

Romans – Justified through faith

Romans 1:18-3:20

The introduction is over the letter moves on to the Wrath of God against mankind.

Nothing keeps people away from Christ more than their inability to see their need of him or their unwillingness to admit it. Deny that you have a problem and nothing can be done about it.

Christian duty: Through prayer and teaching, to bring people to a true diagnosis of their condition in the sight of God.

Paul, before he can show Jew and Gentile salvation equally, he must show/prove equally they are in need of it. The indictment is against all. He does more than accusation, he gives the evidence to prove their guilt and secure their conviction.

The necessary dark background against which the gospel shines brightly.

Paul shows the universality of human sin by dividing up the human race and accusing each section. He reminds them of their knowledge of God, of his goodness and then confronts them that they haven't lived up to it, (Philippians – let us live up to what we already know!) they have suppressed it, contradicted knowledge and lived in unrighteousness therefore they are guilty.

Nobody can plead innocence because nobody can plead ignorance!

1:18-32 depraved gentiles - idolatry immorality antisocial

2:1-16 critical moralizers – apply high ethical standards to everybody but themselves

2:17-3:8 self confident Jews – boast of knowledge of God but don't obey it

3:9-20 whole human race – all guilty without excuse

Gradually and relentlessly builds case against humanity but never loses sight of the Good News. Last section ended with 1:17 “in the Gospel of God a righteousness is revealed” – 3:21 repeats the phrase almost word for word – “righteousness from God ... has been known” It is between the two affirmations of the revelation of God's gracious righteousness that Paul sandwiches his terrible exposure of human unrighteousness.

“God's future wrath once in force cannot be reversed or escaped. God's present wrath can be reversed and men can escape. The reason for this is that God has already poured out his future wrath on Jesus Christ. God's future wrath falls on those who reject Jesus, they bear God's wrath in their place. How tragic.” - Deffinbaugh