

Romans 3:1-22  
Heart Transplant

**I. John 3:1-15. Nic's shocking discovery: Being Jewish won't save him!**

- A. Being religious and having stature in a religious society is nothing without Spirit regeneration—born from above.
- B. For a dues-paid Jewish leader to be told he won't see the kingdom of God was shocking in the extreme.

**II. In Rom.1-3 Paul is answering why he is not ashamed of the gospel. 1:16-17**

- A. Because the world needs rescued—and it can't rescue itself.
  - 1. We need to be right with God. (like we pretend to be)
- B. Because the world is immersed in evil—and God must judge it. 1:18
  - 1. Pagan humanity has turned away from God. 1:18-32
  - 2. Moralistic humanity is no better off. 2:1-16
  - 3. Even the Jews cannot trust their own pedigree or performance. 2:17-29.
    - a) Circumcision (Jewishness) is of value only if you keep the whole law. Gal.5:3-4
  - 4. Paul is saying that even membership in material Israel is not a guarantee of eternal life. One needs personal, repentant faith in Jesus Messiah, coming directly to God through Christ, by His Spirit.
- C. Because something must happen in the heart, by the Spirit—and only God can do it. 2:29.
  - 1. Circumcised heart=an internal change, brought into covenant relationship with God by a change on the inside that He does. **Deut.30:6** (10:16); Jn.3:3; Ez.36:25

**III. But this is profoundly offensive to Jews, which is why Paul got beat up.**

**A. A Sample Argument. 4 Questions Jews asked when Paul preached. 3:1-8**

- 1. Well then what is the advantage to being Jewish at all? 1-2
  - a) Great advantage – the possession of the oracles of God, for one!
  - b) Scripture: written speech of God.
- 2. Yes, but ... if some of the Jews have been faithless, does that mean God won't be faithful (keep His promises) to Israel? 3-4
  - a) Of course not!! God is faithful even if humans aren't.
- 3. Yes, but ... if our sins give God the opportunity to show His righteousness, doesn't that make God unrighteous for judging us? V.5-6
  - a) Of course not!! God is never unrighteous.
  - b) He's the judge of the world!
- 4. Yes, but ...if through my lie, God's truth is seen, why is He judging me? 7-8
  - a) Paul responds with some sarcasm – *Oh sure!* And why not say (and some people actually accuse us of saying this), Let's sin, so that good happens! (People who say this are condemned, and rightly so.)
  - b) *In other words, If He's using my disobedience for His glory, doesn't that mean he approves of it? I'm really doing Him a favor.*
  - c) *Never try to weasel out of guilt by an appeal to God's sovereignty*

**B. A Stinging Reminder: the OT is a record of human failure. 9-18.**

- 1. Paul asks: So, are we Jews better than those Gentiles? 9
  - a) Of course not!! Both Jews and Greeks are *all under sin!* *Sin is a Power and a Condition.*
  - b) Advantage? Yes. Better people? No.
  - c) *If you are coming to Christ, you must let go of all sense of superiority* 9
- 2. Seven verses that demonstrate Jewish failure. 10-18
  - a) Ps.14:1-3; 53:1-3; 5:9; 140:3; 10:7; Isa.59:7-8; Ps.36:1.
- 3. *Even though there was a righteous remnant in Israel, these were saved by grace, not by their own goodness generated through the Law. The vast majority turned away. Which means that Jewishness alone, without personal faith, does not make a Jew better than a Gentile!*

**C. A Soothing Rebuke. 19-22.** Soothing because it makes us stop fighting His Grace.

1. Stop arguing against the indictment.
  - a) every mouth stopped.
2. Accept the fact that you will answer to God.
  - a) Whole world is accountable for sin, revealed by the Law.
3. Receive His righteousness to replace yours. 21-22
  - a) So that when you answer, you have His goodness all over you!
4. *By Faith, radical repentant trust, in Messiah Jesus.*

**IV. What happens when the gospel penetrates and circumcises your heart? When you come out of religion (or anti-religion) and into the Lord?**

A. Regeneration directly from God Himself. Jn.3:3-7

1. A new kind of life by the Spirit, immersing you in God Himself.
2. A new kind of Character (His) growing in you, permeating your thoughts, words, deeds, transforming you. Rom.12:1-2
3. A whole new eternal identity.

B. Declaration of eternal goodness over your life. Justification. Rom. 3:21-28

1. A new kind of righteousness. Real, legal forgiveness for everything you were hiding in your “crypt” (2:16 secrets, kruptos)

C. Guarantee of eternal life in God’s kingdom. Eph.1:13-14

1. A new destiny. Life in the Kingdom.
2. The Spirit’s regeneration is the guarantee of inheritance until we acquire possession of it (resurrection).

**V. So, lose your evil and your religious pride and be immersed in God’s own life.**