

## “God is Faithful and He is Just”

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### Romans 3:1-8

These verses may be described as a parenthetical section (3:1-8) within a longer parenthetical section (1:18-3:20) describing the desperate condition of all people without Christ.

In 2:1-29 Paul was addressing the just wrath of God against not just the ungodly (1:18-32) but also against the Jews who believed in God but were religious hypocrites. With those Jews still in mind he reminds Jew and Gentile alike that the Jew had an advantage in having the “oracles of God,” (v1-2) the scripture (the Old Testament) – even though they abused it. He doesn’t say more about that here. He will deal with this more fully later in chapters 9-11.

But here he does answer some charges these unfaithful Jews might make. If God judges the unfaithful Jew, isn’t God unfaithful to his promise to save Israel? Paul says, wrong! (“By no means!” v3-4). Then someone argues, “If our sin shows the righteousness of God, God shouldn’t inflict judgment on us” (v5). Again Paul says, wrong! (“by no means!” v6) Then again someone adds to the argument, “If my sin ‘abounds to God’s glory,’ ‘why not do evil that good may come?’” (v6-7)

Paul’s response, though brief, is basically two-fold. First in v8 I think he says such a questioner deserve condemnation. Secondly he says such questions indicate a lack of understanding (willful or ignorant) of the character of God who is both faithful and just. In other words God is faithful to his promises of grace but he is also faithful to his promises of justice. We can’t separate God from himself.

While we believe that God will preserve his people to the end by enabling them to persevere, we must never presume upon his grace by thinking we can sin with impunity.

For a more thorough treatment of this text I suggest you refer to Douglas Moo’s NICNT commentary, [The Epistle to the Romans](#).