

Romans
Message 33
There is no Difference and
Something is Wrong
Rom 3:10-18

- 10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:
11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.
12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.
13 Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:
14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:
15 Their feet are swift to shed blood:
16 Destruction and misery are in their ways:
17 And the way of peace have they not known:
18 There is no fear of God before their eyes. KJV

Introduction:

As we have been seeing in past weeks, Paul has been laying out a case that there is no difference between the Jew and the Gentiles as concerns their relationship with God apart from His Grace. They are all sinners and guilty of their sins before God.

But many questions occur to the human mind. “How bad is it?” “What is the extent of my guilt?” “Is there a remedy and what can I do to fix it?” Religion, mostly false, has been answering those questions, after a fashion, from the beginning. Of course, the false religion has been giving incorrect answers.

“It is not terribly bad.”

“Your guilt, though maybe profound, has not ruined you completely.”

“There is a remedy, and if you will give us money and carefully follow what we tell you, the matter can be fixed.”

True religion has different answers and we will be exploring those today.

“Your sin and the guilt of it has totally ruined you.”

“It has formed a vast distance between you and God because of the difference between your sinfulness and His Holiness.”

“You cannot fix it, the crime is against God and only He can remedy the problem.”

I am convinced that Paul quoted from the OT to demonstrate that he had not concocted some new theology in this Gospel he preached.

Interestingly enough, what he was dealing with at Rome was the beginning of a false teaching which sought to eradicate the Jewish scriptures and the Jews from any place of importance in the

New Testament message. Paul would have none of it. He was teaching what had always been taught by true men of God concerning the condition of the sinner.

Ps 14:1-4

- 1 The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.
- 2 The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.
- 3 They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.
- 4 Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the LORD. KJV

Ps 5:9

- 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. KJV

Ps 10:4-7

- 4 The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.
- 5 His ways are always grievous; thy judgments are far above out of his sight: as for all his enemies, he puffeth at them.
- 6 He hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved: for I shall never be in adversity.
- 7 His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity. KJV

Ps 140:1-3

- 1 Deliver me, O LORD, from the evil man: preserve me from the violent man;
- 2 Which imagine mischiefs in their heart; continually are they gathered together for war.
- 3 They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; adders' poison is under their lips. KJV

Isa 59:1-9

- 1 Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:
- 2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.
- 3 For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness.
- 4 None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth: they trust in vanity, and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.
- 5 They hatch cockatrice' eggs, and weave the spider's web: he that eateth of their eggs dieth, and that which is crushed breaketh out into a viper.
- 6 Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with

- their works: their works are works of iniquity, and the act of violence is in their hands.
- 7 Their feet run to evil, and they make hast to shed innocent blood: their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths.
- 8 The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.
- 9 Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light, but behold
obscurity; for
brightness, but
we walk in
darkness. KJV

This describes a horrible condition, but then we must plug in Paul's great affirmation.

Rom 2:11-12

- 11 For there is no respect of persons with God.
- 12 For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; KJV

Or, "It does not matter who you are, whatever Gentile has sinned will perish and whatever Jew has sinned will perish."

So now let us consider closely Paul's case.

10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

To be righteous in this sense means to be considered by God as without fault and without guilt, properly qualified to come into His Presence and abide there. The absence of guilt must be absolute and the stain of sin must be completely cleansed.

God does not slacken the standard for anyone at all. There is no difference for the person in sin regardless of his pedigree. The soul that sins will surely die.

Ezek 18:4

- 4 Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die. KJV

Men love to pretend that they are righteous, that they shall escape the certain penalty of sin. In fact, men just generally love to pretend. The stage has always been famous where people pretend various things... and it has only gotten more popular as it has become more accessible. Once one had to get dressed, go to town and pay an admission fee to watch pretense, but then came movies (cheaper and we didn't need to dress up), and then radio and we could listen (not quite as much fun as being there but it was free), then it was the television, the computer and finally tablets and phones. Primarily these are used to watch pretense, some of us even watch

people lying to us and pretending it is the news.

Man's appetite for pretense is insatiable so we should not wonder that he likes pretend religions where false teachers proclaim a false message and welcome insincere and fraudulent responses affirming pretend Christians to be 'righteous' and ready for heaven, an eternity with God.

But the problem still remains, "**There is none righteous, no, not one.**" Unless there is a Real Remedy the issue will never change no matter how profound the pretense.

11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

This is a great hindrance and reveals that each man of us has a real problem. He does not understand even the nature of his own conditions and he will not seek after God in a real sense nor persevere until he has found Him.

David described it this way.

- 4 The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, **will not seek** after God: God is not in all his thoughts.

It is impossible to construct in the mind a remedy for this person unless something changes. God despises pride and the proud sees no need of God. He does not seek God because he **will not**. Serious considerations concerning God are foreign to him and so the needed event will not occur so long as the situation remains.

There are promises God given about seeking Him.

Jer 29:11-14

- 11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.
12 Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.
13 And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.
14 And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive. KJV

Hos 5:15

- 15 I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early. KJV

God is ready always to meet the one who seeks Him sincerely and with the whole heart. But the man of pride is not going to seek God in reality at all. Now, he may play religious games called "**seeking after God**" (and there are a lot of those) but he will only play those games if they feed his pride and require no humility from him at all.

So there is a quandary here. The one who needs to seek God is proud and because he is proud he will not seek God in any real manner.

12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

Again, this affirmation comes to us, “there is no difference.”

Man, in his natural state denies what this verse states, and even if he does not deny it outright and vocally, he denies it in his soul. He will not affirm his utter worthlessness in spiritual terms.

David’s words were:

3 They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

In the Greek OT they are almost identical to what we have in Romans.

3 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become good for nothing, there is none that does good, no not one. LXX

What an indictment against the entire race and, we must ask, in whose eyes are these things true? Who judges them (“don’t judge me”) to have gone ‘out of the way’? In whose eyes are they “filthy” and “good for nothing,” “unprofitable.”?

I want you to consider how modern religion says just the opposite. “We must tell them they are important. We must affirm them and tell them how valuable they are. We must help them have a positive self-image.” God’s Word and God’s men tell us that we have been judged as without value, good for nothing.

And... who has decided that they do no good? Why, it is no one other than the God of Heaven, the Lord of All the Earth, Great Judge who perfectly renders Judgment on all of mankind!

Malachi writes in a place, “will a man rob God?” And in that same vein I would ask, “Will a man argue and dispute with God concerning His Perfect Judgment of all?”

We might ask, “What is this ‘Way’ from which they are turned aside?”

You will remember the message of John Baptist.

Matt 3:1-3

1 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,
2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.
3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.
KJV

It is the “way” that is a consistent keeping, from a worshipful soul, the Commands of God, His Law, all of it applicable to the time frame in which he lives. It against the Holy Standard of the Law of God that anyone (everyone) is Judged by God to be “turned aside” and “worthless.”

Now, we live in a day in which we are told that we must watch out for everyone’s feelings and not injure them. We must ‘affirm’ them no matter what they are doing or how wrong it is. And, we are told that it is some kind of ‘crime,’ maybe a ‘hate crime,’ to identify behavior as wrong, even if it is.

What is this? That old popular game of “pretense” described in the worn out phrase, “I’m OK and you’re OK.” But we are not OK, we are worthless and there is no difference between any of us so long as we exist outside the Gracious Provisions of God.

The first and greatest commandment is to Love the Lord Your God with all of your heart, mind, soul and strength. Even to breath while refusing to do that is sinful, comes from a sinful place and is an offense to Him. There can be no good done outside of that.

13 Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:

14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:

These two verses must be taken together for all of this talks about the things that proceed out of us that other people hear. Primarily, of course, he is referencing our speech but its’ application is all of the communications we have with other humans.

Jesus made a similarly insulting remark about humans communications.

He was challenged and criticized by the Pharisees for not following their custom when eating. It is called “washing the hands” but it is in no wise similar to the way we do it nor even for the purpose we do it. We wash our hands to remove dirt and contamination so that we will not transfer it to our food and eat it. They sprinkled their hand, each with the other, to supposedly remove spiritual contamination but it served no real function and, so far as we can tell, was not a Mosaic Law unless one were dealing with something in the tabernacle.

So, it was not a law and had no useful purpose. But in the answer Jesus made some comments related to this passage.

Matt 15:15-20

15 Then answered Peter and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable.

16 And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding?

17 Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?

18 But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.

19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

20 These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man. KJV

Do you see it? A man's food might be ever so "holy" and free from any spiritual contamination but it does not change the character of the personality that controls the tongue. That which is in the heart still comes out and reveals the corrupt character of the man, further defiling him before God.

Religious gyrations cannot cleanse a corrupt heart. And yet, this has always been the solution of men, even of the Jews who did not believe.

15 Their feet are swift to shed blood:

The words picture a person who is racing from one murder to the next, viciously and rapidly piling up bodies of those they have killed.

Now, on the face of it we know very few people who would fit this image but the reality is that our country has approved and legalized, paid for an protected, an industry which has murdered millions of innocents and continues to do so. It is horrific even beyond the slaughters of Hitler, Stalin and Mao Tse Tung. We wonder where we stand in this great picture, this body of crime which will be one day judged by God.

But, still, there are few whom we know who have violated God's Law, "thou shalt do no murderer," even in this way.

Does that, then, render us safe from this accusation? Not at all.

1 John 3:14-15

14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. KJV

Are any of us completely safe from this crime? It is doubtful.

16 Destruction and misery are in their ways:

17 And the way of peace have they not known:

In and of ourselves, this is true of all of Adam's children.

But, then, Paul saved the greatest charge for last.

18 There is no fear of God before their eyes.

No fear of God, no love for God, no serious intention to obey Him or serve Him.

This is the real issue under it all. And the problem is not that we do not fear Him at all. Adam and Eve ran and hid from Him, but they did not fear Him enough to obey Him and that is the problem.

Now, this is a really dark picture and it spells out a case for our doom, all of us, because “there is no difference.”

What are we to do with this information? How are we to use it? What conclusions are we to draw and how can we use it?

First of all, embrace it concerning yourself. Own it and lay down all arguments you might think to have with God because of it.

Secondly, embrace the implications of it.

You cannot save yourself by religious gyrations of whatever sort they might be.

Circumcision

Keeping some regulated diet

Being faithful to keep certain ceremonies

Keeping the Law (a mechanical sense is the only way an unregenerate heart can do it)

Being baptized

Praying a prayer

Not even by believing from a heart that God has not awakened - there is a faith which does not save (Faith without works is dead)

Apart from Christ you are helpless and hopeless. Once you really see that you will cry out to Him for mercy, you will cast all of your hope on His Work on the Cross, and you will collapse at His feet knowing that you can do nothing to help yourself.

A couple of stories from the scriptures to picture what I am saying.

Luke 18:10-14

10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. KJV

Matt 15:22-28

22 And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto

- him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.
- 23 But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.
- 24 But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.
- 25 Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.
- 26 But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.
- 27 And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.
- 28 Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.
- KJV

What did they have in common? They helplessly cast themselves upon the mercy of the Lord and He had compassion on them. They both recognized their helpless condition. They trusted nothing other than the compassion of God and did not try to trade any of their works for His answer to their prayers.

If you will embrace your guilt before God and your utter inability to do anything about it AND will cast yourself upon the Grace of God in repentance and faith, I have good reason to hope that He might hear you and have compassion upon you as well.

Will you?