

ROMANS 1-4

ROMANS 2-3 | WEEK 2: OCT 18, 2015

CHIASM: ROMANS 1:18-3:8

Paul structures his argument in 1:18-3:20 in chiastic form:

- (A) The Gentile predicament (1:18-32)
- (B) God's impartial judgment according to deeds (2:1-16)
- (A') The Jewish predicament (2:17-3:8)

GOD'S RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT (2:1-16)

1. Simply possessing the Law, simply being Jewish is irrelevant for justification.
2. The point of this chapter is to establish divine impartiality, not human success in God's court.
3. Paul believes the covenant must be and can be fulfilled. His solution will not be to reject the necessity of covenant keeping but to offer a new means—Christ and the Spirit.

You (Jews) have no excuse either (2:1-4)

Because of your stubbornness, you are storing up wrath for yourself (2:5)

God will repay everyone for what they have done (2:6-10)

God does not show favoritism (2:11)

JEWS & THE LAW (2:17-29)

1. The Jews, unbelievably to Paul, are as guilty of idolatry and all kinds of immorality/injustice as the Gentiles.
2. A Jew is not someone who is physically circumcised but 'inwardly' and 'spiritually' circumcised: "real circumcision is a matter of the heart" (2:29). See Deuteronomy 10:12-22 and Jeremiah 4:4; 31:31-34.

You Jews are hypocrites (2:17-24)

An obedient uncircumcised person trumps a circumcised disobedient person (2:25-27)

A person is a Jew inwardly, through circumcision of the heart by the Spirit (2:28-29)

GOD IS FAITHFUL (3:1-8)

Paul uses his interlocutor to raise the central theological issue of Romans—the faithfulness of God.

What advantage is there in being a Jew, then? Much! Entrusted with words of God (3:1)

God's faithfulness is not nullified by human/Jewish unfaithfulness (3:3-4)

But don't try to argue that your unfaithfulness is good because it enhances God's! (3:5-8)

NO ONE IS RIGHTEOUS (3:9–20)

LAW COURT LANGUAGE

The Charge: All human beings are under the power of sin (3:9b).

The Evidence: OT scripture (Psalms & Isaiah) used to demonstrate that human beings fail to seek or fear God, or to treat other human beings with kindness. They are not righteous! (3:10-18)

The Verdict: “The whole world” stands guilty before God (3:19).

Thus the “deeds prescribed by the law” cannot be the means of justification (3:20)

Paul’s point is that neither the actual possession of the Law nor the failed attempt at its performance is going to be the source of anyone’s right relationship with God now or acquittal on the Day of Judgment.

Jews and Gentiles are all under sin (3:9–18)

The whole world is accountable to God (3:19)

The Law just points out our sin (3:20)

RIGHTEOUSNESS THROUGH FAITH (3:21–26)

The words “But now” mark a major turning point. Romans 3:21-26 unpacks the thesis found in 1:16-17 and leads to the exclusion of any form of pride.

The majority of the most recent interpretations of Paul understand God’s righteousness as God’s saving covenant faithfulness and render the phrases normally translated “faith in Christ as “the faith/faithfulness of Christ’ (3:22,25)

The righteousness of God has been made known apart from law (3:21)

This righteousness is through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe (3:22)

All have sinned and all are justified freely by grace (3:23–24)

God presented Christ as a propitiation to demonstrate his righteousness, having left previous sins unpunished (3:25)

God is just and the who one who justifies those having faith in Jesus (3:26)

Boasting is excluding, because justification is apart from works of the law (3:27–31)

WHAT? WHERE? HOW? WHO?

1. *What* is manifested? God’s righteousness (= saving covenant faithfulness)
2. *Where* or *how* is it manifested? In Christ’s faith/faithfulness.
3. *For whom* is it manifested? All who respond in faith.