1. God’s goodness is what causes people to repent—not His wrath.

   “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?” (Rom. 2:4).

   A. God’s wrath may be able to get a person’s attention, but it can’t change their heart.

   B. Only His goodness and mercy can do that.

   “By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil” (Prov. 16:6).

2. This is what Paul dealt with in Romans 2.

   A. These Jews disdained these non-religious people because they weren’t keeping the rituals and holy standards of the Law.

   B. Paul told them, “Since you’ve been given a superior knowledge of God’s right standards through the Law, in addition to your intuitive knowledge, you’re doubly guilty! You now have a mental understanding of what is demanded of perfection and you know you’re not keeping it.”

   C. The point of this, of course, was to shut their mouths.

3. Paul summarized all of this in chapter 3, saying, “It doesn’t matter if you’re a Jew or a Gentile, if you’re religious or not—everybody’s guilty before God.”

   “As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God” (Rom. 3:10-11).

   A. In context, the point Paul was making is that neither the non-religious nor the religious are able to stand before God.

   B. The non-religious can’t claim total ignorance, because of their intuitive knowledge, and the religious person can’t claim acceptance and relationship with God, because they are falling short of the very things that they know both mentally and intuitively.

   “They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one” (Rom. 3:12).
4. The purpose of the Law is to shut your mouth—it takes away all of your excuses and comparisons and gives you a knowledge of sin and makes you guilty before God.

“The purpose of the Law is to shut your mouth—it takes away all of your excuses and comparisons and gives you a knowledge of sin and makes you guilty before God.” (Rom. 3:19).

A. The Law was never given for the purpose of justification.

“The purpose of the Law is to shut your mouth—it takes away all of your excuses and comparisons and gives you a knowledge of sin and makes you guilty before God.” (Rom. 3:19).

B. The Law wasn’t given to produce salvation or the forgiveness of sins.

5. You can become righteous, enjoy right standing with God—just as if you’d never sinned—be completely forgiven, and be made clean and pure in God’s sight without keeping the Law.

“The righteousness of God without the law is manifested” (Rom. 3:21).

A. All the Old Testament—the Law and the Prophets—pointed forward to this.

“The righteousness of God without the law is manifested” (Rom. 3:21).

B. The Law and the Prophets testify to the coming of the Righteous One—the Lord Jesus Christ—and righteousness given as a free gift through faith in His name.

6. The Law made sin come alive.

“What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me” (Rom. 7:7-11).

A. The Law strengthened sin in its battle against us.

“The strength of sin is the law” (1 Cor. 15:56).

B. If you’re under the Law, then sin has dominion over you.

“For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace” (Rom. 6:14).
C. Even if we kept ninety-nine out of a hundred commandments, that one we broke caused us to become guilty of everything.

“For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all” (James 2:10).

7. Either you’re perfect or you need a Savior.

A. The Law was given to bring us out of our deception that we could ever save ourselves.

B. The Law was given to condemn you—to kill you (2 Cor. 3:6 and 9).

8. There are two kinds of righteousness (Rom. 9:30-10:10).

“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference” (Rom. 3:21-22).

A. The righteousness that comes by living as best you can according to the Law may benefit you in your relationships with other people and in limiting Satan’s inroads into your life, but it’s totally ineffective in achieving right standing with God.

B. The righteousness that comes from God—a God-given righteousness—is perfect, holy, and infinitely greater than any righteousness we could ever obtain through our own efforts.

9. We were all sinners and we’ve all been “justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 3:23-24).

A. God’s standard isn’t me, somebody else, or some religious system—it’s Jesus.

B. For the rest of the chapter, Paul summarized by saying, in essence, “It doesn’t matter if you are better than somebody else; we all must come to God through the Lord Jesus Christ.”

“Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law” (Rom 3:28).
The Purpose of the Law
LESSON 3 – DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS

1. According to Romans 2:4, what leads us to repentance—God’s wrath or goodness?

2. According to Proverbs 16:6, how is iniquity purged?

3. What does the fear of the Lord cause us to do?

4. In Romans 3:10-12, who is righteous—on their own, apart from Christ—before God?

5. Who understands, seeks God, and does good?

6. Who has gone out of God’s way and become unprofitable?

7. According to Romans 3:19, who was the Law given to?

8. What does the Law stop?

9. Because of the Law, who becomes guilty before God?

10. According to Romans 3:20, how many people will be justified in God’s sight through the deeds of the Law?

11. What, then, does the Law bring?

12. According to Romans 3:21, is the righteousness of God now manifested with or without—apart from—the Law?

13. This righteousness was witnessed to, prophesied of, and foreshadowed by what?

14. According to Romans 7:7-11, what did the Law do?

15. In 1 Corinthians 15:56, what is the strength of sin?

16. According to Romans 6:14, the Law puts us under the dominion of what?

17. Instead of the Law, what should a born-again believer be under?

18. According to James 2:10, how guilty is someone who keeps the whole Law but offends at just one point?

19. What does 2 Corinthians 3:6 and 9 reveal about the Old Testament Law?

20. According to Romans 3:22, how does the righteousness of God come?
21. What are the two different kinds of righteousness revealed in Romans 9:30 and 10:10?

22. Read Romans 3:22-24. If there is no difference and all have sinned and come short of His glory, what must happen for all of us to be made righteous?

23. According to Romans 3:28, what, then, do we conclude?
“Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?” (Rom. 2:4)

“By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil” (Prov. 16:6).

“As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one” (Rom. 3:10-12).

“Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets” (Rom. 3:19-21).

“What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me” (Rom. 7:7-11).

“The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law” (1 Cor. 15:56).

“For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace” (Rom. 6:14).

“For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all” (James 2:10).

“Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory” (2 Cor. 3:6 and 9).
“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference” (Rom. 3:21-22).

“What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed” (Rom. 9:30-33).

“Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them” (Rom. 10:1-5).

“But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Rom. 10:6-10).

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 3:23-24).

“Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law” (Rom. 3:28).