

HANDOUT: ROMANS CHAPTER 3

Reviewing Paul’s major points in Romans chapters 1-2:

1. All human beings are subject to God’s impartial judgment: Romans 1:18-29
2. God’s righteous judgment will be pronounced according to a person’s deeds: Romans 2:6-11
3. Gentiles who are not exposed to the Law will not be judged by the Law of the Sinai Covenant but by natural and moral law revealed by their conscience: Romans 2:12-16
4. The Law of Moses [Sinai Covenant] and the sacrament of outward circumcision [imposed since the time of Abraham] is no guarantee of salvation. On the contrary it is the Law which will expose the sins of the Jews to God’s judgment—the real Jew is one who is inwardly a Jew and the sign of being a true Jew is circumcision of the heart: Romans 2:17-29

In Romans 3:1-20 Paul is making a 3 part comparison in a hypothetical debate: he is comparing faithfulness, truthfulness/ justice, and holiness/righteousness with faithlessness, falsehood, and sinfulness.

Faithfulness vs. faithlessness	Romans 3:1-4
Truthfulness/justice vs. falsehood	Romans 3:5-6
Holiness/righteousness vs. sinfulness	Romans 3:7-8 and continuing to verse 20

In Romans 3 verses 10-18 Paul quotes a series of 7 verses; 5 from the Psalms and one verse each from Isaiah and Proverbs:

Psalm 14:1-3	<i>Not one of them is upright, not a single one, not a single one is wise, not a single one seeks God. All have turned away, all alike turned sour, not one of them does right, not a single one.</i>
Psalm 5:9	<i>Their throats are wide-open graves, their tongues seductive.</i>
Psalm 140:4	<i>Viper’s venom behind their lips</i>
Psalm 10:7	<i>Their speech is full of cursing and bitterness</i>
Proverbs 1:16	<i>Their feet quick to shed innocent blood</i>
Isaiah 59:7-8	<i>wherever they go there is havoc and ruin</i>
Psalm 36:1	<i>there is no fear of God before their eyes</i>

Paul uses the Greek word *charis* to indicate a gift given freely and unearned. In Paul’s letters the word *charis* is most often employed to describe the way in which God offers the gift of salvation through Jesus the Son; we translate this word as “grace”:

Jesus’ Incarnation was an act of grace	John 1:14, 17; 2 Corinthians 8:9; Titus 2:11
Jesus self-sacrificial death was an act of grace—a gift of the Father	Romans 8:32; 1 Corinthians 2:12; Ephesians 1:6ff; Hebrews 2:9
Through grace we are justified, receive salvation, and the right to eternal life without the works of the O.C. Law	Romans 3:24; 4:4ff; Ephesians 2:5,8; Titus 3:7; Acts 15:11
Jesus’ Second Advent will be an act of grace—it will be an act of grace when we receive everlasting glory	2 Thessalonians 1:12; 1 Peter 1:13

It is also possible to receive grace “in vain” (2 Cor 6:1), to “fall from grace” (Gal 5:4); to forfeit grace and insult the Spirit of grace (Heb 12:15; 10:29). Above all grace must be carefully guarded, it must be used wisely, and it is necessary for grace to increase—we must continually grow in grace to be strengthened on our faith journey in order to strengthen us and help us obtain our goal (Rom 5:2; Heb 12:28; 1 Pt 4:10; 5:12; Acts 13:43; 14:26; 2 Pt 3:18; 2 Tim 2:1; Heb 13:9).