romans 2:5 Paul has already stated that God will judge the world.

Main point

Paul’s purpose in verses 5–8 is to respond to Jewish objections that are provoked by his theology of the law and the covenant in 2:1–3:4. . . Paul defends the thesis that even though the Jews possess salvific promises, they are not thereby exempt from moral responsibility and God’s

⁷ Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, p. 149.

⁸ Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, p. 150.

⁹ Douglas J. Moo, NIV Application Commentary, New Testament: *Romans*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, © 2000) p. 104.

¹⁰ Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, p. 152.

judgment. In this sense verses 5–8 explicate and defend more fully the theme broached in the citation of Ps. 51:4 in verse 4b.¹¹

3:5-6

Third Objection 3:5-6

Question: If the sin of Jews shows God’s righteousness, wouldn’t His judgment/wrath be unrighteous? 3:5

Answer: That would prevent God from judging anyone 3:6

3:7-8

Fourth Question 3:7-8

Question: If the sin of Jews enhances God’s glory, why should God condemn them? And why not do more evil? 3:7-8a

Answer: Too absurd to answer, Paul never taught that 3:8b

3:8

Seems to be part of a smear campaign against Paul

The intimation is that they use this information to discredit Paul and undermine his gospel, not as an excuse to live sinfully themselves. If the word spread among Jews that Paul had no concern for moral righteousness and actually encouraged practicing evil, then the credibility of his gospel would have been severely damaged. My argument, then, is that the Jewish opponents were not libertines. Instead, they accused Paul of teaching an antinomian gospel because of his emphasis on divine sovereignty and the inability of human beings to keep God’s law.¹²

Summary

Paul seems to be grappling here with the common Jewish belief that God’s “righteousness,” his “covenant faithfulness,” gave the Jews virtual immunity from judgment. In response, Paul affirms that the marvelous blessing of knowing God’s Word (v. 2) is a double-edged sword. For God’s Word promises blessing for obedience, but it also warns about the curse that will fall on disobedience. God remains faithful (v. 3) and righteous (v. 5) in all his dealings. But Jews must understand that the ultimate standard of righteousness is his own holy character, and that holy character requires him to respond to sin with wrath (v. 6).¹³



Think about it

Are there areas in which we could be accused of doing something similar—of only taking partial truth?

What about eternal security/assurance and obedience?

Our church doctrinal statement states:

We believe that all who receive by faith the Lord Jesus Christ, trusting Him alone for eternal salvation, are born again by the Holy Spirit and thereby become children of God, that they are indwelt and sealed by the Holy Spirit and therefore are secure until the day of final redemption. John 1:12-13, 3:3-16, 10:28-29; 2 Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 4:30.

In a recent conversation with an individual going through our membership process, she acknowledge she struggles with the concept of “security” because the tradition she grew up in believed you could lose your salvation. In studying the Bible she had come to a number of passages, like Hebrews 6, which seem to teach that you can lose your salvation.

¹¹ Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, p. 153.

¹² Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, p. 153.

¹³ Douglas J. Moo, NIVAC: *Romans*, p. 103.

Is it possible, that for those of use who believe in eternal security (See John 10) that we have emphasized it to the unbalance perspective?

How is it, that eternal security can be a promise and obedience a requirement?

What about those who walk away from the faith? Are they secure? How do we treat them?



Talk about it

Is teaching grace dangerous?

Should we balance our teaching about grace so that people won't take it for granted?

Should we simple teach more on grace so that people are amazed by grace and are motivate to godliness through it?

I'm including below to blog post that I have written on this subject:

[His Mercies are New Every Morning](#)

Amazing grace. Unmerited mercy.

It truly is amazing that God's grace and mercy don't have limits.

Can you imaging what it would be like if God only had a set amount of grace? And what a weight of despair or hopelessness would overcome you if God's mercy was only given out on certain days or up to a certain quota.

Lamentations 3:21-24

21 But this I call to mind,

and therefore I have hope:

22 The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases;

his mercies never come to an end;

23 they are new every morning;

great is your faithfulness.

24 "The Lord is my portion," says my soul,

"therefore I will hope in him."

To wake up in the morning and realize that God's steadfast love didn't cease over night, that His mercy didn't run out, that every morning there is as much grace, love and mercy as you might need—that is truly amazing and utterly unmerited.

Some worry, even warn, that we should not talk about grace and mercy in these terms for fear of "letting people off the hook." And some *will* take grace for granted and some will abuse mercy. But who are we to seek to limit God's grace and mercy? If anyone takes it for granted, they are taking God for granted—and He can take care of Himself. And if anyone abuse mercy, they are abusing God's gift—and He is the one wronged, not us.

Oh, that we would be a people of grace and mercy.

I don't want to limit God's grace and mercy—I need all I can get!

I want to wake up each morning thanking God for His renewed grace and reservoir of mercy. The more I understand His character, the more I understand what grace and mercy are, the more I should worship. And worship includes obedience.

Take grace for granted? Abuse mercy? I probably will.

But praise God He grants grace and never ceases giving mercy.

Oh, may I live ever to honor, to obey, to praise Him, the one whose grace I abuse and whose mercy I require constantly.

Living Grace Filled Lives

Romans 2:1-5 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 do such things. 3 Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who do 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. (ESV)

God's grace is amazing—beyond what any hymn can state.

Living a grace filled life has at least two sides.

First, learning to accept and appreciate God's grace toward us.

A grace that is abundant—it can't be exhausted.

A grace that extends and covers **all** our weaknesses and sins.

A grace that guarantees love and acceptance in spite of our failings.

A grace that comforts us with the truth we can do nothing to make God love us less—nor can we do anything to make Him love us more.

Amazing, Astounding, Awesome—Actual Grace.

But second, learning to live a grace filled life requires us to look at others and live with others with grace. To extend to others the same spirit of grace that God extends to us.

A grace that is abundant—that doesn't count the wrongs committed (Matthew 18:21-35), that keeps no record of wrong. (1 Corinthians 13:5)

A grace that extends and covers weakness and sin—for love covers a multitude of sins. (1 Peter 4:8)

A grace that guarantees love and acceptance in spite of our failings—for we all stumble in many ways. (James 3:2)

A grace that comforts others with the truth that God's love doesn't change and we will remain faithful.

If we don't live grace filled lives we are treating God's grace, love, kindness, mercy and patience with contempt.

It's like saying to God, "I only value You and Your character when it applies to me." That reminds me of Jonah after God forgave a repentant Nineveh.

Jonah 4:1-2 But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry. 2 And he prayed to the Lord and said, "O Lord, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country? That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster. (ESV)

Notice verse 3. Jonah makes a great statement about the character of God being gracious, merciful, slow to anger, steadfast in love and relenting of punishment—awesome, amazing grace. But to Jonah that was negative because it was a grace displayed towards someone else.

May we live grace filled lives that extend the grace we have been shown, liberally on others.

May we be patient, kind and merciful to those who disagree with us and with those who dress differently than we do. To those who annoy us or interfere with our plans or want to consume our time, may we extend grace and love.

May the church be grace filled.

Key Point

God' is righteous and just in giving salvation as well as in judging sinners.



What do we learn
About God

God is faithful, true, righteous, truthful and His judgment is just.



Act on it

Eternal security is a promise
Fellowship with God requires obedience

Don't use one truth of Scripture to seek immunity from another truth of Scripture

Romans 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. (ESV)

The Jew Condemned			
<i>Section</i>	<i>2:17</i>	<i>2:25</i>	<i>3:1</i>
Condemnation For	Hypocrisy	Ritualism	Unbelief / Unfaithfulness
Jewish Distinctives	Law	Circumcision	Word of God
Response	Disobedience	External not Internal	Took them for granted
Result	Dishonor God	God regards uncircumcised law keeper higher than circumcised lawbreaker—and praises them	Condemnation Deserved
The Condemnation is Absolutely			

Overview—Romans 1:18—3:20

	1:18-32	2:1-16	2:17—3:8	3:9-20
Who is Paul addressing?	Pagan	Moralist	Jew	World (everyone)
How do they relate to God?	Disregard God	Try to distract God	Brag about relationship	No one seeks God
What is their problem?	Knowingly reject God Idolatry / Immorality	Judgmental	Self-righteousness hypocrisy	Sin
Favorite Phrase?	Live it up	Straighten up	You get to work	(Cursing and Bitterness)
Goal?	Satisfy own passions	Monitor their neighbor	Measure their merit	Autonomy
View of Sin?	No one is guilty	They are guilty, not me	Privileged not guilty I'm guilty but privileged overcome	No regard (no fear)
Boundaries?	If it feels good, do it.	If they feel good, note it.	If it feels good, stop it.	None
Paul's Judgment?	You have no excuse for the things you do	You have no authority for the judgments you make	You have no solution for the problem you have	You have no hope in yourself
Key Verse	1:24	2:1	2:23 4:5	3:9-11
Summary	Condemnation: The Universal Need for God's Righteousness			

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