

## *“All Under Sin”*

### **Romans - The Gospel of God**

Romans 3:1-20

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**Jeff:** Why don't we go to prayer? Our heavenly Father, we are so thankful to come to You this morning. We are so thankful to come to You every morning, and bow before You and give You our thanksgiving for the day and for the night's rest. Father, as we come today we're mindful of the evening that we enjoyed, and how our brother Bruce was honored, a father in the faith. And Father, we're thankful that You did so much through this man, made him Your instrument. And You used him so mightily in so many ways. But Father, we are mindful of the fact that You use us all in different ways. And Father, we're thankful not only for Bruce's life, but we're also thankful for someone among us like the bishop who not only served in the pastorate, but who as a professor started the seminary and served on its board and touched so many lives, even lives that are among us this morning. And Father, we pray and give You thanks for men like that, where we can look to and even look through them and then see Christ, and see Him operating in real lives, and so give us encouragement to follow after them.

Father, we pray and we give You thanks for our time together, for the Word before us, for our time in it, and for the way in which Your Spirit not only inspired it but illuminates it and uses it to transform us. Father, we ask and pray that You'll bless the Ligonier conference today and tomorrow. We're thankful for a life like R. C. Sproul and for the legacy that he left. And Father, we're thankful for the teachers who will gather this weekend in Pittsburgh. We pray that it would be a blessing to them.

Father, we also ask that You would be with Bob as he undergoes his procedure this morning. We certainly pray for John and for his mom in the loss of their father, but also in their recovery from COVID. Lord, we're thankful that You preserve us and keep us, even if it's an ultimate keeping. But Father, in this life we pray that You would grant them health.

Father, we ask now that You'll turn our attention to Your word and bless us and strengthen us. And we ask it for Christ's sake and for His glory. Amen.

**Brave Men:** Amen.

**Sig Tragard:** And Jeff, we do have a mike this morning. So if you have a question don't hesitate to jump in, right?

**Jeff:** Yeah.

**Sig:** I'll come to you so we can hear it.

**Jeff:** Yeah. For you men who are new you can interrupt me at any time; I don't have a problem with that, especially if I don't see you. But I don't normally permit Don to interrupt. *(Laughter)*

You know, I do want to say one thing. Maybe I shouldn't say this on the recording, but I will. But you know, the new man who said he would never come back, that was the morning that I put the video on the board of Don learning how to drive. *(Laughter)* And I just happened to look over at him and he had his head down, shaking his head. *(Laughter)*

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And I didn't hear him say what I said to you. But I thought to myself, he'll never come back here. *(Laughter)* Oh well, let's encourage ourselves. *(Laughter)*

Let's turn to the book of Romans, and let's read 3:1-20 this morning. I realize that we did a few verses last time—1-4—but we're going to recover the remainder, those that I had planned on covering next time. So let's turn to the word of God in Romans chapter 3:1-20 and listen to it.

*“Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? Much in every way. To begin with, the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God. But what if some were unfaithful? Does their unfaithfulness nullify the faithfulness of God? By no means! ‘Let God be true, though everyone were a liar.’ As it is written: ‘That you may be justified in your words, and prevail when you are judged.’*

*“But if our unrighteousness serves to show the righteousness of God, what shall we say? That God is unrighteous to inflict wrath on us? (I speak in a human way.) By no means! For then how could God judge the world? But if through my lie God's truth abounds for His glory, why am I still being condemned as a sinner? And why not do evil that good may come, as some people slanderously charge us with saying? Their condemnation is just.*

*What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin. As it is written:*

*‘None is righteous; no, not one.*

*No one understands; no one seeks God.*

*All have turned aside;*

*Together they have become worthless.*

*No one does good, not even one.’*

*‘Their throat is an open grave;*

*They use their tongues to deceive.’*

*‘The venom of asps is under their lips.’*

*‘Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness.’*

*‘Their feet are swift to shed blood.’*

*‘In their paths are ruin and misery,’*

*‘And the way of peace they have not known.’*

*‘There is no fear of God before their eyes.’*

*“Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. For by the works of the law no human being will be justified in His sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.”* This is the word of the Lord.

**Brave Men:** Thanks be to God.

**Jeff:** So we have really watched chapter 1—or the main brunt of chapter 1—unfold through chapter 2 and then into chapter 3 in a courtroom-like setting. We may imagine it in another way as well. We might imagine it as Paul preaching and speaking to one segment of the church and then to another segment of the church saying, “You go, Paul!”, and then Paul turning his sights on one segment of the church and then gathering them all

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together and then really putting them all under God’s word, and therefore all under condemnation. We can image in it like that.

But there is a certain sense in which we can also imagine it like a courtroom setting. And we see Paul the lawyer basically taking on his interlocutor and putting him to the test with the Scriptures. But we also see—and in this section here’s what we’re going to see;-- we’re going to see Paul allowing himself to be questioned by the interlocutor. So the imaginary Jewish man now who he has been dialoguing with is going to ask him some questions.

I think Paul is basically saying, “Well, what if we do this, and what if we did that?” But I’m going to arrange it so that we think of it as when Paul talks about the what ifs, those what ifs are now being asked of him by his Jewish debating partner, just so we can get a feel for how this text is unfolding.

So that’s the way we’re going to look at this. And we’re coming down the home stretch as we look at 1, 2 and 3 together. And obviously as you heard at the very end of this text, it’s going to culminate with the whole world is under sin, and the mouths of Jew and Gentile alike are stopped. And that’s where we’re heading. And then the next week we’re going to head into that great 3:21 passage—*“But now.”* But we’re not there yet. So let’s take a look at this.

There’s a change. Now we’re going to see Paul in the dock. He is on the witness stand as it were. And remember that the Jewish interlocutor, his debating partner, now becomes the lawyer who is questioning him. So keep that in mind as we go.

So this man says, “What advantage is there? What advantage is there, Paul, to being a Jew?”

Now I want you to just think again about that in a very brief way. I want you to think about what that means. When I graduated from high school I applied for a job at PPG. And one of the things about PPG in my home town was that if you were going to get a job there you’d better have family there. If you had family there you were at an advantage; you were in a favored position.

And I was. My dad worked there and I got hired. I knew other guys that applied along with me. They had no family there and they didn’t get hired. And that’s the idea.

The question is, what advantage is there to being a Jew? Is there any favorable position in which we get placed as Jews?

Now think about this. They expect Paul to say no; there’s no advantage at all to being a Jew. But Paul surprises them. And Paul says to them, *“Much in every way.”* Yes, there is an advantage to being a Jew.

And what does he list? I’m just so behind in my slides! He says that for starters it’s the word of God. The word of God is an advantage.

Now we looked at that the last time. We looked at that portion of the Word in a broad sense. We looked at it from the perspective that these are the oracles of God, the living word of God. And of course there’s an advantage to being a Jew and having the word of God.

Now let me ask you a question. How might you think about this if you were a Jewish person? At this point I want to go in a little bit of a different direction and lay something

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out for you to help you understand how the Jew might have been asking this question. And then it really gets interesting when you go into the what ifs that Paul talks about. So let's think for a minute about the Jew.

The Jew is going to say, “Paul, let's think about those oracles of God that you mentioned for just a minute. Let's think about those oracles of God first and foremost from Abraham's perspective.” Abraham was called out of Ur of the Chaldeans. He was called to leave his homeland. He was promised that he would be made a people and put into a land, and then they would be a blessing to all the nations.

“Now Paul, here is the thing that I want you to consider as we think about Abraham. Paul, do you remember Genesis chapter 15? Remember that?”

Paul would have said, “Of course I do. I'm a Pharisee; I remember these things.”

“Well then, you obviously remember that ceremony that happened. You remember that ceremony—the ceremony where God basically summons Abraham to take the animals, slaughter them and put them in halves—you know, cut them in half and create a path. And the path would have been sort of down in slopes so that all of the blood from those animals would have been along this path.”

Now in times past what would have happened is that a king would have summoned his servant to walk through the halves. Why? Because the king would have said, “I am your king; you are my servant, and this is my expectation for you.”

And the servant would have said, “O king, all that you say I will do. And if I don't do as you've summoned me to do, may I be like these animals, torn asunder.” And then he would walk down the halves. And then the blood would be sprinkled on his robe. And he would always be reminded by the blood on the hem of his robe of how he walked through the halves, passed through those halves and promised the king his obedience.

Now isn't that striking to think about what happened to Abe? Abe was put into a deep sleep. And he did not pass through the halves. But instead God passed through the halves in the form of a Theophany, a smoking firepot, an appearance of God. And what did God say? God said to Abraham at that moment, “I will secure your blessedness. And you will be passive in it, Abram; you will be passive in it. I will do this for you.” “Now do you remember that, Paul?”

“Yes, I remember it.” Now jump ahead two chapters. Jump ahead to chapter 17. And there God gave Abraham the sign and the seal of the covenant—circumcision. And in giving him that sign and seal He basically said to him, “Abraham, this is a sign of what I promised to you two chapters ago. And this is a seal of its authenticity. Every time you look at your maleness you will remember that I promised to make you a nation. I promised to put you in a land, and I promised to make you a blessing to the nations.”

“Now Paul, here is the question that we have for you. If the sign indicates the verity of the promise”—and Paul would concede all of this. Paul would not dispute a word of what we just said; neither would we. How could we do it? It's the Old Testament and it's the truth of the matter. Abraham was passive; he didn't secure his own blessedness; God did. And circumcision was the sign. Paul would have conceded it all.

If that's the case, the Jew, this lawyer says to him—and this is the next point—“Does the faithlessness of the Jew nullify the faithfulness of God?”

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Now that’s a powerful argument. “Paul, you’ve been talking about us and how faithless we are. But let me have you remember something. Our faithlessness cannot nullify the faithfulness of God. Remember, Abram was passive in all this. God promised to be faithful and to secure his blessedness. God knew that Abram was not going to be able to do any of this. So Paul, tell me. This is a wonderful argument that you’ve been unfolding to us, and how we’re so similar to the Gentiles. But here is where you’re wrong, because God promised to be faithful to us, and gave us a sign of that faithfulness. And our faithlessness does not matter in all of this.”

Now is Paul in a corner? You feel like Paul’s in a corner, don’t you? You feel like he has waited for this very moment. The Jewish interlocutor has waited for this very moment to give this last round of argumentation about what Paul is saying. And you feel like wow, that was a powerful argument! I think I’m going to give this round to the Jewish interlocutor. At least that’s the way you feel.

Why? Because if Paul admits that there is an advantage in the promise and value in circumcision, then the logical question comes. If God gave the promise and the sign of the promise, then how can unfaithfulness nullify faithfulness?

Now there’s our Jewish interlocutor. They took a picture of him at the end of this argument, smoking his pipe and waiting for Paul. Anyway, whatever. (*Laughter*) Believe it or not.

Now what does Paul say? I mean, this is a little fiery Jewish guy. And he jumps up and he says, “*By no means!*” You know, he’s all exercised over this, and he’s going to come back. He doesn’t see himself as defeated. He sees himself as ready to go.

Now how can he get out of this? Well, here Paul says this, and this is great. He says, “Do you remember David? You may remember David, don’t you? You know David, the chosen king of Israel? You know, the youngest of all of his brothers, the one that was worthless; nobody considered him until Samuel says, ‘Is there another brother?’ You know, that guy? You know, the one that God chose, sort of like Israel? You know, the one who was after God’s own heart? Remember that? Yeah, I think you do remember him.

“Well, this guy that was after God’s own heart, do you remember what he did? Not only did he see Bathsheba and call for her, and what did he do in doing that? Well, he failed; he failed many people. He failed her, he failed the people of Israel, and certainly he failed God.”

Now I want you to think about that for a minute. Not only did he do that; he killed Bathsheba’s husband Uriah, right? And what does Paul say? Paul says,--and let me just ask this,--does David’s unfaithfulness nullify God’s faithfulness? Absolutely not! God’s faithfulness is not nullified by human faithlessness.

Now at this point the Jewish lawyer changes directions. And here’s the subtlety of the shift. The subtlety of the shift is this. And this is where you think that Paul is in a corner; he’s got this one lost. Watch what happens in terms of the subtlety of this shift. The Jewish lawyer changes directions, but only slightly. Is God then unrighteous to judge us?

Why? Think about this. If our unrighteousness magnifies God’s righteousness, then how can He punish us? This is what is going to take place in Romans chapter 9, right?

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How can God judge me? He’s the One who decided this for me. How can He blame me? This is the same kind of thing.

And so the Jew in this situation says, “Okay, look. If God magnifies Himself through my unrighteousness, then how can He punish me? He uses me to bring about His own glory. I’m an instrument in His hands to bring about His own glory.”

Now I want you to think about this at this point. Do you see what he’s doing? What can we say about our Jewish friend at this point? We can say this. He has admitted that he’s guilty. He has admitted unrighteousness. And isn’t that what Paul has been driving at for the last three chapters? Paul has been driving at that we are all unrighteous under the righteous hand of God.

And so think about it. The Jew has been saying, “We’re a guide; we’re a light. We tell people the way of salvation,” and so on—that sort of thing. “And we have circumcision. How can we be unrighteous?” And at this point what you see is that Paul says, “Yep; that’s right. The righteousness of God can’t be nullified by human faithlessness.”

And then the argument shifts. “But doesn’t God use our unfaithfulness to bring about His own glory?”

And Paul says, “Do you know what you just did? You just admitted that you’re unrighteous.” And he’s got them. He has the Jewish lawyer right where he wants him, because the man who may have been right about Abraham has to admit that he’s faithless along with the rest of the Jews. And that’s where Paul starts to gather the threads and say that everyone is unrighteous under the righteousness of God.

Let me stop because that’s kind of a subtle argument. So what kinds of things might you want to talk about before we go on?

**Sig:** So Jeff?

**Jeff:** Yes?

**Sig:** This passage from verse 10—“*As it is written:*”—that’s a quote about David? Is it David saying that statement?

**Jeff:** What’s that?

**Sig:** “*None is righteous; no, not one. No one understands; no one seeks for God.*”

**Jeff:** So if you go back to—

**Sig:** My Bible doesn’t have a reference to those passages.

**Jeff:** Oh! Your Bible doesn’t have a reference?

**Sig:** No.

**Ted Wood:** And neither does mine; that makes two of us.

**Brave Man:** I have it.

**Sig:** What does yours have, David?

**David:** Psalm 14 and Palm 53.

**Sig:** Psalm 14.

**David:** And Psalm 53.

**Jeff:** Where are you guys?

**Sig:** Chapter 3.

**Jeff:** Which verse?

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**Sig:** Verse 10.

**David:** Verses 10-18.

**Sig:** *“As it is written:*

*‘None is righteous; no, not one.’”*

**Jeff:** Yeah. And so you don’t think those Psalms are David’s Psalms?

**Sig:** No, no. That’s why I’m asking you to clarify, because as you refer to David in what you just said, that must be one of David’s Psalms or David’s sayings.

**Jeff:** Yeah. I think that he’s pulling David in with those quotes.

**Sig:** That’s what I’m trying to clarify, because you obviously were referring to David. In the text it doesn’t say “David.” So I’m thinking that because there’s no footnote that it’s got to be—

**Jeff:** Yes. He’s putting David’s words in. I’m making more of it. You remember David, right?

**Sig:** Yes, that’s what I thought: the Psalms of David. Okay.

**Jeff:** Yeah; sorry about that.

**Sig:** Thank you.

**Jeff:** I took a lot of liberties here.

**Sig:** That’s all right; you made a good point. That’s the first good point you’ve made in a long time.

**Jeff:** I know. *(Laughter)* Any other clarifying things?

**Ted:** And if he said, “Remember Genesis 15,” Paul would have said, “I have no idea what you’re talking about.”

**Jeff:** That’s right. I just took a lot of liberties to go through that.

**Sig:** You used that word. Is it “interlocutor?”

**Jeff:** Interlocutor.

**Brave Man:** It’s a place of coffins. *(Laughter)*

**Sig:** It’s where the Loch Ness monster is. *(Laughter)*

**Jeff:** It’s an imaginary debater.

**Sig:** It’s an imaginary debater.

**Brave Man:** Thank you.

**Jeff:** anybody else? Does that make sense? Anybody else? All right. So the Jew has admitted guilt; he has conceded. He is unrighteous. I want you to see this. Look in verse 7. Listen to this. Just listen; this is the Jew. *“But if through my lie God’s truth abounds to His glory, why am I still being condemned as a sinner?”*

That’s his argument. “Wait a minute, Paul! If my sin brings glory to God and if my lie brings glory to God, then why am I still being held accountable as a sinner?” And that’s exactly the point that Paul is making. You are unrighteous; yes, you are a liar. And so Paul asks, “And why not do evil that good may overcome?”, right? “That’s what you’re asking. Why not do evil, that good may overcome?” And Paul says this, and I love this. Paul says, “That’s stupid.” *(Laughter)* Some arguments aren’t worth answering. And that’s basically what he says at the end of this section. He says, “That’s just dumb; I don’t even want to talk about it anymore. It’s not worth arguing about.”

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And you know, there’s some truth in that, isn’t there? There are some arguments that just aren’t worth answering. And sometimes we don’t realize that. Sometime se feel that everyone who asks a question of us we have to answer. And we don’t realize that some things are just stupid.

You know, I’ll never forget. I was working out in the gym years and years ago. And there was a guy in the gym, and he just had a disdain for Christianity. He was a serial adulterer. He had big mouth. He’d come up to the gym and he would talk about his wife in terrible ways, and all of his exploits and things like this.

And one day I was up at a different time. He happened to be up there with me. There were maybe just a handful of us up there. And so he started talking to me a little bit. He knew I was a minister, and it was around Christmastime. And so he said to me, “Hey, why don’t you bring the church over ad sing Christmas carols to my horses?”

And I looked at him and I said, “What?”

And he said, “Yeah. Why don’t you guys come over and sing Christmas carols to my horses?” He said, “Last Christmas this church came over and I led them out to the barn and I had them sing carols to my horses and I went in the house. My horses really loved it.”

And what he was doing was that he was trying to make asses of the Christian people; that’s what he was doing. And instead of just looking at him and saying, “You know what/ You’re an ass, and we’re going to the next house,” they went out and sang carols to his horses and made themselves out to be asses. And I think we need to learn that some arguments just aren’t worth contending for, and that some people are doing it just so they can make Christianity look foolish.

**Bob Busted:** All I wanted to say was that this statement reminds me of Bruce Bickel. When someone uttered foolishness, many times he would walk away or give a really curt answer that really didn’t respond to the question, because in his mind it was not worth talking about.

**Jeff:** Yeah.

**Ted:** You weren’t at the meeting; I was.

**Jeff:** Yeah. Last night Sig said, “Jeff got his outline to me by five o’clock tonight.” And Bruce looked at me and said, “No sense in rushing it.” (*Laughter*)

**Jim Hamilton:** I remember asking Bruce for some help about a fundraiser for a church. And he said, “It’s fairly simple. You raise the money first before you spend a dime.” (*Laughter*)

**Jeff:** All right. Well, some arguments aren’t worth answering. And so Paul says, “Are the Jews better off? “And then he answers that question, and remember what he said. He said that there is an advantage in every way in being a Jew. He said that first of all they have the oracles of God. And then what does he do? In 9 through almost the end of the chapter—9-18—he just goes through the oracles of God. And so he says, “How might we answer whether the Jews are better off? Well, yes and no. Yes, they’re better off because they have the oracles of God which I’m about to take you through. But no, because in order to take advantage of an opportunity you have to exercise responsibility. If you don’t exercise responsibility then you haven’t taken advantage of the advantage.”



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And so they have the promise; they have the sign. And they failed to respond in faith. And so he takes them through the privilege and through the oracles of God. And not in every home is the right to keep and bear arms a right. In my dad’s house it was a privilege. *(He laughs)* And that privilege could be taken away from you at any point if you didn’t exercise responsibility. You know, my dad had certain rules. You had the advantage of carrying a gun and hunting. But if you didn’t exercise responsibility in certain ways—cleaning the gun, carrying the gun appropriately, keeping the safe on at all times, and so on—just being safety conscious and exercising your responsibility, you had that privilege removed. And then it was of no advantage to you to have that gun. And that reminds me of that.

Anyway, secondly, he takes them through the oracles of God. Now I just want you to see this again. Look at what it says; listen to what it says. The conclusion demands itself at the end. And remember, this is all out of the Old Testament Scriptures:

*“None is righteous; no, not one.*

*No one understands; no one seeks God.”*

Now you know, we have to keep in mind that those statements alone put to bed the idea that we can have seeker-sensitive churches. There are no seekers. No one seeks after God. You can qualify that all you want. But in the final analysis the Scriptures say, *“No one seeks after God.”* If you have a seeker who is coming to your church,—and the bishop may want to correct me on this or enlarge upon this,—but I think you could reduce it to one of two things. Either the person has been drawn and that’s why he’s seeking, or they’re seeking something that will benefit themselves by going there. I mean, it’s reducible in my mind to one of those two things. Either it benefits them or they’ve actually been drawn to coming. Would you agree with that, Bishop?

*“All have turned aside.”* Not just some have turned aside; all have turned aside. *“Together they have become worthless.”* *“No one does good.”* Not that some do not do good; all do not do good—no one, not even one. Those are just statements that are unavoidable.

And so he gets down to the bottom and he says that the whole world is under God’s judgment. It’s a litany of texts, and it points to one thing. It points to the sinfulness of man.

And in this sense we’ve really reached the climax. We’ve reached the climax of what we started in 1:18 that goes through chapter 3 verse 20. And Paul’s conclusion is what he started with: there is absolutely no person who is righteous in the sight of God, whether you’re a Jew or a Gentile. The Jews may have received advantages and did not exercise responsibility in having those advantages. The Gentiles even had advantages; the law was written in their hearts. They didn’t exercise the privileges over those advantages.

Why? Because they couldn’t. They are dead in their sins and transgressions; they are captured by sin. You can describe it any way you want, but “no one is righteous, not one.” And so the law shuts mouths.

And we ask the question. If Abraham was given the promise, and we are the children of Abraham who are the recipients of that promise, as Galatians c:7-9 says, then why the

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law? That’s what Paul asks in Galatians 3. Why the law? Well, the law shuts mouths and drives people to the promise. That’s the idea. So the law shuts the mouths of people.

If you think about this in terms of an argument, Paul won. And yet in his victory we lose. In other words, he wins. And when he wins he has argued that we, Jews and Gentiles alike, are all under sin.

Now that brings us up to the point that we’re going to enter into next time. And let me just read it. I don’t want anyone casting themselves off of a bridge in the meantime because Paul won.

Look at 1:16-17 for a minute. *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation for everyone who believes—to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith; as it is written: ‘The righteous shall live by faith.’”*

And then look at 3:21. *“But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law.”* And remember, the law brings knowledge of sin and condemnation. *“Although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it.”* In other words, they’ve always pointed to this righteousness that was to come. *“The righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe.”* And so that’s really a glorious thing. And it will push us forward into the next section.

**Ted:** I’m just reading these Scriptures that Paul quotes from. And if I was a Jew I would say, “Paul, you’ve misquoted the Scripture.”

**Jeff:** Okay.

**Ted:** Because Psalm 14:1 begins, *“The fool says in his heart, ‘There is no God.’”*

**Jeff:** Uh-huh.

**Ted:** *“They are corrupt; they do abominable deeds,”* etc. And again in Psalm 53 it starts off, *“The fool says in his heart.”* “So Paul, you’ve made this universal. The Scriptures are talking about the fool, not all people.”

**Jeff:** Uh-huh.

**Ted:** “We Jews are not fools.”

**Jeff:** Yeah.

**Ted:** I mean, I think there’s an answer for it. I’m just saying that if I were a Jew and I were going by the Scriptures I would say that he did not quote the Scripture correctly.

**Jeff:** That’s right. The bishop is going to answer for me.

**Bishop Rodgers:** No, no, no. We are all foolish. *“Proclaiming to be wise they became fools.”* What is the maxim? *“It is wrong to do wrong.”* Isn’t that a part of what is written on the heart of every human being?

**Jeff:** Yeah.

**Bishop:** It’s kind of a fundamental moral awareness that everybody bears. To do wrong even with the little knowledge that one has is still unacceptable and sinful.

**Jeff:** Yes, although I think that’s changing a bit.

**Bishop:** We can hide it; we can deny it till the Judgment Day.

**Jeff:** Yes; I think you’re right. It feels like the foolish man is getting more bold though in his honesty about that.

**Bishop:** Yes.

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**Jim:** I’ve been reading that the law as given to make us conscious of sin, and that the law is not a means to justification but of condemnation. It’s scary.

**Jeff:** Yeah; that’s right. Anybody else?

**Brave Man:** I couldn’t find any direct quote from the Old Testament. But doesn’t it say that no one is truly righteous?

**Jeff:** Yes, absolutely. And this is the problem, though, and it comes from Adam. We want to be considered righteous on the basis of what we do. And that just comes from being in Adam.

And so it’s interesting. How does that manifest itself even among good, solid Christian people? You know, you still have to take care, because think about it. One of the things that people do is that you get to play that comparison game, right? Somebody may go to a Wednesday night Bible study. And they realize that they’re in a small minority in a church that goes to a Wednesday night Bible study. And they may begin to think, “I’m really spiritual, but they’re not.” And those are the kinds of righteousness games that we play with ourselves. And we know better. And that’s the problem: we know better and still do it. And the world is suppressing that knowledge in unrighteousness, and they do it constantly. I mean, I just—

**Ted:** Go ahead. You were going to share something private and personal. *(Laughter)*

**Jeff:** I was. Then I remembered I was being recorded. *(Laughter)* All right. If there are no other thoughts or questions, we’ll close in prayer.

Father, thank You for this day and for the time You’ve given us to be together. And Lord, thank You for Your word and for the love of Christ shed abroad in our hearts. And Father, thank You for the law, for the way in which it drives us to the gospel promise. We ask that Your hand would be upon us all in Jesus name, as we think about that day to day. Amen.

**Brave Men:** Amen. *(Applause)*