

Saul2Paul

ROMANS

A BLOGPOST FROM THE APOSTLE PAUL TO THE CHURCH IN THE USA

Saul2PaulBlog

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Ok, Church in the USA-spiritual vs. ritual: Just because you have been baptized doesn't mean you are more righteous than some who hasn't been! Just like circumcision, baptism is spiritual, it's written in your heart. You're probably thinking "what's the point, then?"

Well, in the first place, we have been *entrusted* with God's Holy Word. The covenant between God and the Jews was symbolized in circumcision. Our faith in Christ Jesus is symbolized by our baptism. In both cases, we become trustees of Scripture.

So what does that mean? Best explanation I have ever read was by a scholarly guy from England named Tom Wright (an Arch Bishop): If I put my money in a bank, I am entrusting the bank with it. It doesn't mean the bank can do whatever it wants with my money. They are keeping it for **my benefit**, or the benefit of my heir, BUT the bank benefits from my money too. Get it?

Scripture was intended for Israel, then for Gentiles, and **Scripture is intended by God to be used in the future**, a use we cannot see in advance, only God can. But God has *entrusted* us with Scripture for a time and place yet to be realized. A seed yet to be sown, so to speak.

Fine you say, but what about those who are entrusted and are, like so bad and sinning all the time? They make a mockery of God's Holy Word-doesn't that take away the goodness of God? Absolutely Not! Do you think we can change the Truth of God by our actions?? Whoa, no way. If everyone lied, cheated and killed, *God would still be good*. Whatever we do does not change the goodness and power of the Creator.

Remember what I said about the Gospel before? It is the power of God for salvation. Scripture isn't a message about God's power – **it IS God's power!** It is the power to save!

I'm going to throw a really cool word at you: *dynamis* – yup, that's a Greek word for power – great, earth bending power. That is where our word "dynamite" comes from. Think about it: dynamite has the power to change a hillside; Scripture has the power to change your heart!

That is the greatest news for all of us! We are all sinners. We all do bad things. We sin. **Nobody, but nobody is sinless.**

There is a lot about our behavior that sucks. We're greedy, we get angry, we...check below for the vice list of sin and badness. We are unrighteous, and our bad behavior proves God's righteousness! We are human. We sin. God is Good, He does not Sin. And He has power. The power for salvation. His righteousness can judge the world.

And boy is there a lot we do that deserves harsh judgement. That would be God's Wrath against our sin. Everybody and I mean everybody, is under the power of sin and deserves God's wrath. But we can be saved from wrath – because God's power is bigger and stronger and wins. Through Jesus Christ.

Does that mean you don't have to care about your behavior and you can go ahead and wallow in super bad sin because "God has your back?" That somehow, anything bad you do will become good because of who God is? **No No No.** God will do what is right because he is God, and you will be judged on the basis of His rightness and your sin.

Our problem is we have pawned off our salvation to satisfy our own devices and desires. All through human history, we keep trying to get away from God, but it is His rightness that has been **proven** through His Law and the stories of the prophets and is **attested** through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. All who believe!

We were kidnapped by sin, but God through Jesus Christ the redeemer, has rescued us from the slavery of sin. #YayGod

This mercy is FREE to everyone – so amazing! Jews, Gentiles...we are all loved and saved by the same God. Here is a Hebrew phrase for you: *Adoni Achad* (God is One). One God for all; no matter who we are, we are really **one people in Jesus Christ.**

VICE LIST OF SIN AND BADNESS

No one seeks God
No one shows kindness
Throats are opened graves
Tongues are used to deceive
Venom of vipers is on their lips
Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness

Feet are swift to shed blood
Ruin and misery are in their paths
The way of peace they do not know
There is no fear of God in their eyes

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CHAPTER 3

WORKS VS. FAITH

READ ROMANS CHAPTER 3: WAY TO SALVATION

WORDS TO PONDER:

Righteousness: A theological concept, primarily in Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. It is an attribute that implies that a person's actions are justified, and can have the connotation that the person has been "judged" or "reckoned" as leading a life that is pleasing to God. The quality or state of being just or right.

Power: Great or marked ability to do or act; strength; might; force. A specific capacity, faculty, or aptitude. The forces of evil will not prevail against the power of God.

- **Justification:** The act or an instance of justifying something: vindication. The act, process, or state of being justified by God
 - **Redemption:** The act of redeeming or something redeemed. The recovery, for a fee, of a pawned article. Rescue upon payment of a ransom. Salvation from sin.
 - **Atonement:** Making amends to restore a damaged relationship; expiation. Reconciliation; restoration of friendly relations. Concord. The reconciliation of God and mankind through the death of Jesus Christ.
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DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION:

1. What advantage was there in being a Jew?
 2. What comes through law?
 3. What came apart from law?
 4. Summarize in your own words the lessons we have learned about justification by faith compared to justification by deeds of the law.
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MEMORY VERSE:

Hear my prayer, O Lord, Listen to my supplications! Answer me in Your faithfulness, and in Your righteousness. And do not enter into judgment with Your servant, for in Your sight no man living is righteous or justified.

Psalm 143:1,2