


Day 1

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

*Is Anyone Righteous?*

<sup>9</sup> What shall we conclude then? Are we any better? Not at all! We have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin.


Q1. Who are Jews? Who are Gentiles? Jews or Gentiles: where would you place Hindus? Muslims? Buddhists?

Who are Jews?

Who are Gentiles?

Hindus? Muslims? Buddhists? Others?

Are members of these religions: Jews? Or Gentiles? Or other?

 “The apostle [Paul] is reasoning with Jews; and he proceeds to show from their own [Old Testament] Scriptures [which Paul paraphrased in the following verses 10-18 (↓)] that what he had affirmed was true. The point to be proved was, that the Jews, in the matter of justification, had no advantage or preference over the Gentiles; that the Jew had failed to keep the Law which had been given him, as the Gentile had failed to keep the Law which had been given him; and that both, therefore, were equally dependent on the mercy of God, incapable of being justified and saved by their works.” [©1834, *Notes on the Bible* by Albert Barnes. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/romans/3-10.htm>]

<sup>10</sup> As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; <sup>11</sup> there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God.

Q2. How does the dictionary define “righteous”?

Q3. Do verses 10-11 (↑) apply to Believers? And/or non-believers? Why?

Believers? Yes? No? Why?

Non-believers? Yes? No? Why?

## Lesson 6: Romans 3:9-31

<sup>12</sup> All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." [Psalm 14:1-3; 53:1-3; Ecclesiastes 7:20]

Q4. Hey! This is harsh. I go to a Christian church. I'm a good person. Does Paul's broad definition really include me?

Yes? } Why?  
No? }

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### Day 2

<sup>13</sup> "Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit." [Psalm 5:9]

"The poison of vipers is on their lips." [Psalm 140:3]

<sup>14</sup> "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." [Psalm 10:7]

Q5. How can a "throat" be an "open grave" and a tongue "practice deceit"?

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#### Mark 7:18-23 [NIV-1984]

<sup>18</sup> "Are you so dull?" he asked. "Don't you see that nothing that enters a man from the outside can make him 'unclean'? <sup>19</sup> For it doesn't go into his heart but into his stomach, and then out of his body." (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods "clean.")

<sup>20</sup> He went on: "What comes out of a man is what makes him 'unclean.' <sup>21</sup> For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, <sup>22</sup> greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance, and folly. <sup>23</sup> All these evils come from inside and make a man 'unclean.' "

Q6. How can a viper's poison be on a person's "lips"? (What might the "viper" represent?)

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#### James 3:2-8 [NIV-1984]

<sup>2</sup> We all stumble in many ways. If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check.

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## Lesson 6: Romans 3:9-31

<sup>3</sup> When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. <sup>4</sup> Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. <sup>5</sup> Likewise the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. <sup>6</sup> The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.

<sup>7</sup> All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles, and creatures of the sea are being tamed and have been tamed by man, <sup>8</sup> but no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

Q7. Is “bitterness” an okay emotion for Believers?

Yes? } Why?  
No? }

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**Philippians 2:14** [NIV-1984]

Do everything without complaining or arguing,

**James 5:13** [NIV-1984]

Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise.

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### Day 3

<sup>15</sup> "Their feet are swift to shed blood; <sup>16</sup> ruin and misery mark their ways, <sup>17</sup> and the way of peace they do not know." [Isaiah 59:7,8]

<sup>18</sup> "There is no fear of God before their eyes." [Psalm 36:1]

Q8. Using a ‘broad brush,’ are these preceding verses 10-18 applicable today?

Q9. What does “fear God” mean to you?

## Lesson 6: Romans 3:9-31

Q10. In general, does today's society fear God?


Yes? } Why?  
No? }

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<sup>19</sup> Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God.

<sup>20</sup> Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.

 “Sin offends our holy God and separates us from Him. Because God is holy, He cannot tolerate sin; He cannot ignore or excuse sin as though it didn't matter. Sin cuts people off from Him, forming a wall that isolates God from the people He loves. No wonder this long list [see also Isaiah 59] of wretched sins makes God angry and forces Him to look away from us. People, who die with their life of unrepented, therefore unforgiven sin, separate themselves eternally from God. God wants them to live with Him forever, but He cannot take them into His holy presence unless their sin is removed. . .” [Life Application Bible NIV, 1991, published by Tyndale and Zondervan Publishing Companies, page 1269]

Q11. How does a person move from darkness to light? From being a non-Believer to a Believer?  
How do I know that I will be with God in Heaven when I die?

Darkness to light?  
Nonbeliever to Believer?


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Eternal destination? (i.e., Heaven?)

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 An analogy.

I died and I'm standing before the Judge – the Lord God Almighty. The prosecuting attorney is Satan and, while he paces back-and-forth before the Judge's bench, he lists every one of my sins in excruciating detail emphasizing the people I had hurt. I am standing, downcast, and feeling deep, deep, sorrowful shame as I listen to all of the sins I committed, the people I had hurt, and the impact and consequences of my words and actions upon those people. I am in anguish over the pain I caused. Eventually, Satan completes his recitation of the list of my sins, and rests his case.

The Judge turns to my attorney Christ Jesus and asks Him for my defense.

Christ Jesus simply states, “My Father, the list of charges, the sins, is accurate. The defendant is guilty. The defense rests.”

The Judge then states, “My judgment is just. The defendant sinned. The consequence for sin is death. Are there any last words?”

Christ Jesus quietly addresses the Judge, “I know this person by name. I paid the penalty for this person's sins. Please free this person.”

The Judge turns to me and lovingly says, “My child, your sins are forgiven. You are free to go.”


[As retold by Galen Watje, 07/20/2023]

## Lesson 6: Romans 3:9-31

### Day 4

#### *Righteous By Faith*

<sup>21</sup> But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.

 We've defined "righteousness" in the past as a "right standing with God". Agreed?

Q12. How does "the Law and the Prophets testify" to this "righteousness"?

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<sup>22</sup> This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup> and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Q13. Verse 22: How do we achieve "this righteousness"?

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Q14. Verse 24: What is "His grace"?

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Q15. What does this mean to you: "justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus"?

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## Lesson 6: Romans 3:9-31

Q16. According to Paul, how are we to obtain “This righteousness from God”? Based on Scripture or your life experiences, is there another way to achieve “This righteousness from God”?

How to obtain?

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Another way? Yes? No? Describe?

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### Matthew 7:13-14

<sup>13</sup> "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. <sup>14</sup> But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it."

Q17. What does Jesus' statement of Matthew 7:13-14 (↑) mean to you?

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### Matthew 28:18

<sup>18</sup> Then, Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

Q18. It seems that Jesus is telling us that few people will find the way to eternal life, yet He tells us to “go and make disciples of all nations”. On one hand, it sounds futile and on the other, we are commanded to spread the Gospel. How would you explain the apparent contradiction?

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## Lesson 6: Romans 3:9-31

### Day 5

<sup>25a</sup> God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood.

Q19. How does the dictionary define “atonement”?


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Q20. What does “sacrifice of atonement” mean to you?

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 Instead of “sacrifice of atonement” (which is used by our standard NIV-1984), some versions use the word propitiation (e.g., ESV & KJV). Applicable definitions for ‘propitiation’ are “the act of atoning for sin or wrongdoing; the act of delivering from sin or saving from evil; something done or paid in expiation [to make amends] of a wrong” [© 2003-2023 Farlex, Inc. <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/propitiation>]

Q21. Did God actually “present Him as a sacrifice”? If yes, how was it accomplished?

Yes? }  
No? } How?

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#### **Leviticus 1:1-4** [The Burnt Offering]

<sup>1</sup> The LORD called to Moses and spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting. He said, <sup>2</sup> "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'When any of you brings an offering to the LORD, bring as your offering an animal from either the herd or the flock. <sup>3</sup> " If the offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he is to offer a male without defect. He must present it at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting so that it will be acceptable to the LORD. <sup>4</sup> He is to lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him.

Q22. Do you have “faith in His blood”?

Yes? }  
No? }

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#### **Isaiah 53:5** [NIV-1984]

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds [or KJV: stripes; bloody wounds on His body from the terrible whipping to which He was subjected, plus thorns pressed into His scalp, nail holes, and the piercing spear] we are healed.

## Lesson 6: Romans 3:9-31

<sup>25b</sup> He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished — <sup>26</sup> he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

Q23. How would you define “forbearance”?

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Q24. Did the Lord leave “the sins committed beforehand unpunished”? (In the Old Testament, it seemed like He was always purging evil from His people.) How would you explain Paul’s statement?

Yes? } Why?  
No? }

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Commentators have mixed assessments on the meaning behind the phrase “*he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished*”. (1) Some believe the Apostle Paul is referencing all of the sins the faithful committed before Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross (basically, the Old Testament history), (2) another contingent of commentators believe Paul is addressing the sins the person commits before coming to belief in Christ Jesus, and (3) others are in the camp that Paul is alluding to both.

This commentator firmly believes that the Apostle Paul is referencing both groups: those in Old Testament history who had placed their trust in the Lord and especially in the prophecies that pointed to the coming Messiah; as well as those who believe in the saving grace of Christ Jesus. When I committed my first sin, the Lord God should have ‘smoked’ me (incinerated me for my sin), yet the Lord demonstrated great forbearance by giving me time to come to faith, to believe in His Son, the Lord Christ Jesus. Christ Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross was so consequential, so climactic, that his sacrifice covered the faithful: past, present, and future. Praise the Lord!

Q25. Have you ever heard the question “What happened to the people of the Old Testament, since they came before Jesus?” Would this passage (verses 25<sup>b</sup>-26 ↑) help explain God’s judgment and the eternal destination of the person in Old Testament times?

Yes? } Why?  
No? }

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**Genesis 15:1, 6** [English Standard Version (ESV)]

<sup>1</sup> After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision: “Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.” . . .

<sup>6</sup> And he [Abram/Abraham] believed the Lord, and He counted it to him as righteousness.


**Matthew 22:31-32** [NIV-1984] [Jesus said to the Jewish Sadducees:]

<sup>31</sup> But about the resurrection of the dead — have you not read what God said to you, <sup>32</sup> ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’ ? He is not the God of the dead but of the living.”



## Lesson 6: Romans 3:9-31

<sup>27</sup> Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. On what principle? On that of observing the law? No, but on that of faith.

 “Most religions prescribe specific duties that must be performed to make a person acceptable to a god.” [©1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, *The Life Application Bible*, published by Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, IL 60189. All rights reserved. Page 2033]

Q26. If I am to perform good deeds/works in my efforts to make myself acceptable to my god, how might I typically react with others of my religion? How would I typically react to those not of my religion?

My religion (non-Christian)?

.....  
Not of my religion?  
.....

Q27. Conversely, if I am a Believer in the saving grace of Christ Jesus, how might I typically react with others of my religion? How would I typically react to those not of my religion?

My religion (Christian)?

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Not of my religion?  
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## Day 6

<sup>28</sup> For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law.

Q28. How are we, who believe, “justified by faith”?

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Q29. How would you explain, “justified by faith apart from observing the law”?

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**Acts 16:31** [NIV-1984]

They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved — you and your household."

## Lesson 6: Romans 3:9-31

### Galatians 2:15-16 [NIV-1984]

<sup>15</sup> "We who are Jews by birth and not 'Gentile sinners' <sup>16</sup> know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.

### Romans 4:23-24 [NIV-1984]

<sup>23</sup> The words "it was credited to him" were written not for him alone, <sup>24</sup> but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness — for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.

<sup>29</sup> Is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles too? Yes, of Gentiles too, <sup>30</sup> since there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith. <sup>31</sup> Do we, then, nullify the law by this faith? Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law.

Q30. Verse 31: We, who believe, have faith, so why does God's Law remain important, since Paul writes, "Do we . . . nullify the law . . . ? Not at all! . . . we uphold the law"?

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Q31. If you wanted to lead someone to Jesus, which is the best method? Would you use Paul's method to convict the non-believer of their sin? Or would you encourage the non-believer to just accept Jesus? Or would you allow the Holy Spirit to perform the convicting of sin?

Paul's method of convicting? Yes? No? Depends? Why?

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Just accept Jesus? Yes? No? Depends? Why?

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Holy Spirit convicts? Yes? No? Depends? Why?

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