

May 25, 2014

"No Matter Who We Are"

Romans 3:22-25a

We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are.

For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, with undeserved kindness, declares that we are righteous. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins. For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin.

A woman went to a doctor with both ears severely burned. The doctor said, "In all of my years of practice, I have never seen anything quite like this. How did you burn your ears?"

"Well," she said, "I was ironing and watching television. Suddenly, the telephone rang. I answered the iron instead of the phone and burned my ear."

"That's horrible!" the doctor said. "But how did you burn your other ear?"

"Can you believe it?" she said. "The idiot called back!"

Greg Laurie writes, "It seems to me that, like this woman, some people in the church today are preoccupied. In many ways, we have lost our focus and have missed what our priorities should be.

"I think we have forgotten what our real message is. Is our primary message that we are against homosexuality or that we are against abortion? No, our primary message should not be negative, but positive: It is the story of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

"My fear is that more people know what we as Christians are against than what we are for. Do they know what we believe? Do they know what we think about Jesus Christ?"

Paul having shown God as a holy judge (as we looked at last week), he now shows the God of love. In v22-25 we see both the guilt of all but also the grace for all.

All people are different. We are of different character, disposition, and we all have different personalities. Some are introverts, some extroverts; some optimists and some pessimists. Some like to joke and some are more serious. Some like things to be neat, and to some that's not very important. Some people are hard to get along with or are hard to warm up to, with others we have an easier time. Some are mean, even criminal and some are kind, and helpful. Some are intellectual, some not so much; some affluent, some poor, some middle class. Some are snobs, some down to earth.

Even early on in our children we can see traits of being tender, passionate, or rebellious. It's amazing how children from the same family, same household, same

parents, being brought the same way can be so different. We are all different. We even come in a variety of shapes and sizes, and attractiveness. All people are different, but there is one thing that we all have in common. There is one area in which we are all the same, where there is no difference...“No matter who we are.” Paul speaks of that one thing in this passage. And that one point in which there is no difference, no matter who we are, is that “everyone has sinned.”

We often want to blame others for what we do wrong, but we are without excuse:

Recently in traffic court, a man who received an expensive parking ticket testified that a uniformed policeman had given his okay for the man to park there.

The judge asked the man if he would recognize the officer if he ever saw him again, and the man replied that he would.

The judge then said, "Good. When you see the officer again, tell him he owes you \$157. Next."

No one is righteous or is always doing what is right. Everyone falls short of God's standard and so all must be made right by placing faith in Jesus Christ.

Romans 3:22a

We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ.

There is one way of salvation, and only one, and whatever other differences there may be about people, there is no difference about this matter; if we are saved at all, we must all be saved in one way.

Whether I am preaching in a church, in a ball room filled with dignitaries, or in a prison my message is the same. To whomever you may be speaking to at a family gathering, at a school, job, in church or in your home or neighborhood, there is no difference to the message of salvation you present.

Romans 3:22a

We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ.

Acts 16:31

Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved.

Mark 16:16 (Jesus Himself said)

Anyone who believes and is baptized will be saved. But anyone who refuses to believe will be condemned.

You don't have to be puzzled as to what message you are to present to whom. Whether the person is religious and irreligious, insider and outsider, uncivilized and

uncouth, barbarian or Scythian, slave or free, we have one message for all no matter who they are:

1 John 4:10

God ... loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.

John 3:16

So that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

Not only is there no difference in the message "no matter who we are," there is no difference as to a person's need for this message no matter who they are.

Romans 3:22

We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are.

There is no difference as to a person's need of this message of Christ. There are some, as we have already admitted, who have lives that have been moral and upright; yet they have as much need of Christ as those who immoral, unethical, and mean spirited.

The message of Christ comes to deal with sin; and if a person has but one sin, they cannot get rid of that one sin apart from the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. But there is no one that has merely one sin, we all have many sins.

We may not feel our sins are as bad as some things that others have done; our sins may not all be equally clear, some may have secret sins, but the secrecy of sin does not make it less sinful in the sight of God. There are no secrets from Him, He sees everything; and whether sin be open or hidden, whether it be less or more than that of others, it needs the atoning sacrifice of Christ to remove it.

Romans 3:23

For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard.

Everyone has a heart problem; we have a sinful nature and a tendency to sin. Some people may be better than others, but none are without sin... "No matter who we are."

No one can make their own heart clean. Today with plastic surgery and prosthetics it is possible to change parts of our body, yet it is clearly impossible to change our heart. Though each heart needs so vital a change there cannot be a change except that it be made new by Christ. It requires the work of the Spirit of God and it is just as possible for the honest man as the dishonest thief to have their heart made right in the sight of God; just as it is equally impossible for either of them to do it without the work of God's Spirit. In both cases it is beyond human power; and therefore the need of the work of the Spirit of God is the same.

All of us, at this moment, either stand condemned before God, or else we are wrapped in the glorious righteousness of Jesus Christ. The need is the same to every individual

in the world; those who are elevated to a higher place in our estimation do not stand high before God; the movie star, the pop star, even a President needs the grace of God to save them just as much as those who idolize them. There is no difference as to the need of salvation "no matter who we are."

This is equally true of the method of salvation. The way in which a man or woman is saved is the same no matter who we are. They may not feel the same thing or have the same experience, yet there is one road and that road is narrow that leads to eternal life. The plan of salvation is this: admit you have sinned and can't earn, but need God's forgiveness and righteousness, or else be lost without the hope of heaven. Believe that God has put His dear Son Jesus in your place as your substitute to take your sin and the punishment you deserve. You must believe He was sacrificed and died for you and was raised from the dead to forgive your sins and give you eternal life. Then you must ask Jesus to be your Savior and you will be saved and the Spirit of Jesus will come to live in you.

Christ uncrowned himself to crown us, and put off his robes to put on our rags, and came down from heaven to keep us out of hell. He fasted forty days that he might feast us to all eternity; he came from heaven to earth that he might send us from earth to heaven. - W. Dyer

2 Corinthians 5:21

For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

There has never been a person who has been sincere about asking Jesus to be their Savior, to forgive their sin, to give them eternal life, to make them right with God, to justify them, and apply the righteousness of Christ to their account; there has never been anyone who was sincere about this that found it to fail and no one ever will, no matter who we are.

The God of love reaches out with open arms to sinful people in the hope that they will come to Him and be saved.

Don't fool yourself, you are not a Christian by being born to Christian parents just as you are not a vegetarian because your parents are, you must decide if you want to be a vegetarian. Coming to church doesn't make you a Christian just as stopping into a mosque this afternoon would not make you a Muslim, or stopping into a MacDonald's will make you a hamburger.

John 3:3

Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, unless you are born again (or born from above), you cannot see the Kingdom of God."

All must put aside their pride and bow before Christ for spiritual birth.

Still others may think they are too great a sinner, their heart is too wicked, their life beyond remedy to ever be accepted by Christ. Or perhaps your low self esteem makes you think you would never be accepted by Christ just as you feel unacceptable by others. Maybe you think you're different from everyone else. Maybe it's your age, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks" they say, well, you're not a dog! What has been learned can be unlearned, and with God's grace and power you can learn new things in their place.

There may be other reasons you think you can't come to Christ or reasons you don't witness to certain people about Christ. Hasn't it already been made clear, hasn't Paul made it clear?

Romans 3:22

We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are.

I rejoice that He is the Savior of all, no matter who we are. All fall short of the God's standard. God tells us to keep His law, but we don't, we can't keep it perfectly. God tells us to be like Him as revealed in His Son, Jesus but we fall short of that too. All have fallen through sin, but out of them who ever believes in Jesus Christ shall have eternal life. There is one salvation; there is one remedy, and only one, for the disease of sin, and all who apply to the great Physician are healed forever, no matter who we are. I love to see all people, all of the human race reunited in Christ.

I rejoice that there is one message for all people, no matter who we are. Imagine if we had to say, "oh you are a #1 person, you need message #1, and you are a #2 person you need message #2, or you are a #13 person, you need message #13." There is one message, all have sinned but are made right by placing faith in Jesus Christ.

Today many saviors are considered, people even try to be their own savior. Isn't it great mercy that there is one Savior, one message, one name by which all can be saved, no matter who we are?

Acts 4:12

There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.

Romans 3:22a

We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ... no matter who we are.

Romans 4:4-8, 24-25

When people work, their wages are not a gift, but something they have earned. But people are counted as righteous, not because of their work, but because of their faith in God who forgives sinners. David also spoke of this when he described the happiness of those who are declared righteous without working for it:

"Oh, what joy for those
whose disobedience is forgiven,
whose sins are put out of sight.

Yes, what joy for those
whose record the LORD has cleared of sin."

God ...count us as righteous if we believe in him, the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. He was handed over to die because of our sins, and he was raised to life to make us right with God.

We are all different but we have this in common, we can't be right with God by keeping His law, by following rules, or a standard, we all sin, we all fall short of God's standard. But we can be made right by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are.