

Read Romans 1:18-2:1; 3:9-18



1. Who are the people described in chapter 1? What is said about their behaviour and character?



2. Who decides what is right and wrong, according to Paul?



3. Can anyone plead ignorance?



4. In chapter 2 verse 1, who is Paul addressing? Why should we not be judgemental?



5. What conclusion does Paul reach in chapter 3 verse 9-18?



6. Is this true of the world? For example, do people worship created things instead of the creator? (1:25). Is everyone a liar? (3:13).



7. Is Paul right to say that everyone is "under sin"?



8. How does this apply to me?



9. What follows about my standing with God?



10. How can sinful people be acceptable to the holy God?

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**Dictionary:** "sin" = rebellion against God; "righteous" = right with God; "Gentiles" = anyone who is not a Jew.

## SCRIPTURE UNDER SCRUTINY

### Which part of the Bible will we investigate?

Over the next five weeks we will look at part of Paul's letter to the Christians in Rome (known as Romans)

### Who was Paul?

Paul was the leading Christian teacher after Jesus Christ. He was an apostle - that is someone who knew all about Jesus' life and teaching and was specially chosen to teach the new Christian church.

Paul was born with the name Saul. He was a Jew and he learned about the Jewish religion under Gamaliel, the most important Jewish teacher of that time. He became a powerful leader with great knowledge and he was very much respected by the Jewish people. He hated Christians and had them put into prison and even killed.

Then one day Jesus Christ appeared to him in a vision. You can read the story in the Bible, in the book of Acts, chapter 9. As a result, he became a Christian. He changed his name from Saul to Paul and began to teach the Good News about Jesus Christ.

From then on Paul travelled all over the Roman empire teaching and starting churches. He often wrote letters to churches and people that he knew. Many of these letters are now part of the Bible.

### Why will we look at the letter to the Romans?

In the letter to the Romans Paul summarises the Christian message - in fact the message of the whole Bible. In the next five weeks we will look at most of the first five chapters in Romans. Each week we will ask three questions.

1. What does the text say?



2. Is this true? Does it fit with our experience?



3. What does this say about me?



We do this because we want to understand what the Christian message says. Many people think they know what the Christian message is, but actually they have not read the Bible. The Bible says something very different to what most people think the Christian message is.

At the end of five weeks you may not agree with the Christian message. You may not want to believe the Christian message. But we hope that you will understand what it says.

### Rom 1:18-2:1

18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness,

19 since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them.

20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities-- his eternal power and divine nature-- have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

21 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.

22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools

23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

24 Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another.

25 They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator-- who is forever praised. Amen.

26 Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones.

27 In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

28 Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done.

29 They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips,

30 slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents;  
31 they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless.  
32 Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

## CHAPTER 2

1 You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things.

### **Rom 3:9-18**

9 What shall we conclude then? Are we any better? Not at all! We have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin.

10 As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one;  
11 there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God.  
12 All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one."  
13 "Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit." "The poison of vipers is on their lips."  
14 "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness."  
15 "Their feet are swift to shed blood;  
16 ruin and misery mark their ways,  
17 and the way of peace they do not know."  
18 "There is no fear of God before their eyes."