

A Word from Kathy

Much has been said about man's sinfulness in the first two chapters of Romans. Chapter 3 is like a cool breeze blowing on a warm day. This week we look at the faithfulness of God. Read this chapter at least twice before starting the study guide. Pray, asking God to speak to your heart and to help you glean all he has for you in this chapter. Our desire should always be to be made over in the image of Christ.

Observation

1. Paul uses a series of questions and answers to teach in this section of the letter. In verse 1 he asks the questions, "What advantage is there to being a Jew?" "What value is there in circumcision?" What are the advantages he mentions in verses 2-8? (Look closely at verses 2 and 3.)
2. Were the Jews worthy of God's faithfulness?
3. In verses 9-12, what undeniable truth do we see concerning all men and women? (Luke 18:19: *And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone."*)
4. Verses 13-18 very graphically describe all sinners. What do these verses say about our speech, motives, and relationships, where we go, what we do, and the attitude of our hearts?
5. In verses 19-20, we see Paul stating the inability of the law and the purpose of the law. What is the purpose of the law? (Read Gal. 3:24-25: *So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian.*) What could the law not do for us?

The law is the tutor that goes with us; in a way it is like the speedometer on our cars and the speed limit signs on the side of the road. They reveal the facts but can do nothing to change our actions. The law simply reveals the truth.

6. In verses 21-22, who is the only true source of righteousness? What facts do you see in these two verses concerning righteousness?
7. What truth did you see in verse 10, now repeated in verse 23?
8. All men and women are then guilty before God. Is there no cure? Are we hopelessly bound in our sin? God, the righteous judge, declares all men guilty, but then what does he do? According to verse 26, what two roles does that attribute to God?
9. According to Romans 3:25, who presented the sacrifice for our sins?
We also see this in 1 Jn. 4:9-10: *This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.*
Again we see no one seeks after God (as we saw in Rom. 3:11). Who is the one initiating our relationship?
10. God knew the magnitude of our sin debt; he knew what it would take to redeem us. What does this reveal about Jesus' death in our place?
John 19:30: *...he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.*
11. According to Rom. 3:27, this eliminates all _____.

Application

12. Over and over we have seen that it is the faithfulness of God that is the foundation of our salvation. It is not by our doing but by his great love for us. How has focusing on the faithfulness of God helped you this week?

13. I have heard people say they went searching for God and found him. According to the Bible is that a true statement? (See vs. 11.) You may have a longing to change your life and a strong desire to please God. You may even be grieved over your sin and be seeking the truth about forgiveness and restoration to God; but that is because God, by his Holy Spirit, is drawing you to himself. It is always God's love that reaches out to man (vs. 12). Does knowing this serve to increase your love for God?

14. Since God is the righteous judge and every mouth is silenced and without excuse before him, then we are accountable for our sin. But by his love, he has presented the sacrifice and paid our debt. Has your heart been challenged to respond to this great love in a specific way? Salvation is a one-time event but our life should be an ongoing offering of thankfulness for all he has done. What thanks offering would you like to give this week? Is there some specific way you could express your love and thankfulness for his mercy and grace?

15. How could verses 29-30 help the body of Christ, which is separated into so many distinct denominations, many of which will often have nothing to do with one another?