

“The Gospel and the Jews”

INTRODUCTION: Four times in Romans 1-3, Paul lays side by side the Jews and the Gentiles ...

1. *To the Jews first but also to the Greeks ... both Jews and Greeks ...*
 - a) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. (Romans 1:16)*
 - b) *There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. (Romans 2:9-16)*
 - c) *I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome. (Romans 1:14-15)*
 - d) *Barbarians (Ch. 1) ... Greeks (2:1-16) ... Jews (2:17-3:20)*
 - e) *For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks are under sin ...*
2. Paul’s long dissertation on the sinfulness of mankind is meant to drive us to three conclusions:
 - a) **First:** all of us are sinners because we fail to live up to God’s standards.
 - b) **Second:** There are no people groups who are less sinful than other groups of mankind:
 - (1) *Roman Barbarians sin against nature ...*
 - (2) *Greek Moralists sin against conscience ...*
 - (3) *Jewish Legalists sin against scripture ...*
 - (4) Hence: “all have sinned ...”
 - c) **Third:** Every person shows the same need for a sinless Savior.
3. Paul is now entering into his third argument: *The Jews are no less sinful and guilty before God than Roman pagans (Barbarians) and Greek moralists. They simply sin against God in a uniquely Jewish manner.*
4. Paul is *obviously* speaking to Jews in these verses (2:17-3:20)
 - a) *But if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast in God (Romans 2:17)*
 - b) *For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. (Romans 2:25)*
 - c) *Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? (Romans 3:1)*
 - d) *What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, (Romans 3:9)*
 - e) **Note:** This is where Paul himself enters the Gospel story – “What then? Are **we** Jews any better off? No, not at all.”

f) *Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. (Romans 3:19)*

5. This is the final **sledgehammer blow**: “... so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God ...” (3:19)

a) “**every mouth stopped**”: No one has any excuse ...

(1) Not the Roman pagans who sin against nature ...

For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. (Romans 1:20)

(2) Not the Greek moralists who sin against conscience ...

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. (Romans 2:1)

(3) Not the Jewish legalists who sin against the Law ...

You who boast in the law dishonor God by breaking the law. (Romans 2:23)
For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. (Romans 3:20)

b) and “**the whole world be held accountable to God.**”

(1) i.e., every one of us, and every person in the world, we answer to God for what he/she has done against God’s will or failed to do in obedience to God.

(2) we **won’t** discuss with God the sins of “those bad people,”

(3) we will answer to God for our own *inner evil* and our own *sinful deeds*.

c) **Note well**: “*no human being will be justified in His sight!*” (3:20)

(1) literally: *no flesh will be justified*

(2) *because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin. (Romans 3:20 NASB)*

(3) *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23)*

6. **Charles R. Erdman**: *Romans*; p. 41

A large part of the religion of some men seems to consist in their readiness to find fault with others. Such was the case of the Jew whom Paul here describes. In the midst of the flood of Gentile pollution and iniquities, which Paul has pictured in the preceding chapter, he sees one who, like a judge, from the heights of his tribunal, sends a stern look over the corrupt mass, condemning the evil which pervades it and applauding the wrath of God which punishes it. The man is not named, however, until Paul proceeds (vs. 17-29) to set forth the guilt and condemnation of the Jew.

7. What Paul is dealing with is man’s *universal, sinful PRIDE*.

- a) Each person – Roman homosexual, Greek philosopher, circumcised Jew – thinks himself *superior* to others!
- b) **Grant R. Osborne:** *Romans: IVP; p. 71*

It is human nature to think we are somehow better than others. We all tend to point to something in our pedigree that makes us stand above the commoners around us, perhaps a successful relative or a moment of victory in the past. For the Jews it was their family tree. They thought that being the recipients of the law placed them above the others and gave them a special status before God.

- c) Obviously, this is true! Why it's easy to see why **Mike Ross** is superior to most, if not all of you!
 - (1) Baptized as an infant into the historic Roman Catholic Church, reared in a moral home, educated in parochial schools, studied in a minor seminary.
 - (2) **Note:** Senior Year of H.S. I received the *Christian Citizenship Award* for being the most "Christ-like Senior."
 - (3) I attended *THE* Ohio State University
 - (i) Dean's list, first in my family to receive a college degree – No drugs, sex, alcohol!
 - (4) Officer in the U.S. Army, MBA, Fortune 500 Company
 - (5) Converted in 1976 – *new and even BETTER Christian!*
 - (6) Seminary, Church Planter, Senior Pastor, 40th Moderator of the PCA, D.Min from RTS, etc. ...
 - (7) ... to say nothing of my superior Midwestern values, Republican politics (Never voted for a Democrat!), Conservative views on most issues, etc., etc., etc. ...
 - (8) to say nothing of the fact that I'm extremely pleasant, incredibly handsome, and an all-around good guy!

8. In truth: I sound a lot like the Apostle Paul!

though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. (Phil. 3:4-6)

9. **Three small problems:** I just happened to overlook ...

- a) **One:** *my list of qualifications and accomplishments very conveniently leave out all my spiritual, moral, relational, cultural and career failures!*
- b) **Second:** *many people in the world (most of them) would find fault with everything I am and have done – every single reason for boasting is a reason of shame for others.*
- c) **Third:** *Before God all these things mean absolutely nothing! They carry the eternal value of mere TRASH!*

If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— (Phil. 3:4-9)

10. **Your** list would be different: *a Southerner or Californian ... the University of Michigan or NC-Chapel Hill ... a Democrat (who's never voted for a Republican) ... Your wealth, your beauty, your intellectual prowess, you're "an artist," blah ... blah ... blah ...*

11. We all ignore this one fact: *Whoever we are and all we've ever done or will ever do is stained by and caked with one common thing: the shamefully dirty and embarrassingly foul residue of our own sin!*

*We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment.
We all fade like a leaf,
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. (Isa. 64:6)*

12. What God is calling for, and what Paul is preaching toward, is **simple honesty** about ourselves: who we are ... what we've done!

13. And that spiritual honesty will make us **humble** – toward God and with one another.

14. Where are *Christians* in this line up of fallen, guilty, condemned humanity? Answer: With the *Jews* ...

- a) The *religious* people who believe in the God of the Bible,
- b) the people who receive and believe in *The Bible*,
- c) those who are waiting in faith for a *Messiah*,
- d) Christians are the *children* of the Jews!

But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree, do not be arrogant toward the branches. If you are, remember it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you. Then you will say, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast through faith. So do not become proud, but fear. For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off. And even they, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again. For if you were cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree. (Romans 11:17-24)

15. **Romans 2:17-3:20** is written to *Religious People* who are prone to legalism and self-righteousness.

- a) The surprisingly last “hunk” of fallen and condemned humanity –
- b) Jews, Christians, Mormons, JW’s, Muslims, etc.
- c) People who sin against God’s *revealed word*.

16. Paul will ask them *10 Questions* in order to establish the undeniable fact of 3:19-20 and 23 ...

Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. (Rom. 3:19-20)

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, (Romans 3:23)

17. Four paragraphs and three **reasons** religious people are just as needy of salvation in Jesus Christ as anyone else ...

I. RELIGIOUS PEOPLE SIN AGAINST GOD’S LAW (Romans 2:17-24)

But if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast in God and know his will and approve what is excellent, because you are instructed from the law; and if you are sure that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth— you then who teach others, do you not teach yourself? While you preach against stealing, do you steal? You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? You who boast in the law dishonor God by breaking the law. For, as it is written, “The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.” (Romans 2:17-24)

1. Paul’s first point is obvious: *If you have the Law of God and know it, to sin against such knowledge is vile!*
2. Remember Paul’s two points in 2:1-16
 - a) we shall all be judged for our *deeds*
 - b) we shall all be judged according to the *light* we have received
 - c) So ... the more light the harsher the judgment when we sin
 - d) because *we sin with a greater knowledge of our own evils*.
3. The Jews were all the more *culpable* because of the way they saw themselves! Paul offers a Five-Fold self-description of the Jew:
 - a) They called themselves *Jews* (their monotheistic religion inherited from Abraham and the Patriarchs)
 - b) They relied on *the Law* (the OT revelation and the *Torah* given to them by Moses)
 - c) They boasted in *God* (they were proud of and had confidence in their One, true God)
 - (1) a good thing, not a sin
 - (2) *Some boast in chariots and some in horses, But we will boast in the name of the Lord, our God. (Ps. 20:7 NASB)*
 - d) They knew and approved of God’s *revealed will* as it came to them in Scripture.

(1) *and know his will and approve what is excellent, because you are instructed from the law (Romans 2:18)*

(2) The Word of God reveals the Will of God

(3) Scripture enables us to approve what God approves.

e) They fancied themselves as *instructors, guides and teachers* of God's law to pagans and children.

and if you are sure that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth— (Romans 2:19-20)

4. This being so, the obvious question arises: *Do you obey the Ten Commandments?*

a) The **first** revelation given by God (Exodus 20),

b) The **divine basis** for all morality and goodness,

c) The fundamental **rules of life** for both ...

(1) Loving God: Laws 1-4

(2) Loving other people: Laws 5-10

(3) *And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets." (Matt. 22:37-40)*

d) Paul asks **four** probing questions – *"You then who teach others, do you not teach yourself?*

(1) **Question #2:** *While you preach against stealing, do you steal?* Bribery, unjust wages, forbidden usury, inaccurate weights and measures in business affairs, etc.?

(2) **Question #3:** *You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?* Lust in the heart, the taking of a second wife, visiting a prostitute, a "one-time" fling, lewd entertainment (porn), etc.?

(3) **Question #4:** *You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?*

(i) meaning: "You who condemn the idolatrous Romans and Greeks of their idolatry – even their robbing of their own temples!"

(ii) incidentally, a *very serious crime*, worthy of death, in the Greco-Roman society

(iii) *"Don't you rob your own Temple by failing to pay the tithe? What's the difference between the two temples being robbed?"*

(iv) *Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, 'How have we robbed you?' In your tithes and contributions. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. (Malachi 3:8-9)*

5. The Jews (as Christians do) conveniently (narrowly) defined theft, murder and idolatrous temple-robbing. But, as Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, the Law of God is deeper, more involved and profoundly pervasive in all of life!

a) Stealing?

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matt. 6:19-21)

b) Adultery?

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (Matt. 5:27-28)

c) Idolatry?

“No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. (Matt. 6:24, 33)

6. Our shallow interpretation and application of the Law of God *blasphemes* God, worse than the pagans knew how to do!

a) *You who boast in the law dishonor God by breaking the law. For, as it is written, “The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.” (Romans 2:23-24)*

b) Paul makes reference to **Isaiah 52:5** and **Ezekiel 36:20-21**

(1) *Now therefore what have I here,” declares the Lord, “seeing that my people are taken away for nothing? Their rulers wail,” declares the Lord, “and continually all the day my name is despised. (Isa. 52:5)*

(2) *But when they came to the nations, wherever they came, they profaned my holy name, in that people said of them, ‘These are the people of the Lord, and yet they had to go out of his land.’ But I had concern for my holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations to which they came. (Ezekiel 36:20-21)*

c) **Robert Mounce: Romans: NAC; p. 100**

Throughout the Gentile world the Jews’ hypocritical conduct had led others to blaspheme the name of God. Intended to represent God to the nations, they had caused others to hold him in contempt. By their conduct they had disgraced the God they professed to worship.

In recent years a number of religious leaders have been publicly exposed for sexual sins. The impact upon those who trusted them as spiritual guides is great. Thousands have been disillusioned by the conduct of the thoughtless few. To bear the name of God is a sacred trust. To violate that trust has severe repercussions for those leaders themselves and for those whose spiritual growth is harmed by their actions.

d) Jesus was severe against such shameful living ...

And he said to his disciples, "Temptations to sin are sure to come, but woe to the one through whom they come! It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were cast into the sea than that he should cause one of these little ones to sin. (Luke 17:1-2)

7. How can we avoid the questions for ourselves, as *Evangelical Christians*?

- a) *Are we against abortion on demand?* Then why is such murder still legal in the USA? Christians don't want Roe vs. Wade overturned because their daughter might need a "legal termination" of her illicit pregnancy!
- b) *Do we condemn homosexuality?* They why not our own heterosexual fornication, pornography or adulteries?
- c) *Refuse to condone same-sex marriage?* How many times have you been married?
- d) *Refuse to steal?* What about from your employer, on your tax return, or by advocating lower taxes that take away from the poor?
- e) *Ever rob a temple?* What kind of giving record was mailed to you in March by CCC? Are you a tither? Even a member?

8. **How easy it is to hide behind a very literal, narrow, self-serving application of the Ten Commandments.**

9. But that's not all we do ...

II. RELIGIOUS PEOPLE SIN AGAINST RELIGION (Romans 2:25-29)

For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God. (Romans 2:25-29)

1. Paul singles out *circumcision*: the distinguishing mark of Judaism; that rite or ceremony which made a person a Jew.
2. For Christians it would be *Baptism*; NT circumcision
 - a) *In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. (Col. 2:11-12)*
 - b) Baptism ... *a circumcision made without hands* ...
 - c) So then, Romans 2:25-29 reads as follows for the Christian –

For baptism indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you break the law, your baptism becomes unbaptism. So, if a man who is unbaptized keeps the precepts of the law, will not his unbaptism be regarded as baptism? Then he who is physically unbaptized but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and baptism but break the law. For

no one is a Christian who is merely one outwardly, nor is baptism outward and physical. But a Christian is one inwardly, and baptism is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God. (Romans 2:25-29)

3. **Robert Haldane:** *Romans: BOT; p. 100*

Paul here pursues the Jew into his last retreat, in which he imagined himself most secure. He presses him on the subject of circumcision, which the Jews viewed as their stronghold – that rite even more ancient than Moses, and by which they were distinguished from the other nations.

4. That *religious rite* (sacrament) that made a person a visible member of the Covenant people of God – the Church.

a) The OT Sacrament of *circumcision*

(1) *The sacraments of the old testament, in regard of the spiritual things thereby signified and exhibited, were, for substance, the same with those of the new. (WCF 27-5)*

5. **James M. Boice:** *Romans: Vol. 1; pp. 258-259*

Still, the Jew had one last card to play, one final argument. He had been circumcised, and circumcision had brought him into the visible outward fellowship with that body of covenant people to whom God had made salvation promises. It was like saying that circumcision (our counterpart is baptism) had made him a member of that body and because of that membership his salvation was certain. The Jew really did believe this – just as many people today believe they are saved merely by being members of a church! The argument is that salvation is for the Jews and that what makes one a Jew is circumcision.

6. **Martin Luther** used to tell the Devil to stop assaulting him by saying, “Get away from me, Satan, for I am a *baptized* man!”

a) What was Dr. Luther saying? That he was saved by baptism?

b) No! He was saying, “*I am a true Christian because I am united to Christ, by faith and in repentance, of which my Baptism gives evidenced.*”

7. Baptism is, our *Westminster Confession of Faith* tells us: “a sign (symbol) and seal (guarantee) of the covenant of grace,” for those whose **hearts** have been changed by ...

a) *regeneration* – born again in the Spirit

b) *repentance* – turning away from a life of self and sin

c) *faith* – turning in surrender to a life in Christ and His righteousness.

d) We call this process *Conversion*.

8. This is Paul’s point: *It will do you no good to be circumcised (baptized) and to join the Church if you do so as an “old creature” without faith in Jesus Christ or repentance of sin. The blood of a circumcision cannot cut away the old sin nature. Only the blood of Christ can do that. The waters of baptism cannot wash away filth, shame, guilt or damnation. Only the Holy Spirit can do that. A person must have a heart-change – a “circumcision of the heart” (v. 29) – in order to be forgiven and to be declared righteous!*

Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. (John 3:3,5)

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. (Romans 6:3-4)

9. Religion won't help if *regeneration* hasn't happened; circumcision cannot replace *conversion* anymore than Baptism replace *Christ*!
10. So then, is religion worthless? Absolutely not!

III. RELIGIOUS PEOPLE SIN WORSELY WITHOUT RELIGION (Romans 3:1-8)

Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? Much in every way. To begin with, the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God. What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God? 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.”*

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.) By no means! For then how could God judge the world? But if through my lie God's truth abounds to his glory, why am I still being condemned as a sinner? And why not do evil that good may come?—as some people slanderously charge us with saying. Their condemnation is just. (Romans 3:1-8)

1. **Jim Boice** uses a comical but effective illustration to explain what Paul was doing in Romans 3:1-9 (Romans: Vol. 1; p. 265)

A lawyer friend tells a story of a novice attorney defending a man accused of biting another man's ear off during a barroom brawl. A witness to the fight was on the stand, and the lawyer was cross-examining him. “Did you actually see the defendant bite this man's ear off?” the young attorney asked.

“No, sir,” the witness replied.

That was the answer the attorney wanted and needed, but he made a mistake not uncommon to young lawyers. Instead of ending his cross examination when he was ahead and on a winning track, he continued to ask questions.

“What exactly did you see?” he queried.

“I saw him spit it out,” said the witness.

The point is that going too far or failing to quit when you're ahead is a mistake in legal squabbling.

2. As if anticipating that the Jews will ask him the question: *Haven't you gone too far? You're saying that it's worthless to be a Jew in the first place? Pagans and Jews are the same in God's eyes? Really Paul?*
3. Paul answers **four preliminary objections** the Jews (hypothetically) might raise against his Gospel evidence of the Jew's sinfulness:

- a) **Objection #1:** Paul's teaching contradicts God's covenant with Israel and says that OT religion was useless!
- (1) *Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? Much in every way. To begin with, the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God. (Romans 3:1-2)*
 - (2) "Not so," says Paul, "the OT covenant gave to Israel the OT oracles upon which his argument for a Messiah in Christ was based.
 - (3) The OT proves we all sin and need a Savior, and those who believe the OT have that advantage over "rank pagans"
- b) **Objection #2:** If we believed what Paul taught we would nullify the faithfulness of the Covenant-keeping God!
- (1) *What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God? 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." (Romans 3:3-4)*
 - (2) Sinful Jews do not negate God's Covenant of Grace.
 - (3) Salvation is rooted in God's mercy and His promises, never in our performance.
- c) **Objection #3:** Paul's theology impugns the justice of God and causes Him to appear to be unjust in His judgments.
- (1) *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.) By no means! For then how could God judge the world? (Romans 3:5-6)*
 - (2) Quite the contrary! For God to be just He *must* judge immoral gentiles, critical moralists and shallow religionists who trust in themselves.
 - (3) Abraham was right to say, "Will not the Judge of all the earth do what is right?" (*Gen. 18:25*)
- d) **Objection #4:** Well then, why don't we all just sin as much as we can to give God glory for saving us!
- (1) *But if through my lie God's truth abounds to his glory, why am I still being condemned as a sinner? And why not do evil that good may come?—as some people slanderously charge us with saying. Their condemnation is just. (Romans 3:7-8)*
 - (2) **John R. W. Stott:** *Romans: BST; p. 98*
'If evil behaviour causes good consequences, such as manifesting God's character and so promoting his glory, then let's increase evil in order thereby to increase good. The end obviously justifies the means.'
 - (3) **Notice:** The argument is so ludicrous, so unfair a caricature of Paul's teaching, and so dishonoring to God that Paul does not even attempt to answer it.

(4) The shocking *stupidity* of the argument answers itself!

4. **Charles Hodge** explains what Paul is doing here (*Romans*; p. 75)

By reducing the reasoning of the Jews to a conclusion shocking to the moral sense, he thereby refutes it. The apostle often thus recognizes the authority of the intuitive moral judgments of our nature, and thus teaches us that those truths which are believed on their own evidence, as soon as presented to the mind, should be regarded as fixed points in all reasonings; and that to attempt to go beyond these intuitive judgement, is to unsettle the foundation of all faith and knowledge, and to open the door to universal skepticism. Any doctrine, therefore, which is immoral in its tendency, or which conflicts with the first principles of morals, must be false, no matter how plausible may be the arguments in its favour.

5. **Religion is better than non-religion, but it's not as good as Righteousness!**

6. There is only **one conclusion** left to draw ...

Conclusion: There is no one who doesn't need salvation from sin ...

1. *What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, as it is written:*

"None is righteous, no, not one;

no one understands;

no one seeks for God.

All have turned aside; together they have become worthless;

no one does good,

not even one."

"Their throat is an open grave;

they use their tongues to deceive."

"The venom of asps is under their lips."

"Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness."

"Their feet are swift to shed blood;

in their paths are ruin and misery,

and the way of peace they have not known."

"There is no fear of God before their eyes." (Romans 3:9-18)

2. Paul cites OT Scripture – *Jewish Bible* – from 9 OT passages

a) From **Psalm 14:1-3** repeated in **Ps. 53:1-3** ...

as it is written:

"None is righteous, no, not one;

no one understands;

no one seeks for God.

All have turned aside; together they have become worthless;

no one does good,

not even one." (Rom. 3:10-12)

b) From **Psalm 5:9**, and **Jeremiah 5:16** and **Psalm 140:3** ...

*“Their throat is an open grave;
they use their tongues to deceive.”
“The venom of asps is under their lips.” (Romans 3:13)*

c) From **Psalm 10:7** ...

“Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness.” (Romans 3:14)

d) From **Proverbs 1:6** ...

“Their feet are swift to shed blood; (Romans 3:15)

e) From **Isaiah 59:7-8** ...

*in their paths are ruin and misery,
and the way of peace they have not known.” (Romans 3:16-17)*

f) From **Psalm 36:1** ...

“There is no fear of God before their eyes.” (Romans 3:18)

3. Out of the OT Scriptures of the Jews **three undeniable conclusions** strike home to each and every human being:

a) to Barbarians, Greeks, and Jews (Christians)

b) **First:** No one is any better off than anyone else when it comes to sin. All live under the guilty weight of their own sins ...

What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, (Romans 3:9)

c) **Second:** Not one person is righteous before God when it comes to themselves: *“None is righteous, no, not one” (3:10)*

d) **Third:** Every person stands under the judgment of the Law – whether they knew the Law or not – because they all sin –

(1) Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. (Romans 3:19-20)

(2) sin against the general revelation of nature (Ch. 1)

(3) sin against the general revelation of conscience (2:1-16)

(4) sin against the special revelation of Scripture (2:7-3:20)

(5) for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23)

4. God has us **all**, each and every one of **us**, right where He wants us: *“all under sin” (3:9)* so that He can take us to where He wants us all to be, each and every one of us, to **Jesus Christ** for salvation!

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.” (Romans 1:16-17)

5. So ... we can all be *humbled* ... we can all stop looking at other sinners in judgment and to ourselves in *self-righteousness* ... and can all begin to look to *Jesus Christ* for righteousness!

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:1)