

Crossroads Baptist Church
April 23, 2006 10:00
Romans 3: 1-8
Romans #11

“The Faithfulness of God”

Have you ever been in a witnessing situation proclaiming the sinfulness of man and hammering home the responsibility of the person to whom you are sharing when all out of nowhere questions and statements will rise like, “But what about all those hypocrites down at the church;” “Where did Cain get his wife?” “Why are there so many denominations?”

When the truth begins to get too uncomfortable, we have a humanistic response to begin changing the subject. When the sword begins to cut too deeply or the plow gets too close to the corn, we’ll change the subject or divert the attention away from us.

Such is the case of our passage today. Paul is acting as a prosecutor bringing his case against the Gentiles in chapter one and the Jews in chapter two of their sinfulness before God and their ultimate responsibility of their sin.

Now, the Jews are feeling the heat so they seek to divert the attention from themselves to actually God. In this passage, the whole of the matter is that God is a faithful God who has sovereignly chosen and privileged the Jews above all the people of the earth, but with that privilege comes responsibility and their unfaithfulness to follow God does not make God a liar and unfaithful.

I. God’s faithfulness is seen in his goodness of privilege

Paul is asking the question or is being asked, “What advantage it is that we are Jews? That we have the oracles of God?”

When Paul mentally calls the roll of Jewish prerogatives, one item tops all and that is that they had the high honor and unique privileges of being the custodians of the oracles of God. The special revelation to Israel.

In other words, they were asking if the privileges didn’t also mean some special provisions. In other words, its not what you know, its who you know. Because we have been so chosen and blessed and are so close to God, then God will grant us some special oversight.

What they were not understanding is that with privilege comes responsibility.

Deuteronomy 28 is the chapter of blessings and cursing. The chapter is divided by these two verses:

28:1 “now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the Lord your God will set you high above all nations of the earth.”

28:15 “But if shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statues, which I command you today; that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you.”

God is good and faithful to give us the privileges that we have. To show forth His glory, but with that privilege and goodness comes responsibility.

II. God’s faithfulness is seen in his righteous judgment

That Israel has been blessed with so many advantages, does that guarantee a rosy future? Does that mean that God will look the other way when they transgress the law? For indeed, God has made promises to them. Doesn’t that make God look bad when they do not reach their potential to be all God wanted them to be.

It is really fair for God to judge my sin if it brings him greater glory – vs. 7 and should this not actually encourage us to sin – vs. 8.

Does it mean that just because they are Jews and have been promised a glorious future that it will automatically come about?

If not, does that make God then unfaithful? Are his promises untrustworthy? Null?

Paul answers in verse 4 with the strongest negative – God forbid. Let it not be. Perish the thought.

Instead what we need to realize is that God has the right to judge and Paul uses the illustration of David from Psalm 51:4.

In Psalm 51, David confesses his sin. As quoted here in Romans 3:4, he further states that he confesses in order that God might be proved right in his words and prevail in his judging.

David’s sin served moral purposes in the end, but only because of the unweaving faithfulness of God and the over-ruling grace of God.

David wanted God to be proven righteous and triumphant.

III. God's faithfulness is independent of man and his actions.

In verses 7-8, the argument is used here that is later used in Romans 6. If sin makes grace look good, then we should keep on sinning so grace will look better and better.

Here the argument is that if God's glory is seen in my sin and unfaithfulness, then on what basis does God have to judge me when He gets glory for my unfaithfulness and sin? Should we not continue to sin so that the good of His glory will continue?

The argument is being made: Doesn't God's light shine best against the backdrop of our dark, black sin? While that might seem reasonable, remember God's ways and thoughts are high above ours.

The truth is God's faithfulness is the same and independent of man and his actions. God does not change when interacting with man.

He is God and changes not.

"If we are unfaithful, he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself."

II Timothy 2:13

David also concludes, "if every man on earth were proven to be false, God's truth would still remain true."