**There is None that Seeks after God**

**by Pastor Fee Soliven**

**Romans 3:8-18**

**Wednesday Evening**

**March 6, 2024**

**Romans 3:8-18**

8 And why not say, "Let us do evil that good may come"?--as we are slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say. Their condemnation is just. 9 What then? Are we better than they? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin.

10 As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; 11 There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. 12 They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one." 13 "Their throat is an open tomb; With their tongues they have practiced 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 they have not known." 18 "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

**8 And why not say, "Let us do evil that good may come"?--as we are slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say. Their condemnation is just.**

**Matthew 5:11-12**

11 "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. 12 Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

**1 Peter 3:16-17**

16 having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. 17 For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

Saints, the gospel Paul preached was being misconstrued because he argued that obeying the law would not bring salvation.

Paul, and possibly the Roman Christians, had heard this objection from Jews who were accusing him of teaching lawlessness.

If Jews or Gentile Christians interpreted Paul’s words that God is faithful despite people’s faithlessness to mean that God’s laws need not be followed, then they could reach the incorrect conclusion that the more we sin the better it is.

Paul dismisses this perverse reasoning with the terse words, “Those who say such things deserve to be condemned.”

**9 What then? Are we better than they? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin.**

**Proverbs 20:9-10**

9 Who can say, "I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin"? 10 Diverse weights and diverse measures, They are both alike, an abomination to the LORD.

Saints, to the question of whether there was any value in being a Jew, Paul had said yes.

But to the question as to whether Jews are better than Gentiles, Paul answers no. The reason?

Jews and Gentiles alike are under the power of sin. Both need God’s grace. Gentiles have no excuse, and neither do Jews.

**1 John 1:9-10**

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

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

Saints, there can be no more argument about special privileges for the Jews, for from their own Scriptures Paul strings together a series of verses outlining universal indictment.

The advantage of being a Jew does not apply to salvation. All have sinned; no one is righteous. No one can earn right standing with God.

**Psalm 14:2-3**

2 The LORD looks down from heaven upon the children of men, To see if there are any who understand, who seek God. 3 They have all turned aside, They have together become corrupt; There is none who does good, No, not one.

**Ecclesiastics 7:20**

“For there is not a just man on earth who does good And does not sin”

**Jeremiah 17:9-10**

9 "The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it? 10 I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings.

As is the pattern throughout the New Testament, writers do not always quote word for word from the Old Testament.

Their notions about making exact citations were less stringent than ours.

And because writers were probably working from memory as often as they were working with a text before them, their quotations tend to be allusions more than they are direct references.

At other times their quotes may have been exact to the translation they did have before them, such as the Greek version of the Old Testament.

**11 There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God.**

**Psalm 14:1-3**

1 The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, They have done abominable works, There is none who does good. 2 The LORD looks down from heaven upon the children of men, To see if there are any who understand, who seek God. 3 They have all turned aside, They have together become corrupt; There is none who does good, No, not one.

**John 6:44**

“No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day”

**John 15:16-17**

16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. 17 These things I command you, that you love one another.

**Colossians 2:13-14**

13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, 14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

Saints, the phrase no one is seeking God is from Psalms 14:2.

**12 They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one."**

Saints, the phrase all have turned away from God; all have gone wrong is from Psalms 14:3

**Psalm 14:3**

They have all turned aside, They have together become corrupt; There is none who does good, No, not one.

and so does

**Psalm 53:3**

They have all turned aside, They have together become corrupt; There is none who does good, No, not one.

**13 "Their throat is an open tomb; With their tongues they have practiced deceit"; "The poison of asps is under their lips";**

Saints, from Psalms 5:9 comes the statement that their talk is foul, like the stench from an open grave. Jesus made it clear that the indications of sinfulness come from inside of us.

**Psalm 5:9-10**

9 For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; Their inward part is destruction; Their throat is an open tomb; They flatter with their tongue. 10 Pronounce them guilty, O God! Let them fall by their own counsels; Cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions, For they have rebelled against You.

**Matthew 15:10-11**

10 When He had called the multitude to Himself, He said to them, "Hear and understand: 11 Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man."

**James 1:26-27**

26 If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless. 27 Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

**James 3:8-9**

8 But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. 9 With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God.

Saints, Paul begins to point out that sinfulness corrupts human relationships too. The gift of communication becomes twisted into a weapon to deceive others.

**14 "Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness."**

Saints, From Psalms10:7 comes the picture of sinful people’s mouths full of cursing and bitterness.

**Psalm 10:1-7**

1 Why do You stand afar off, O LORD? Why do You hide Yourself in times of trouble? 2 The wicked in his pride persecutes the poor; Let them be caught in the plots which they have devised. 3 For the wicked boasts of his heart's desire; He blesses the greedy and renounces the LORD. 4 The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God; God is in none of his thoughts.

5 His ways are always prospering; Your judgments are far above, out of his sight; As for all his enemies, he sneers at them. 6 He has said in his heart, "I shall not be moved; I shall never be in adversity." 7 His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and oppression; Under his tongue is trouble and iniquity.

Saints, eventually, rebellion against God shows itself by tainting the way a person speaks. Cursing and bitterness may strike us first as offensive expressions, but they are also clues about a person’s inward condition.

**15 "Their feet are swift to shed blood; 16 Destruction and misery are in their ways; 17 And the way of peace they have not known."**

Saints, Isaiah 59:7-8 states that rebellion against God leads to violence against others.

**Isaiah 59:7-8**

7 Their feet run to evil, And they make haste to shed innocent blood; Their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; Wasting and destruction are in their paths. 8 The way of peace they have not known, And there is no justice in their ways; They have made themselves crooked paths; Whoever takes that way shall not know peace.

Saints, the shameful milestones of history are marked with bloodstains from the atrocities committed by those who freed themselves from God. There is always talk of peace, but apart from God, there can be no real peace.

**18 "There is no fear of God before their eyes."**

Saints, Quoting from Psalms 36:1, Paul states the bottom line condition of these people: they have no fear of God to restrain them.

**Psalm 36:1-4**

1 An oracle within my heart concerning the transgression of the wicked: There is no fear of God before his eyes. 2 For he flatters himself in his own eyes, When he finds out his iniquity and when he hates.

3 The words of his mouth are wickedness and deceit; He has ceased to be wise and to do good. 4 He devises wickedness on his bed; He sets himself in a way that is not good;

He does not abhor evil.

Saints, to fear the Lord is to recognize God for who he is: holy, almighty, righteous, pure, all-knowing, all-powerful, and all-wise.

**1 Peter 2:17**

Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

**Proverbs 10:27**

“The fear of the LORD prolongs days, But the years of the wicked will be shortened”

**Psalm 19:9**

“The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether”

When we regard God correctly, we gain a clearer picture of ourselves: sinful, weak, frail, and needy.

When we recognize who God is and who we are, we will fall at his feet in humble respect.

Only then will he show us how to choose his way.

Paul’s brief tour of truth ends almost full circle.

He began with the fact that no one is like God (who is righteous), and he ends with the parallel truth that we lack fear of God.

Some people lack this fear out of ignorance, while others, through familiarity with God, lose the sense of humble awe that ought to characterize a person’s attitude before God.

Soon and Very soon, Jesus is about to appear, we are almost out of here!

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**1 Corinthians 15:50-54**

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

**Short Movie Slide>**

**Acts 2:38-39**

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

**Let’s Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.”**