

God Does Not Show Favoritism

An overview of Romans 1:32-3:20.

- I. The Proposition:** Because God favors neither the Jew nor the Gentile, all righteous people from all races and status who live by faith can live together in the body of Christ. Rom. 1:17; 12:3-5.

To support his proposition Paul introduces the following issues:

- A. "Let God be true and every man a liar." 3:4. As it is written: What God says is always right (9:19, 20). His judgment of the world will always prevail.
1. God's wrath is also God's righteousness. 3:5-8; 1:32; 2:2-11.
 2. Mere men do not have the capacity to judge our fellowman because we do not possess the righteousness of God. 2:1-4; 3:9-18.
- B. The power and purpose of the Law was to make the Jews conscious of their sins; thereby, it served to silence "every mouth" in Israel. Of course, that would only work for those who were not stubborn and unrepentant. 2:5; 3:19, 20.
1. "God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you (Jews who taught others but did not walk their talk)" 2:17-24.
 2. Circumcision was the sign of righteousness for a person who was justified by faith (4:9, 10). Faith is a heart thing. 2:25-29; 10:8.
- C. The Gentiles who were declared right by God lived by their inherent nature. 2:12-16.
1. The nature they lived by in this context was the nature they inherited from Adam because he broke covenant with God and they got the knowledge of good and evil. 5:12-14.
 2. Mankind has a basic understanding of God's righteousness without having had access to the Law. 1:32; 2:14. The people who claim to be atheists or agnostics can be heard to yell "foul" loud and clear when they think justice has not been served for them. Young people of all races can be heard to say, "That is not fair. I gave you one of my chocolates yesterday and now you should share with me."
 3. The "adolescent years of youth" is the time when maturity takes place in all aspects of a person. It happens in the body, mind and emotions in all, but the mentally deficient. It is at this point the conscience begins to function something like a legal courtroom scenario. Except in this case, each person is his or her own judge, advocate and jury. They find themselves guilty when they judge they have not behaved according to what they believe is good. They declare themselves guilty. They have a guilty conscience. 2:14, 15; 16:19.
- D. The Day of Judgment for all Jews and Gentiles. 2:5-11.
1. Each person will be judged according to his or her deeds. God will give to each person according to what he or she has done.

2. People who have been persistent in seeking glory, honor and immortality (2:7): Their reward will be eternal life with God in His kingdom. His or her eternal life will be one of glory, honor and peace (2:10).
3. People who are self-seeking and who reject truth and follow evil (2:8):
There will be God's wrath (thumos - hot) and indignation (orge – fierce revenge).
The result will be trouble (thlipsis – pressure, affliction) and distress (stenochari – narrowness, distress) – “Where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.” Mark 9:48.

II. Conclusion:

A. Paul “put to rest” God’s view of the history of both the Jews and Gentiles so it would not be a fellowship issue.

1. “All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will perish under the law.” 2:12.
2. “A man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is of the heart, by the Spirit.” 2:29.
3. Some Gentiles may have obeyed the requirements of the law and were praised by God (2:15).

B. The present situation was and is:

1. Both Jew and Gentile have sinned and “fall short of God’s glory.” 3:23; 11:32.
2. God’s righteousness is the standard and only measurement of the deeds of His people (3:3).
3. God does not show favoritism now. He will not show favoritism on Judgment Day (2:6-11).