

# **WALKING THROUGH ROMANS - PART 5**

## **ROMANS CHAPTER 3 — CONCLUSION OF THE HUMAN CONDITION**

This lesson brings us to the conclusion of the section that spans Romans 1:18 through Romans 3:20. Paul has been building an argument step by step, and now he is bringing that argument to a close.

The driving question remains the same: Has God remained faithful in a fractured world? That question is still on the table, and everything Paul is doing is answering that question.

We have been dealing with the human condition. The human condition is what happens when we trust ourselves first, which has the potential to lead us beyond God's design and into brokenness.

The human condition is really about who we are without Jesus. It is about what happens when we rely on ourselves more than we rely on God.

All of us must confront this reality. The human condition is not something that belongs to one group. It is something that all of us have the potential to experience.

It confronts us. It faces us. And we must make an intentional decision to combat it by centering our lives around Christ.

In previous lessons, Paul exposed the human condition through Gentile humanity. Then he exposed the human condition through Jewish religious humanity.

Now Paul brings both sides together. He is no longer separating them. He is bringing them into one conclusion.

## **PAUL'S ARGUMENT**

Paul's argument is that the human condition is not isolated. It is universal.

No group has autonomy over the gospel. No ethnic group, no background, no religious history gives anyone an advantage when it comes to righteousness.

The gospel is for all. The human condition impacts all. And that is what Paul is bringing together in this section.

## **PAUL'S METHOD — DIATRIBE**

Paul is still using the diatribe method. He is anticipating objections, raising questions, and answering them before they are asked.

He understands how his audience thinks, especially the Jews, because he himself comes from that background.

So he raises the arguments they would raise, and then he dismantles those arguments.

## **BUCKET 1 — ROMANS 3:1–4**

Paul raises the first objection: If having access to the law does not make the Jews righteous, then what is the true value of the law?

The Jews believed they had an advantage because they were given the law. They saw themselves as God's chosen people and believed that gave them a higher standing.

Paul acknowledges that they were entrusted with the oracles of God. That word entrusted is critical.

It does not mean they owned it. It means it was given to them to steward.

So Paul raises the issue: If you have access but you are not stewarding what you have, what is your advantage?

Having access and being faithful to what you have access to are two different things.

Paul then raises another question: If some were unfaithful, does that nullify the faithfulness of God?

And he answers: By no means.

This introduces divine faithfulness.

Divine faithfulness means that God's reliability is not dependent on human response.

Even when humanity fails, God remains consistent.

God's faithfulness is steady. It is not shaken by our inconsistency.

But this does not remove our accountability.

We still must answer for how we live.

We cannot fall into the trap of cheap grace—thinking that because God is faithful, we can live any kind of way.

Grace is available, but accountability still exists.

True repentance is required.

Repentance is a change of mind that leads to a change in direction.

It is not just feeling sorry. It is choosing to go in the opposite direction of what disconnected us from God.

## **BUCKET 2 — ROMANS 3:5–8**

Paul raises another objection: If human unrighteousness highlights God's righteousness, then is God unjust to judge?

In other words, if our brokenness makes God look better, why would God judge us?

Paul rejects this thinking.

He shows that this line of reasoning is flawed.

Yes, human imperfection highlights God's perfection.

But that does not remove God's role as judge.

If we accept that flawed thinking, we would be saying that sin is necessary to make God look good.

That would mean we should continue in sin so that God's glory increases.

Paul rejects that completely.

This introduces divine justice.

Divine justice means that God's judgment is both real and necessary.

God must judge.

We must give an account for how we live.

We cannot twist truth to justify our behavior.

Wrong is wrong, even if God can bring good from it.

Grace does not make wrongdoing acceptable.

God can deliver us from wrong, but that does not make the wrong right.

## **BUCKET 3 — ROMANS 3:9–18**

Paul now moves from dialogue to declaration.

He stops arguing and starts declaring the verdict.

He says that both Jews and Gentiles are under the power of sin.

This introduces hamartiology, the study of sin.

Sin is not just something we do. Sin is a condition.

It is something that impacts and infects humanity.

Paul uses a chain of Old Testament scriptures to reinforce his point.

This is known as a catena—a chain of texts used to support an argument.

He shows that none are righteous.

No one truly seeks God.

Speech is corrupted.

Actions are distorted.

There is no reverence for God.

These are not isolated behaviors.

These are indicators of a deeper condition.

Humanity is impacted and infected by sin.

And we do not have the power to fix ourselves.

We cannot rescue ourselves from the power of sin.

That power belongs to God alone.

## **BUCKET 4 — ROMANS 3:19–20**

Paul now brings the argument to its conclusion.

He explains the role of the law.

The law speaks so that every mouth may be silenced.

The law removes excuses.

It holds the entire world accountable to God.

Paul says that no one is justified by the works of the law.

Justification means being declared righteous.

We are not declared righteous by what we do.

We are declared righteous by what God has done.

The law reveals sin, but it does not solve sin.

It shows the problem, but it cannot fix the problem.

The law exposes weakness.

It shows us that we cannot make ourselves right.

Righteousness cannot be achieved through effort.

It must come through God.

## **FINAL TAKEAWAY**

The human condition is universal.

It cannot be corrected by effort alone.

God has remained faithful.

But we must respond through repentance and trust.

The law reveals the problem.

Christ provides the solution.