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How to Be in the Right

CAPITOL BIBLE STUDY

monthly (interim) schedule

*** 1st Tuesday of the month ***

TUESDAY, 7 APRIL 2015

12 NOON in 123 CAP

Capitol Commission (Interim) Bible Studies are held the *first* Tuesday of each month at 12 Noon. The *monthly* Bible study is nonpartisan and non-denominational. We are currently studying the book of Romans, chapter-by-chapter, and verse-by-verse.

I pray that this study will be edifying to you. I am here to serve you and to be a resource for prayer and counsel. Please accept my study in the Word of God, as an evidence of my desire to be serving you. – Dr. Ron J. Bigalke, Georgia State Minister, Capitol Commission

Capitol Commission (Interim) Bible Study

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Tuesday, 7 April 2015

Romans 3 – “How to Be in the Right”

Forbes magazine is the oldest business periodical in America; it is a primary source for reliable business news and financial information. Founded in 1917 by Scottish immigrant B. C. Forbes, the magazine has consistently been family owned and operated throughout its publication history. The success of *Forbes* magazine has earned tremendous respect for the organization.

One reason that *Forbes* is respected is that every set of editorials in the magazine includes a phrase from Proverbs: “with all thy getting, get understanding” (4:7, KJV). The final page of each magazine issue provides a collection of quotations from celebrated agitators and innovators with “thoughts on the business of life.” A different text from the Bible – selected by *Forbes* readers – is also included prominently on that concluding page.

The quotations provided on the final page of *Forbes* have been collected in a nearly thousand-page volume entitled, *The Forbes Book of Business Quotations*. The topics addressed are exhaustive (from “ability” to “zeal”), and 367 of the 368 topics provide a trove of enlightening and useful witticisms from a variety of human luminaries. The one topic that does not provide words from a

human person is “righteousness.” The editors simple provided eight passages of Scripture under the “righteousness” entry: Psalms 15:1-2; 92:12-13; Proverbs 16:8-9; 29:2; Isaiah 3:10-11; Jeremiah 22:13; Hosea 10:12; and, 2 Timothy 4:7-8. Righteousness is the only topic exemplified by Scripture verses, as if the editors agreed with the words of Romans 3:10, “THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE.”

Men and women have expertise in many aspects of business and life, yet righteousness is not one of those characteristics. Righteousness is the business of God. Job asked, “But how can a man be in the right before God?” (9:2). The only person who can answer that query is God himself, which He has done in the Bible, and certainly in Romans 3.

BEING IN THE WRONG

(*Rom 3:1-20*) Romans 3 begins with three questions. The first is whether there is any advantage being a Jew (i.e. a religious person). The answer is, “yes,” there are many benefits. Most importantly is the reality that the Jews “were entrusted with the oracles of God” (vv. 1-2). God entrusted the Jewish people with his “very words.”

The second question concerns the reasons why the Jews did not respond positively to the Word of God. Could it be possible that their unbelief will nullify God’s faithfulness to his promises? Another benefit of being a Jew is that God’s Law reveals his faithful love, even in the midst of human unfaithfulness (vv. 3-4). Unbelief never alters God’s Word. The Bible remains true and God remains faithful, in spite of human unfaithfulness. God remains true “though every man be *found* a liar.”

Humanity’s unfaithfulness further magnifies the faithfulness of God. Indeed, the true purpose of God’s Law was to make fallen humanity aware of our sinfulness, “so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God” (v. 20). Unable to say anything in defense, we are silenced before God.

**FAUSTUS BELIEVED THE HUMAN PLIGHT TO BE HOPELESS;
HOWEVER, HE SHOULD HAVE CONTINUED TO READ THE HOLY
BIBLE TO LEARN OTHERWISE.**

The third question concerns the character of God. Would not God be unrighteous to inflict punishment upon fallen humanity, especially if unrighteousness further magnifies the faithfulness of God (as was stated in the previous verses)? The answer is that God must even punish religious persons for their sins, or He would not be able to righteously judge the world. He would be functioning in such a manner that evil is practiced so that good may come, which would be contrary to his holy nature (vv. 5-8).



Capitol Commission (Interim) Bible Study

1st Tuesdays (monthly) @ 12 Noon - 12:45 pm, 123 CAP
lunch provided from sponsorship by Classical Conversations (SE Georgia)



Enhancing Trust

The conclusion is that all humanity – those who approve of sinful living (the pagan, 1:18-32), those who do not approve of sinful living (the moral, 2:1-16), and the religious person (2:17—3:8) – “are all under sin.” All people, either with *or* without the Law (whether Jews or Gentiles) are “accountable to God.” Several Old Testament allusions and quotations are provided to prove the assertion (vv. 10-18): all humanity is guilty for failing to seek, reverence, or obey God.

Doctor Faustus (1604) is a classical drama by Christopher Marlowe, based upon the German tragedy Faust, in which a man sells his soul to the devil in exchange for knowledge, pleasure, and power. Faustus studied divinity (theology) prior to selling his soul, and made his decision based upon the biblical assertion that all have sinned and the wages of that sin is death. Faustus concluded, “Why then belike we must sin, and so consequently die. Ay, we must die an everlasting death” (I.44-46). Faustus believed the human plight to be hopeless; however, he should have continued to read the Holy Bible to learn otherwise.

... GOOD NEWS IS THE “RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST FOR ALL THOSE WHO BELIEVE...”

Indeed, “the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 6:23). If the Lord God had not demonstrated his love toward sinners (cf. 5:8), then Faustus was certainly accurate that the human plight was hopeless because it is impossible for any one of us to attain God’s favor on our own, or to satisfy his just and righteous standards. However, the good news is the “righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe” (3:22).

BEING IN THE RIGHT

(Rom 3:21-31) Romans 3:21 affirms that a righteousness of God, without the Law, has been manifested. The thought is related to the statement in verses 19-20 that the Law is unable to justify in the sight of God. Whereas righteousness through the Law is impossible, righteousness without the Law is possible.

Having established the absolute necessity for the gospel of grace, the next section of Romans explains the essential content of that gospel. Divine righteousness is revealed by “the wrath of God” against sin (1:18—3:20), and is also manifested secondly in God’s loving justification “through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe” (3:21—7:6).

Justification is a legal (forensic) term with regard to acquittal; it refers to God’s action whereby He makes human beings, who are sinners and worthy of condemnation, to be made acceptable before Himself, the one who is holy and righteous. God credits those who believe with his righteousness for the purpose of saving us from the penalty of death. The Son of God died for sinners; therefore, God’s gift is salvation from the wages of sin. Eternal life must be a gift

because it can never be earned by any merit of our own, since we are all sinners (3:23, 27-28).

The gift of redemption can only be experienced through faith (vv. 22, 24). The reason is similar to how a human judge can issue a decree to pardon, and how the divine Judge must similarly pardon sinners from our guilty status to that of being innocent, as the result of Jesus dying vicariously for the sin of those whose guilt was imputed to Him, and whose punishment was transferred to Him.

The work that Christ accomplished is often referenced as a substitutionary atonement. He took the sinner’s place and shed his own blood in their place (vv. 3:25-26). By dying vicariously as the sinner’s Substitute and taking the righteous punishment due those He came to save — whose guilt was imputed to Him — the Lord Jesus Christ substitutionally bore the punishment of sinners, and thus those who believe receive the righteousness of Christ (Isa 53:6; 2 Cor 5:21). From the divine vantage point, the purpose of Christ’s death was to demonstrate the righteousness of God.

ETERNAL LIFE MUST BE A GIFT BECAUSE IT CAN NEVER BE EARNED BY ANY MERIT OF OUR OWN...

Two religious groups exist today: those who emphasize behaving and those who prioritize believing. The biblical emphasis is upon believing since the manner in which we believe will affect the way we behave. We can never expect anyone to behave as God commands, unless they first believe in the Author of the Scripture.

Do you believe? If not, you are accountable to pay the “wages of sin.” Why do something so foolish when Romans 10:13 assures us “for ‘WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED’”? All who believe are “justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus” (Rom 3:24).

Thank you for allowing Capitol Commission the honor to provide Bible studies to you. If you have any questions, please talk with us, or contact by email or phone.

About Capitol Commission

Capitol Commission state ministers are pastors-missionaries who teach weekly verse-by-verse Bible studies for legislators, lobbyists, and staff members. The Bible studies are hand-distributed to each legislative office, emailed, and made available throughout the Capitol community. Capitol Commission is a ministry of the church seeking to proclaim the gospel message, and to help believers mature through verse-by-verse Bible teaching. In the Bible, we see God’s love for the world, especially those who have been placed in authority. This is the foundation for our ministry to you.

The church is instructed to submit and to honor government leaders (Rom 13:1-7), and to pray for their eternal salvation (1 Tim 2:1-4). The desire of Capitol Commission is to witness God transform the hearts and lives of elected officials, lobbyists, and staff members. We apply this mandate to four primary areas of discipleship: (1) *evangelize* those who have not known saving faith in Jesus Christ; (2) *establish* those who desire to grow in their faith and knowledge of Scripture; (3) *equip* those called to spiritual leadership; and, (4) *encourage* churches to participate with us in ministry.

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NEXT CAPITOL COMMISSION (INTERIM) BIBLE STUDY:
Tuesday, 5th of May @ 12 Noon in 123 CAP
(always the 1st Tuesday of each month, during interim)