

Sin and Condemnation: The World's need to get right with God

(71)

Pastor Eddie Ildefonso

[Romans 1:18-3:20](#)

(Continuation from 07/16/17)

E. The Arguments of the Religionist (Jew) Against a Heart Religion, [Romans 3:1-8](#)

1. What profit is there in being a religionist—in being circumcised or baptized (v.1-2)?
2. Does unbelief void God's promises—make God a liar (v.3-4)?
3. Is God unjust if He takes vengeance (v.5-8)?

2. [\(Romans 3:3-4\) Unbelief— Religionist— Salvation](#): the question is, “If you say some Jews do not believe and are condemned, doesn't that void God's promises and make God a liar?”

The Objection That Paul Attacked God's Promises

[Romans 3:3-4 \(NASB\)](#)

³“What then? If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it?”

⁴May it never be! Rather, let God be found true, though every man *be found* a liar, as it is written, ‘**THAT YOU MAY BE JUSTIFIED IN YOUR WORDS, AND PREVAIL WHEN YOU ARE JUDGED.**’”

DEEPER STUDY # 2

[Romans 3:3 \(NASB\)](#)

³“What then? If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it?”

[\(Romans 3:3\) Unbelief— Man, Errors](#): this is one of two common but gross deceptions of men—that unbelief makes a thing ineffective and voids it. A man argues: “If I deny something, ignore it, refuse to accept it, push it out of my mind, it will not be, nor will it come to pass.” Some even think of God's Word in this way. They think they can deny and reject some part of it and it will not be so. They accept the Scriptures that stress the love of God and allow them to live as they wish, but they reject the Scriptures that stress the supernatural and miraculous power of God and the desperate need of man to be saved from sin, death, and an eternal hell. They reject the Scriptures that demand that man live responsibly.

07-30-17

Series: The Book of Romans

Matthew 5:18 (NASB)

¹⁸ "For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished."

Luke 21:33 (NASB)

³³ "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away."

2 Timothy 2:13 (NASB)

¹³ "If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself."

Psalms 111:7 (NASB)

⁷ "The works of His hands are truth and justice; All His precepts are sure."

DEEPER STUDY # 3

Romans 3:4 (NASB)

⁴ May it never be! Rather, let God be found true, though every man *be found* a liar, as it is written, 'THAT YOU MAY BE JUSTIFIED IN YOUR WORDS, AND PREVAIL WHEN YOU ARE JUDGED.'

(Romans 3:4) Judging— Judgment: men judge God. They judge Him to be true or false. They judge whether He exists or does not exist. They judge His Word. But in the final hour, God will end up judging men. He will overcome all those who judged Him to be less than He is and less than what He said.

Romans 2:2 (NASB)

² "And we know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice such things."

Ezekiel 12:25 (NASB)

²⁵ "For I the LORD will speak, and whatever word I speak will be performed. It will no longer be delayed, for in your days, O rebellious house, 'I will speak the word and perform it,' declares the Lord GOD."

3. **(Romans 3:5-8) Love— Justice:** the question is, "Is God unjust if He takes vengeance?"

The Objection That Paul Attacked God's Purity

Romans 3:5-8 (NASB)

⁵ "But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? The God who inflicts wrath is not unrighteous, is He? (I am speaking in human terms.)

⁶ May it never be! For otherwise, how will God judge the world?

⁷ But if through my lie the truth of God abounded to His glory, why am I also still being judged as a sinner?

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

The third objection Paul anticipated was that his teaching attacked the very purity and holiness of God. The argument of his accusers would have been something like this:

07-30-17

Series: The Book of Romans

If God is glorified by the sins of Israel, being shown faithful Himself despite the unfaithfulness of His chosen people, then sin glorifies God. In other words, Paul, you are saying that what God strictly forbids actually brings Him glory. You are saying that God is like a merchant who displays a piece of expensive gold jewelry on a piece of black velvet so the contrast makes the gold appear even more elegant and beautiful. You are charging God with using man's sin to bring glory to Himself, and that is blasphemy. You are impugning the righteous purity of God. Not only that, but if man's **unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say** about God's judgment? If what you say is true, why does God punish sin? **The God who inflicts wrath is not unrighteous, is He?**

Again, lest his readers conclude that he was expressing his own thinking, Paul immediately adds the parenthetical explanation that he was **speaking in human terms**, that is, according to the **human** logic of the natural mind. He (Paul) was saying, in effect, "Don't think for a minute that I believe such perverted nonsense. I am only paraphrasing the charges that are often made against me."

If my unbelief and sin give God a chance to overcome ([Romans 3:4](#)) and to show His justice, then my sin brings greater glory to Him.

Romans 3:4 (NASB)

⁴May it never be! Rather, let God be found true, though every man *be found* a liar, as it is written, 'THAT YOU MAY BE JUSTIFIED IN YOUR WORDS, AND PREVAIL WHEN YOU ARE JUDGED.'

To intensify the disclaimer, Paul says again, "**May it never be!**" Obviously God does not encourage or condone sin in order to glorify Himself, **for otherwise how will God judge the world?**

It gives Him a chance to fulfill His Word. How can He punish me for that? Is He not unjust in inflicting punishment?

The answer is **fourfold**.

1. God forbid (*mē genoito*): away with such a thought! No! Never!
2. God is moral; therefore, He must judge the world. He would not be moral and just if He did not judge the world.
3. Such an argument is contradictory. Think about it. "If my sin and disobedience give God a chance to demonstrate His righteousness, why then am I called a sinner for that? My sin is really a good thing. It gives God a chance to show how good He is. I may sin, yes, but only good has come out of it. When God accepts me as I am, a sinner, God has a chance to show how gloriously merciful He is. You can't condemn me for giving God a chance to show His mercy."
4. The damnation of persons who argue this point is **just**; it is not unjust. Such arguments are common among every generation of men, but the arguments are gross deceptions. A man exclaims: "A God of love cannot take vengeance. He is too good and loving. He will be denying His very nature of love if He judges me."

07-30-17

Series: The Book of Romans

If Jews understood anything about the nature of God it was that He is a perfect judge. From the earliest part of the Old Testament He is called “**the Judge of all the earth**” ([Genesis 18:25](#)).

[Genesis 18:25 \(NASB\)](#)

²⁵“**Far be it from You to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous and the wicked are *treated* alike. Far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?**”

The psalmists repeatedly refer to Him as a judge (see, e.g., [Psalm 50:6](#); [Psalm 58:11](#); [Psalm 94:2](#)).

[Psalm 50:6 \(NASB\)](#)

⁶“**And the heavens declare His righteousness, For God Himself is judge.**”

[Psalm 58:11 \(NASB\)](#)

¹¹“**And men will say, ‘Surely there is a reward for the righteous; Surely there is a God who judges on earth!’**”

[Psalm 94:2 \(NASB\)](#)

²“**Rise up, O Judge of the earth, Render recompense to the proud.**”

A major theme of virtually all the prophets is that of God’s judgment—past as well as present, imminent as well as in the distant future. Paul’s very obvious point is that God would have no basis for equitable, righteous, pure judgment if He condoned sin.

In [verses 7](#) and [8](#) the apostle reiterates the false charges against him in somewhat different terms. “You claim that I say, ‘If through my **lie the truth of God abounded to His glory, why am I also still being judged a sinner?**’”

[Romans 3:7-8 \(NASB\)](#)

⁷“**But if through my lie the truth of God abounded to His glory, why am I also still being judged as a sinner?**

⁸ **And why not say (as we are slanderously reported and as some claim that we say), ‘Let us do evil that good may come’? Their condemnation is just.**”

That was clearly a charge of antinomianism (disregard of God’s law) of the worst sort. The critics were accusing Paul of teaching that the more wicked a person is, the more he glorifies God; the more faithless a person is, the more faithful he makes God appear; the more a person lies, the more he exalts God’s truthfulness.

Those were not hypothetical misrepresentations, as Paul makes clear in his next statement: “**And why not say (as we are slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say), ‘Let us do evil that good may come?’**” ([Romans 3:8](#)) Paul’s enemies obviously had repeatedly charged that his gospel of salvation by grace through faith alone not only undermined God’s law but granted license to sin with impunity. In effect, they accused him of saying that, in God’s eyes, sin is as acceptable as righteousness, if not more so.

Although the scribes and Pharisees were themselves sinful and hypocritical to the core, they loved to condemn others for breaking the Mosaic Law and the rabbinical traditions even in the

07-30-17

Series: The Book of Romans

smallest degree. Their religion was legalism personified, and the idea of divine grace was therefore anathema to them, because it completely undermined the works righteousness in which their hope was founded.

The same legalism characterized the Judaizers, supposed Jewish converts to Christianity who insisted that Christians had to maintain all the Mosaic laws and ceremonies. Their charges against Paul's gospel of grace were virtually identical to those of the scribes and Pharisees. The apostle therefore was attacked in much the same way both from within and without the church. It is therefore probable that Paul was addressing his arguments both to the Jewish leaders without and to the Judaizers within.

One of the most obvious characteristics of fallen human nature is its amazing ability to rationalize sin. Even small children are clever at giving a good reason for doing a wrong thing. That, essentially, was what Paul's opponents charged him with doing—rationalizing sin on the basis that it glorified God.

Later in the epistle Paul deals in detail with this same issue. After saying that,

Romans 5:20-21 (NASB)

²⁰“The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,

²¹so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Romans 6:1-2 (NASB)

¹“What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase?

²May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?”

With all the forcefulness he could muster, the apostle denounced the charge that he condoned any kind of sin. Least of all would he presume to justify sin by the spurious and vile argument that it brought glory to God.

It is possible, of course, that some of Paul's accusers wrongly associated his teachings with that of libertines in the church, such as those who were a blotch on the church at Corinth.

Jude wrote of “**certain persons [who had] crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ**” ([Jude 4](#)).

For a professed Christian to live in continual, unrepentant sin is a certain mark that he is not saved. To be a Christian is to be under the lordship of Jesus Christ and genuinely desire to serve Him. As Jude makes indisputably clear, the person who tries to justify his sin by presuming on God's grace is ungodly and denies Christ ([v. 4](#)).

Romans 3:4 (NASB)

⁴“May it never be! Rather, let God be found true, though every man *be found* a liar, as it is written, ‘**THAT YOU MAY BE JUSTIFIED IN YOUR WORDS, AND PREVAIL WHEN YOU ARE JUDGED.**’”

07-30-17

Series: The Book of Romans

Paul's final response to his slanderous critics was short but pointed. Although he was not the least guilty of teaching antinomianism, he fully concurred that for those who do teach it, **their condemnation is just.**

Romans 3:8 (NASB)

⁸“And why not *say* (as we are slanderously reported and as some claim that we say), ‘Let us do evil that good may come’? Their condemnation is just.”

What this argument fails to see is that *genuine love is just*. Love expressed unjustly is not love; it is license and indulgence. God's love is perfect, absolutely unbiased and impartial. It is shed upon all ([John 3:16](#); [1 John 2:2](#)).

John 3:16 (NASB)

¹⁶“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”

1 John 2:2 (NASB)

²“And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for *those of the whole world*.”

It is not license and indulgence; neither can it be, not in its perfection. Neither can it allow license and indulgence. God's love is completely and perfectly just. It demands justice. In no respect can it be unjust by failing to judge. Neither can God be accused of being unloving when He executes justice ([Romans 2:2-16](#)).

Romans 2:2-16 (NASB)

²“And we know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice such things.

³But do you suppose this, O man, when you pass judgment on those who practice such things and do the same *yourself*, that you will escape the judgment of God?

⁴Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?

⁵But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,

⁶who WILL RENDER TO EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS:

⁷to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life;

⁸but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation.

⁹*There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek,*

¹⁰*but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*

¹¹For there is no partiality with God.

¹²For all who have sinned without the Law will also perish without the Law, and all who have sinned under the Law will be judged by the Law;

¹³for *it is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified.*

¹⁴For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves,

07-30-17

Series: The Book of Romans

¹⁵ in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them,

¹⁶ on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.”

God’s love is just; God’s justice is the demonstration of perfect love. The cross was where God exacted His perfect justice upon His Son, and it is the perfect example of the glorious truth. The cross is the perfect demonstration of both the love and the justice of God.

Thought 1. The cross is the perfect demonstration of God’s love and justice.

John 3:16 (NASB)

¹⁶ “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”

Romans 5:8 (NASB)

⁸ “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NASB)

²¹ “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

Galatians 3:13 (NASB)

¹³ “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, “CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE.”

Ephesians 5:2 (NASB)

² “And walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.”

1 Peter 2:24 (NASB)

²⁴ “And He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.”

1 Peter 3:18 (NASB)

¹⁸ “For Christ also died for sins once for all, *the just for the unjust*, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit.”

Thought 2. Men shall be judged and condemned if they have rejected the love and salvation of God provided in His Son, Jesus Christ.

Matthew 16:27 (NASB)

²⁷ “For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and WILL THEN REPAY EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS.”

Matthew 25:31-32 (NASB)

³¹ “But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne.

³² All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.”

2 Corinthians 5:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”

07-30-17

Series: The Book of Romans

1 Peter 1:17 (NASB)

¹⁷“If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay *on earth*.”

2 Peter 2:9 (NASB)

⁹“*Then* the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the Day of Judgment.”

2 Peter 3:7 (NASB)

⁷“But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.”

Jude 1:14-15 (NASB)

¹⁴“*It was* also about these men *that* Enoch, *in* the seventh *generation* from Adam, prophesied, saying, ‘Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones, ¹⁵to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.’”

Revelation 20:12 (NASB)

¹²“And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.”

Revelation 22:12 (NASB)

¹²“Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward *is* with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.”