



**“Made Right by His Righteousness”**

Romans 3:1-20

Reading and Study Guide for the week  
of Jan. 28-Feb. 3, 2024

**Memory verse:** “If you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” (Romans 10:9)

**This week, read and study Romans 3:1-20. Some questions to answer and think about this week with your family or Community Group:**

**God's Faithfulness - [Romans 3:1-8](#)**

1. What could you learn about the character of a person by watching the behavior of his or her children?
2. How does failure to be true to God reflect on the character of God? ([3:3-4](#))
3. What was Paul’s response to the charge that God is unjust in judging us? ([3:5](#))
4. How is God’s character affected by the level of our sinfulness? ([3:7](#))
5. What religious activities are we tempted to rely on as the basis of our justification before God?
6. What excuses do we use to explain away continuing sinful behavior in our lives?
7. What step or action can you take this week to keep you from taking God’s grace for granted?

**Life Application Bible Notes**

**[3:1ff](#)** In this chapter Paul contends that everyone stands guilty before God. Paul has dismantled the common excuses of people who refuse to admit they are sinners: (1) "There is no God" or "I follow my conscience" ([1:18-32](#)); (2) "I'm not as bad as other people" ([2:1-16](#)); (3) "I'm a church member" or "I'm a religious person" ([2:17-29](#)). No one will be exempt from God's judgment of sin. Every person must accept the fact that he or she is sinful and condemned before God and receive God's wonderful gift of salvation.

**[3:1ff](#)** What a depressing picture Paul is painting! All of us—pagan Gentiles, humanitarians, and religious people—are condemned by our own actions. The law, which God gave to show the way to live, holds up our evil deeds to public view. Is there any hope for us? Yes, says Paul. The law condemns us, it is true, but the law is not the basis of our hope. God himself is. He, in his righteousness and wonderful love, offers us eternal life. We receive our salvation not through law but through faith in Jesus Christ. We do not—cannot—earn it; we accept it as a gift from our loving heavenly Father.

**3:2** The Jewish nation had great benefits. (1) They were entrusted with God's laws ("the whole revelation of God," [Exodus 19-20](#); [Deuteronomy 4:8](#)). (2) They were the race through whom the Messiah came to earth ([Isaiah 11:1-10](#); [Matthew 1:1-17](#)). (3) They were the beneficiaries of covenants with God himself ([Genesis 17:1-16](#); [Exodus 19:3-6](#)). But these privileges did not make them better than anyone else (see [3:9](#)). In fact, because of them the Jews were even more responsible to live up to God's requirements.

**3:5-8** Some may think they don't have to worry about sin because (1) it's God's job to forgive; (2) God is so loving that he won't judge; (3) sin isn't so bad—it teaches valuable lessons; or (4) we need to stay in touch with the culture around us. It is far too easy to take God's grace for granted. But God cannot overlook sin. No matter how many excuses they make, sinners will have to answer to God for their sin.

### **No One Is Righteous - [Romans 3:9-20](#)**

1. In what ways are all people the same?
2. How are Jews and Gentiles alike? ([3:9](#))
3. What is human nature? ([3:12](#))
4. What are the characteristics of people who stand condemned before God? ([3:13-18](#))
5. What reasons would you give for describing people as either basically good or basically evil?
6. How would you explain this passage to a person who believes that he or she is good and not guilty of any serious sins?
7. What "laws" do you need to put aside in your life in favor of the true righteousness God offers?

### **Life Application Bible Notes**

**3:10-12** Paul is referring to [Psalm 14:1-3](#). "No one is righteous" means "no one is innocent." Every person is valuable in God's eyes because God created us in his image, and he loves us. But no one is good enough (that is, no one can earn right standing with God). Though we are valuable, we have fallen into sin. But God, through Jesus his Son, has redeemed us and offers to forgive us if we turn to him in faith.

**3:10-18** Paul uses these Old Testament references to show that humanity in general, in its present sinful condition, is unacceptable before God. Have you ever thought to yourself, "Well, I'm not too bad. I'm a pretty good person"? Look at these verses and see if any of them apply to you. Have you ever lied? Have you ever hurt someone's feelings by your words or tone of voice? Are you bitter toward anyone? Do you become angry with those who strongly disagree with you? In thought, word, and deed, you, like everyone else in the world, stand guilty before God. We must remember who we are in his sight—alienated sinners. Don't deny that you are a sinner. Instead, allow your desperate need to point you toward Christ.

**3:19** The last time someone accused you of wrongdoing, what was your reaction? Denial, argument, and defensiveness? The entire world will be silent before God. No excuses or arguments will remain. Have you reached the point with God where you are ready to hang up your defenses and await his decision? If you haven't, stop now and admit your sin to him. If you have, the following verses are truly good news for you!

**3:20, 31** In these verses we see two functions of God's law. First, it shows us where we go wrong. Because of the law, we know that we are helpless sinners and that we must come to Jesus Christ for mercy. Second, the moral code revealed in the law can serve to guide our actions by holding up God's moral standards. We do not earn salvation by keeping the law (no one except Christ ever kept or could keep God's law perfectly), but we do please God when our life conforms to his revealed will for us.

**Romans Study Guide questions and notes are from**

