

Lent Devotional March 22, 2019

SCRIPTURE

Romans 2:25-3:18

^{2:25} Circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law; but if you break the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. ²⁶ So, if those who are uncircumcised keep the requirements of the law, will not their uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? ²⁷ Then those who are physically uncircumcised but keep the law will condemn you that have the written code and circumcision but break the law. ²⁸ For a person is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is true circumcision something external and physical. ²⁹ Rather, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart — it is spiritual and not literal. Such a person receives praise not from others but from God. ^{3:1} Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? ² Much, in every way. For in the first place the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God. ³ What if some were unfaithful? Will their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God? ⁴ By no means! Although everyone is a liar, let God be proved true, as it is written,

“So that you may be justified in your words,
and prevail in your judging.”

⁵ But if our injustice serves to confirm the justice of God, what should we say? That God is unjust to inflict wrath on us? (I speak in a human way.) ⁶ By no means! For then how could God judge the world? ⁷ But if through my falsehood God's truthfulness abounds to his glory, why am I still being condemned as a sinner? ⁸ And why not say (as some people slander us by saying that we say), “Let us do evil so that good may come”? Their condemnation is deserved! ⁹ What then? Are we any better off? No, not at all; for we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under the power of sin, ¹⁰ as it is written:

“There is no one who is righteous, not even one;
¹¹ there is no one who has understanding,
there is no one who seeks God.
¹² All have turned aside, together they have become worthless;
there is no one who shows kindness,
there is not even one.”
¹³ “Their throats are opened graves;
they use their tongues to deceive.”
“The venom of vipers is under their lips.”
¹⁴ “Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.”
¹⁵ “Their feet are swift to shed blood;
¹⁶ ruin and misery are in their paths,
¹⁷ and the way of peace they have not known.”
¹⁸ “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

DEVOTIONAL

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The first human beings, made in the image of God, were meant to live their lives as righteous beings. But their disobedience to God brought them under the power of evil, and their sin has tainted all humanity ever since. There is no one who is righteous, not even one. When the God of mercy revealed His righteousness and its requirements of humbled humanity by means of laws, God's people instead

boasted in the Law! They misunderstood God's intention. They could not perfectly keep God's law, so it could not make them righteous.

Where, then, can we find our righteousness? In Jesus Christ, who came to the world as the righteousness of God. If we dwell in Christ, his righteousness will shine on us, and we will be instruments of reflecting his righteousness to others. Dwell in Christ!

PRAYER

Loving God, thank you that you've revealed your righteousness to us through Your Son Jesus Christ. Let your righteousness shine on us so that we may dwell in it. Through us, let your righteousness be revealed as power breaking through all darkness and making our world bright. Amen.