

Prayer:

Slide # 1
Romans

Theme: The Righteousness of God – The Gospel of God

Outline:

- **Prologue:** 1:1-17
- **Doctrinal:** 1:18-8:39
God's holiness – man's sinfulness – 1:18-3:20
Justification by grace through faith – 3:21-5:21
Sanctification of the believer – 6:1-8:39
- **Dispensational:** 9:1-11:36 (The place of Israel and the church)
- **Practical:** 12:1-15:33 (Duties and privileges of the believer)
- **Epilogue:** 16:1-27

The book of Romans presents the most systematic presentation of the gospel that we have in the Bible. After the prologue the very first topic Paul deals with is that of sin proceeding to show that ALL are under the condemnation of sin. Paul systematically shows that the pagan is under the condemnation of sin, the moralist is under the condemnation of sin, and the religionist is also under the condemnation of sin.

Slide # 2

Romans 1:18 – 3:20
The Whole World Guilty Before God

- 1:18-32 – Depraved Pagans
- 2:1-16 – Hypocritical Moralists
- 2:17-3:8 – Self-Righteous Religionists
- 3:9-20 – **The Whole Human Race**

Today we come to Paul's developed conclusion that emphasizes the total depravity of mankind and that all are under the condemnation of sin. He makes the point resolutely and emphatically as seen in Romans 3:9-20.

Slide # 3

Romans 3:9-20

- 3:9 – The Charge that ALL are under sin.
- 3:10-18 – A 14 Point Scriptural Indictment.
- 3:19-20 – The Verdict.

Romans 3:9–20 (NKJV)

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.

In Romans 3:1-2 Paul showed that the Jew very much has had a privileged advantage in that to them were given the very oracles (utterances) of God. However, morally they have proven to be no better. Consistent with what Paul has already emphasized all are shown to be under sin.

This is the point that Paul now goes on to drive home with a 14-point indictment from the Old Testament Scriptures.

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

The ultimate argument for anything is **“it is written”** referring to the inspired Scriptures. And Paul saves his **“it is written”** for his crowning argument that decisively shows all are under the condemnation of sin.

In verses 10-18 Paul quotes or summarizes at least 6 Old Testament passages to show the depravity of mankind. It paints an ugly picture but one that is true, and one that is necessary to know. We need to know the dark ugliness of our sin to appreciate the glorious gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In Romans 3:10-12 Paul references Psalm 14:1-3 in making his points. Psalm 14:1-3 is very close to Psalm 53:1-3 and also there may be an echo of Eccl. 7:20 in the mix as well.

Paul begins with “There is none righteous, no, not one”. There are no exceptions. The entirety of humanity is not right before God. Psalm 14:1-3 clearly is applied to the whole of humanity and not just to the Jews.

Slide # 4

Psalm 14:2–3 (NKJV)

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.

When we speak of total depravity we do not mean that every person is as absolutely bad as they can be, but rather through and through all are corrupted by sin totally. Someone has said that if sin was the color of blue then everyone of us would be some shade of blue. In our natural state we are under sin meaning there is always room for “deprovement”. People are born in sin and they grow in sinfulness. And depravity lends itself to this reality.

In the book of Judges we read that “everyone did what was right in his own eyes” (Jg. 17:6; 21:25). Note they all did what was RIGHT in their own eyes – not what was WRONG. But all this doing RIGHT in their own eyes produced one of the darkest eras in the history of Israel. The testimony of Scripture as confirmed by history is that there is NONE righteous – no not even one. As Isaiah 64:6 says, “all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags”. And the whole human race is implicated.

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

People in their natural state don't get God. They don't understand their sinfulness, and they don't understand God's holiness. They have no idea the dreadful condition they are even in. Left to our own reasoning we are total fools who know nothing of God.

Slide # 5

1 Corinthians 2:14 (NKJV)

14 But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Ephesians 4:18 (NKJV)

18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart;

Slide # 6**1 Corinthians 1:21 (NKJV)**

21 For since, in the wisdom of God, **the world through wisdom did not know God,** it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

No one ever figures out God. He reveals Himself. What we know is what we have been told – what God has revealed to us. And God’s plan is to save those who believe the message that He has revealed through the gospel.

“There is none who seeks after God.”

This verse right here puts all the “Seeker Friendly Churches” completely out of business. If you are in business to win “seekers” then you are done – because there are NO seekers.

People see people searching desperately for peace, relief from guilt, meaning or purpose and they say, “Oh they are seeking for God”. No they are NOT! They are seeking the benefits that only God can ultimately give, but they don’t want God.

“Show the world the fruits of Christianity, and it will applaud. Show it Christianity, and it will oppose it vigorously.”

Man seeks the benefits of God while at the same time fleeing from God himself. – **R.C. Sproul**

“Man-made religions are demon-inspired efforts to escape from God, not to find Him.” – John MacArthur

The word “seek” (Gk. ekzeteo) means “a determined search”. People don’t all of the sudden think to themselves, “*I am going to make a determined search to find God.*” Never! People aren’t looking for God in the same way the criminal is not looking for a policeman. Rather they are hiding – not wanting to be found (cf. Jn. 3:20).

God is the seeker! God always takes the initiative – never man. It was God who came to Adam in the garden saying, “***Where are you?***” (Gen. 3:9) Adam didn’t go running after God saying, “*Where are you?*” NO, rather he was hiding from God – not wanting to be found.

It was God who took the initiative. ***“There is none who seeks after God.”*** It was Jesus Who came ***“to seek and to save that which was lost”*** (Lk. 19:10).

God is always the seeker, the convicter, the initiator, the inviter. And as He does so people are then responsible to respond. Hebrew 3:7-8 says, ***“Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts”***.

Slide # 7

Psalm 27:8 (NKJV)

8 When You said, “Seek My face,” My heart said to You, “Your face, LORD, I will seek.”

Slide # 8

Jeremiah 29:13 (NKJV)

13 And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.

Yes, if we seek God with all our heart we will find Him, but the point Paul is making is that this never happens apart from God’s initiating it. We only seek Him because He first seeks out after us. “We love Him because He first loved us.” (1 Jn. 4:19) He always makes the first move. Without Him doing this we would never on our own seek after God. In our depravity we want nothing to do with God. In grace He comes to us.

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

The whole human race has turned aside from God. They have all morally derailed and gone off track.

Sin is the revolt of the self against God with a view to the enthronement of oneself. Ultimately, sin is a self-deification, the reckless determination to occupy the throne which belongs to God alone. – ***John Stott***

Slide # 9

Isaiah 53:6 (NKJV)

6 All we like sheep have gone astray; We have **turned, every one, to his own way**; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

All turning aside denotes volitional rebellion. And it applies to ALL!

In total we have “**together become unprofitable**” meaning “worthless” or “useless”. The world in their psychobabble is always talking about the need for “self-esteem”. What are they talking about? Well, in the analysis of God there is nothing to esteem in rebellious humanity! The whole is “unprofitable”. That is a totally humbling reality!

Now indeed we have inherent value because we are made in the image of God, but man has ruined it – in that we in our sinfulness in total have become “unprofitable”.

The whole batch of humanity is “unprofitable”. The word “unprofitable” was used by the Greeks to refer to **rotten fruit**. It refers to that which is utterly useless! I ask you what can be done with “**rotten fruit**”? What do you do with rotten fruit? You throw it away because it is useless and worthless. There is nothing to esteem there!

And yet God in His amazing grace comes to save the worthless! No wonder those who are truly saved can’t make enough of the GRACE of God! No wonder we sing, “Amazing Grace how sweet the sound that saved **a wretch like me.**”

And then Paul once again emphasizes “**There is none who does good, no, not one.**” We have emphasized this so much that when asked: “How are you?” some of us are reluctant to say “good, I’m good”.

Now it is one thing to say you are doing good, in the sense of doing well, and quite another thing to say you are morally good in the sense of moral perfection. Paul in saying, “There is none who does good” is saying there is none who does good perfectly well all the time.

Slide # 10 [Jesus to the rich young ruler.]

Matthew 19:17 (NKJV)

17 So He said to him, “Why do you call Me good? **No one is good but One, that is, God.** But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.”

The absolute standard of GOOD is God Himself. And only God is perfectly good. In terms of doing good, we all fail. “There is none who does good, no, not one.” We all come short of the glory of God’s good standard. There is no exception (other than the God-Man – our Lord Jesus Christ).

Nine times in verses 9-12 Paul stresses the UNIVERSALITY of sin!

Slide # 11

“all under sin” – v. 9

“none righteous” – v. 10

“no, not one” -v. 10

“none who understands” – v. 11

“none who seeks after God” – v. 11

“all turned aside” – v. 12

“together become unprofitable” – v. 12

“none who does good” – 12

“no, not one” – v. 12

Romans 3:9-12 emphasizes the depraved character of humanity in total. There is absolutely no exception.

These verses indicate that the whole of man’s inner being is controlled by sin: his mind (“none who understands”), his heart, (“none who seeks after God”), and his will (“none who does good”).

– **Warren Wiersbe**

Thus, the whole of the human race in our natural state is characterized by total depravity.

In total we are self-absorbed rebels corrupted by sin through and through. Even the good that we do is stained by sin; even the good that we do is tainted by “selfism” and is not motivated by God-honoring faith (cf. Rom. 14:23).

Someone has said that we should put all the politicians into a sack and then start beating the sack. And it doesn’t matter which one you hit because they are all guilty.

How about we change that up a bit. How about we all get put into the sack and then get beat in the sack. It doesn’t matter which one gets hit because we are all guilty. That is Paul’s point.

We are ALL under the condemnation of sin. There is no exception. There is no “holier than thou”.

Verses 10-12 describe the depraved character of humanity, verses 13-14 describe the depraved conversation.

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

Verse 13 contains quotes from Psalm 5:9 and Psalm 140:3.

Nothing is more foul than the stench emanating from the corpse of an open grave. Martha protested the stone being removed from the tomb of her brother saying, “**Lord, by this time there is a stench for he has been dead four days**” (Jn. 11:39).

The “throat” is closely connected to the mouth. To look down your throat the doctor has you open your mouth. And what is figuratively presented here is moral putrid stench coming from corruption that fuels the mouth.

Paul here graphically portrays the conversation of depraved humanity by likening it to the stench of disgusting corruption that emanates from an open sepulcher.

“**With their tongues they have practiced deceit**”. People tend to lie. Everyone has told a lie. Many people are pathological liars on one level or another – even if they call them “little white lies”.

Some snakes are poisonous and some are not. Pictured here is a tongue/fang combination that is poisonous. People with their venom words can strike with poison. They are dangerous. And combine that with deceit and the situation is very depraved.

14 “Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.”

Verse 14 is a quote from Psalm 10:7. Cursing is the idea of derisive language that calls for the harm of someone. Bitterness is hatred expressed in vile terms. James 3:8 says, “no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.”

The mouth reveals the decay of the heart! The mouth tells on the heart (cf. Prov. 10:31-32; 15:2, 28; Jer. 17:9; Matt. 15:18; Ja. 3:1-12).

In Matthew 12:34 Jesus said, “**For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.**”

Slide # 12

Matthew 12:35–37 (NKJV)

35 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.

36 But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment.

37 For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

Want to know what is going on in the heart of a person – just listen to them talk. Sometimes when I hear people cursing and full of hate speech I feel like saying, “It’s obvious that something is rotten in your heart.” And when people use God’s name in vain – such as when they say, “Oh my god” I sometimes ask, “And who is that?”

The conversation of depraved humanity is putrid, deceitful, poisonous, full of cursing and bitterness. It isn’t pretty! It’s depraved!

Verses 15-17 relate to depraved conduct! These verses are a take off from Isaiah 59:7-8.

15 “Their feet are swift to shed blood;

Jesus said the devil “was a murderer from the beginning” and his children share in his nature (Jn. 8:44). There is a “killer nature” in there. The first recorded sin after the FALL of mankind was a murder – when Cain killed his brother Abel. I mean we are no sooner out of the Fall in Genesis 3 and we have a murder in Genesis 4.

Sin leaped full grown into human experience. Man’s first sin separated man from God; his second sin separated man from man.

– **John Phillips**

Back in 1968 Will Durant wrote a book “The Lessons of History”. He said, “In the last 3,421 years of recorded history only 268 have seen no war.” Hundreds of millions have died in war.

But we don’t need to look that far. We have legalized murder in the womb in our country and in much of the world. In our country since abortion has been legalized the official record says over 63 million children have been murdered in the womb. “**Their feet are swift to shed blood**”. A sinfully deranged man goes off and kills a number of people and the whole country is in shock, but millions killed in the womb causes no such stir. It has been said that the most dangerous place in the world is in the womb.

16 Destruction and misery are in their ways;

Depravity goes about spreading destruction and misery wherever it goes. The badness of people just keeps on hurting people for seemingly no good reason. People who plant wide spreading malicious viruses on the internet – why? It’s what depravity does!

The **Holocaust** was Nazi Germany's deliberate murder of approximately six million Jews. The society seemed civilized. How could this happen? It was unbelievable what they did to the Jews. They beat, maimed, starved, gassed, and tortured them in the most inhumane ways possible. They baled human hair for commercial purposes. They flayed tattooed human flesh for lampshades. All this was done by what considered to be one of the most advanced, cultured, and enlightened nations in Europe.

As the Jews became a nation in 1948 the cry went up, “Never again, never again”. But then Oct 7 – just a few weeks ago and once again we see atrocities that are unthinkable.

Fools that claim to be “progressive” say we are getting better and better. Really? What planet are you observing? Such people are blind to reality – blind to the truth of God’s word, blind to the reality of human depravity!

Crime is off the charts and out of control in so many of our nations cities. A spirit of lawlessness that defines the Antichrist (2 Thess. 2:8-9) is already at work as Paul says in 2 Thessalonians 2:7.

Jesus said, “as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.” (Mt. 24:37). How were those days?

Slide # 13

Genesis 6:11 (NKJV)

11 The earth also was corrupt before God, and **the earth was filled with violence.**

Genesis 6:13 (NKJV)

13 And God said to Noah, “The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the **earth is filled with violence** through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

What defined the world in the day of Noah was violence and this defines the world just prior to the Lord’s return. We are there! Have you seen the nightly news? “If it bleeds in leads” and it leads every night!

“Destruction and misery are in their ways”. This defines depraved humanity!

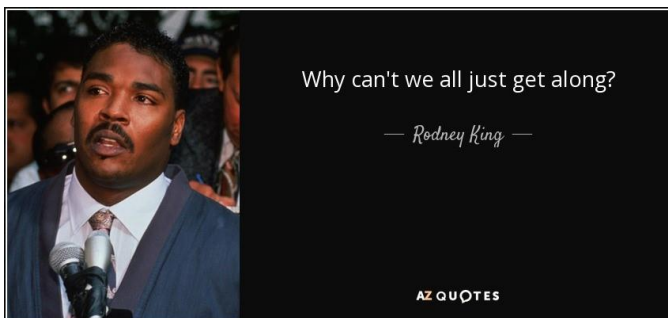
17 And the way of peace they have not known.”

Depraved people have a hard time getting along. Goodness, even the saints (who still have the flesh) struggle with this.

“To live above, with saints we love, that will be glory.
To live below, with the saints we know, that’s quite a different story!”

In 1991 Rodney King after a high speed chase while driving intoxicated was beaten by police officers in LA. Suddenly riots and all kinds of ugly broke out all over the place. Rodney made his way to the mic and said these famous words...

Slide # 14



The answer to Mr. King’s question is depravity. “The way of peace they have not known.”

Slide # 15

Titus 3:3 (NKJV)

3 For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, **hateful and hating one another.**

It’s what depravity does! Depravity is all about “fightin, fussin, and feudin”.

And that brings us to verse 18 which summarizes the underlying cause of it all.

Slide # 16

The Traits of Depravity

Romans 3:10-18

- vv. 10-12 (Character)
- vv. 13-14 (Conversation)
- vv. 15-17 (Conduct)
- v. 18 (Cause)

18 “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

Verse 18 is a quote from Psalm 36:1.

This summarizes the CORE problem of depraved humanity. They have no fear of God. The idea of having no fear of God is having no reverence for Him. They have no worshipful respect or awe for Him.

The Bible sometimes uses “fear” as a synonym for saving faith. It denotes the essential attitude involved in saving faith which is to have a proper reverence and respect for God (cf. Job 28:28; Eccl. 12:13).

Slide # 17

Acts 10:34–35 (NKJV)

34 Then Peter opened his mouth and said: “In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality.

35 But in every nation **whoever fears Him** and works righteousness is accepted by Him.

Proverbs (the book of wisdom) says, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge” (Prov. 1:7) and again, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom” (Prov. 9:10). A right relationship with God starts here.

To live with no fear of God is to live like His Lordship authority doesn’t matter; like there is no accountability to Him. When God revealed Himself to the children of Israel at Mount Sinai they trembled and were terrified. God made His presence known to them in this way so they would fear God and not sin.

Slide # 18**Exodus 20:20 (NKJV)**

20 And Moses said to the people, “Do not fear; for God has come to test you, and that **His fear may be before you**, so **that you may not sin.**”

“Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved.”

There is a touch of terror in a proper fear of God. But in our day the fear of God has been so watered down that all holy reverence is removed.

Step into the average church these days and you will likely see that the services are designed more to remove the fear of God than to promote it. – **Steven J. Lawson**

A proper fear of God involves a worshipful awe of His sovereign greatness and a dread of violating His holiness (cf. Lev. 10:1-3; Acts 5:1-11; 1 Cor. 11:30).

No fear of God is perhaps the worst trait of depravity and in effect explains all the others.

Paul has presented 14 points of indictment from the OT Scriptures. It serves to underscore the universal truth of total depravity.

Years ago (before the advent of cell phones) a man was walking through a park in Scotland. He was carrying a small New Testament in a leather case.

A group of young people saw him and thought he was carrying a camera – and asked if he wouldn't mind taking their picture.

In response he said, ***“I already have it.”*** Astonished, they wondered when and where he had taken it. He then proceeded take out his New Testament and read to them Romans 3:10-18. He then said, ***“That is your picture”*** and took the opportunity to witness to them about their need of Christ.

Paul in verses 19-20 now brings to conclusion the MAIN point he has been driving towards from 1:18 on.

19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

Here is the purpose of the law. It has a mouth shutting purpose. It leaves us defenseless – with no answer. It shows that the whole world is guilty before God having broken His holy moral standard. There is no exception and there will be no rebuttal!

The law here certainly corresponds to the law of Moses but is broader than that also encompassing the whole of the OT as Paul quotes from the Psalms and Isaiah to make his points. It also intersects with the moral law written on the conscience of all people as noted in Romans 2:15.

This verse shows that there is a universal moral law of God for which all are accountable and before which all are found guilty. The language is very clear, “***that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.***”

The Jews said the law was not given in [the Promised Land] (which belonged to Israel), but in the wilderness, because the law was for all nations. – ***D.L. Moody***

There is a sense in which that is true. The law of God (in the sense of the Old Testament) which was given to the Jews most clearly shows the standard of God’s moral law but it intersects with the moral law written on the hearts of all people and it finds all to be guilty of violating it. No one lives up the light of God’s law as revealed to them whether in conscience or in the Scriptures.

Slide # 19

God being a perfect God, had to give a perfect Law, and the Law was given not to save men, but to measure them. – ***D.L. Moody***

And that is the point – we all come up short. When measured up against the moral law of God we all come short of the glory of God’s holy standard.

20 Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Paul’s ***therefore*** is sense of “because”. This is enlightening because in verse 20 he doesn’t use the definite article “***the***” in reference to the law which would denote a specific aspect of God’s law.

Rather he leaves it general referring to all aspects of God's law whether in reference to God's law in as seen in Scriptural revelation or whether God's law as found written on the conscience.

By the deeds of any aspect of God's law no flesh will be justified in God's sight. And the reason being is because no one keeps the law. We are all law breakers (cf. Acts 13:39; Gal. 2:16; 3:11). God doesn't grade on a curve. Keeping His law is an all or nothing proposition.

Slide # 20

James 2:10 (NKJV)

10 For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in **one point**, he is guilty of all.

To keep the law of God one must keep the whole thing in thought, word, and deed all the time – and no one could do this.

By virtue of what he is, man acts as he does. The Law makes man aware that he is not what he ought to be.

– ***Wycliffe Bible Commentary***

So the purpose of God's law serves to show us we are sinners – as Paul says, "***by the law is the knowledge of sin.***" The law doesn't show us how to be saved. It shows we are law breakers – that we are sinners.

The law is like a mirror that shows us we are morally dirty but it doesn't provide cleansing. Notice it doesn't say "***by the law is the knowledge of salvation***" but rather, "***by the law is the knowledge of sin.***" The law shows us we are lost but not how to be saved. Paul called the law a "ministry of death" in 2 Cor. 3:7 and a "ministry of condemnation" in 2 Cor. 3:9.

Paul as a way of referring to the gospel spoke of it as "***the knowledge of the truth***". In 1 Tim. 2:4 he says God "***desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.***"

However, in presenting his most systematic presentation of the gospel in Romans where he starts is with a thorough argument for all being under the condemnation of sin with his closing argument being a 14-point indictment from the law of God. Thus, in his presentation of the knowledge of the truth in Romans he starts with "***the knowledge of sin***" as revealed by the law.

This is the starting place in sharing the gospel! This point has tragically been overlooked by many and we have a whole generation that has suffered because of it.

Many are afraid to use the law because we are no longer under the law. But it does serve a critical purpose and that is to show people their sinfulness. As Paul says, “***the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully***” (1 Tim. 1:8).

And the lawful use of the law is to use it to show people they are sinners who don't live up to His holy law. And again, as Paul says, “***the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith.***” (Gal. 3:24).

Evangelism must start with the holiness of God, the sinfulness of man, the demands of the law, and the eternal consequences of evil.

– ***Martyn Lloyd Jones***

Slide # 21

I do not believe that any man can preach the gospel who does not preach the Law. – **Charles Spurgeon**

If men do not understand the Law, they will not feel that they are sinners. And if they are not consciously sinners, they will never value the sin offering. There is no healing a man till the Law has wounded him, no making him a live until the Law has slain him.

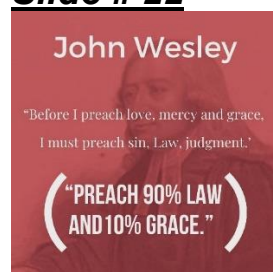
– ***Charles Spurgeon***

[The great evangelical preachers 300 years ago in the time of the Puritans, and 200 years ago in the time of Whitefield and others, always engaged in what they called a preliminary “Law work”.

– ***Martyn Lloyd Jones***

This “preliminary Law work” is essentially what Paul is doing by starting with showing that ALL are under the condemnation of sin in showing we are all guilty of breaking the Law of God.

Slide # 22



In Luke 11:52 Jesus said, “**Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge...**”.

The law is the key of knowledge and by the law is the knowledge of sin. Take away this key and there is no entry way into truth of the gospel. This is the key that unlocks the door showing people their need of a Savior.

The rightful use of the Law is the missing KEY in much of evangelism today.

People today are desperately trying to bury their feelings of guilt. People want self-teachings but not convicting truths that make them feel guilty. And many contemporary preachers cater to this. They don't talk about sin. They don't expose sin by the law. They never call people to repentance. It's just all “Easy Believism” that has no teeth and therefore very few genuine converts.

“That is the reason we have so many mushroom converts”—that is, converts that spring up out of nowhere and then disappear—“because their stony ground is not plowed up. They have not got a conviction of the law.” -**George Whitefield** (1714-1770).

Indeed, often this is the MISSING KEY. Ray Comfort has written a book to emphasize this very point which is titled, “Hell's Best Kept Secret”. Most people tend to think they are GOOD people and many think they are GOOD enough to get to heaven. Hell would love to keep them there but law exposes their depravity for what it is. The Law drives us to GRACE. This is always the order – first the law then grace. The law was given by Moses but then grace came by Jesus Christ (cf. Jn. 1:17).

We are not saved by the law but we are convicted by it. And the law showing us our sin – points the way to Christ as our Savior.

One day the famous evangelist Dwight L. Moody had the opportunity to preach at a large prison in New York. From the location from which he preached he could not see a single prisoner, but he preached loud and he preached his heart out. Afterwards, he was allowed to go around and through the bars talk to the prisoners. One after another they all declared their innocence. Moody said, “I began to get discouraged”. But then he came to the cell of a man who had his elbows on his knees and he was just sobbing. Moody said, “My friend what is your trouble?”

He looked at Moody in despair and said, "My sins are more than I can bear." Moody blurted out, "***Thank God for that.***"

Yes the gospel is the GOOD NEWS which is all about Jesus, but in order to appreciate it you first have to know the BAD NEWS of sin which is all about you. The knowledge of the truth starts with the knowledge of sin as revealed by the law. The law shows us our sinfulness, the gospel of grace then comes in sweet relief to all who will believe on the Lord Jesus Christ!

Have you seen the awfulness of your sinful self? Then look to Jesus Who is the wonderful Savior of all those who believe on Him as Lord and Savior!