

Victoria Fellowship Church
International & Interdenominational
Bible Study Worksheet – 30th April 2023

Theme: The Power of God at Work in us **Topic:** God's Righteousness Revealed

Main Text: Romans 3:1-31

Key verse: Romans 3:21-22a *"But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe."* (NIV)

INTRODUCTION: Apostle Paul had spent so much time in Chapter 2 of Romans (the subject of our last Sunday's study) stressing the point that neither being Jew nor circumcised justifies us before God, but that justification comes by obeying God's word. In Chapter three, which is the focus of our study today, Paul proceeds to respond to arguments that were being put forward by the Jews. Undoubtedly, the Jews had been chosen by God as His special and chosen people, a people circumcised and entrusted with God's word (the law). Because of this special privilege, the Jews felt that they had an advantage over other people (the gentiles). However, Paul takes time to make clear that neither being Jew nor circumcised nor being custodians of the law gave them any advantage over other people.

1. (a) Read Romans 3: 1 & 2. In what ways might Christians of today be caught in the privileged mindset of the Jews of Paul's days? (b) What is the danger of such 'privileged' mindset according to Romans 3:9-12? (c) How does Romans 3:20 and Galatians 2:16 address this danger/error?

A central verse in Romans 3, and which we popularly quote, is verse 23 – *"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"*. This verse points out man's inability to meet God's standard of righteousness. In his indulgence in sin, man involves every part of the body. Romans 3:13-18 captures this fact this way: *"Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit. The poison of vipers is on their lips. Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood; ruin and misery mark their ways, and the way of peace they do not know. There is no fear of God before their eyes."* (NIV). This shows how difficult it is to avoid breaking the law. So, when our works are judged by the law, we all fall short, and no one deserves the salvation that God has designed for us. It is in this eternal predicament of man that *"... God has made another way to make men right with Himself. It is not by the Law. The Law and the early preachers tell about it. Men become right with God by putting their trust in Jesus Christ. God will accept men if they come this way. All men are the same to God"* (vs. 21&22 – New Life Version). This is God's righteousness revealed!

2. (a) When you read and reflect on Romans 3:10-17, 23, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge you? Explain why. (b) Romans 3:21 (CEV) says that *"But now God's way of putting people right with himself has been revealed. It has nothing to do with law..."* What do you understand by this in relation to the topic? (c) How best can you explain this verse to those who may see grace as license to indulge in sin? See also Romans 3:31

God's revealed righteousness is to be accessed freely. *"But all are treated as righteous freely by His grace because of a ransom that was paid by Christ Jesus. Through His faithfulness, God displayed Jesus as the place of sacrifice where mercy is found by means of His blood. He did this to demonstrate His righteousness in passing over sins that happened before, during the time of God's patient tolerance. He also did this to demonstrate that He is righteous in the present time, and to treat the one who has faith in Jesus as righteous"* (Romans 3: 24-26 CEBA). There is nothing anyone can add to this.

3. (a) To be righteous is to be made right with God. According to Romans 3:24, what is the only means by which a person can be made right with God? (See also Romans 3:20, 28) and why is it referred to as a gift? (See Ephesians. 2:8-9) (b) In relation to the Christian faith, why is it important that righteousness is a gift from God? (c) Romans 3:27-28 admonishes us not to boast. What would that look like as we relate to fellow believers and non-believers?

Prayer: LORD, thank You for the reminder that as one who has fallen short of Your glory, that there's no hope of attaining righteousness by my works apart from Your grace. Help me to embrace the righteousness that You have revealed through faith in the atoning power of Christ's death on the cross. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.