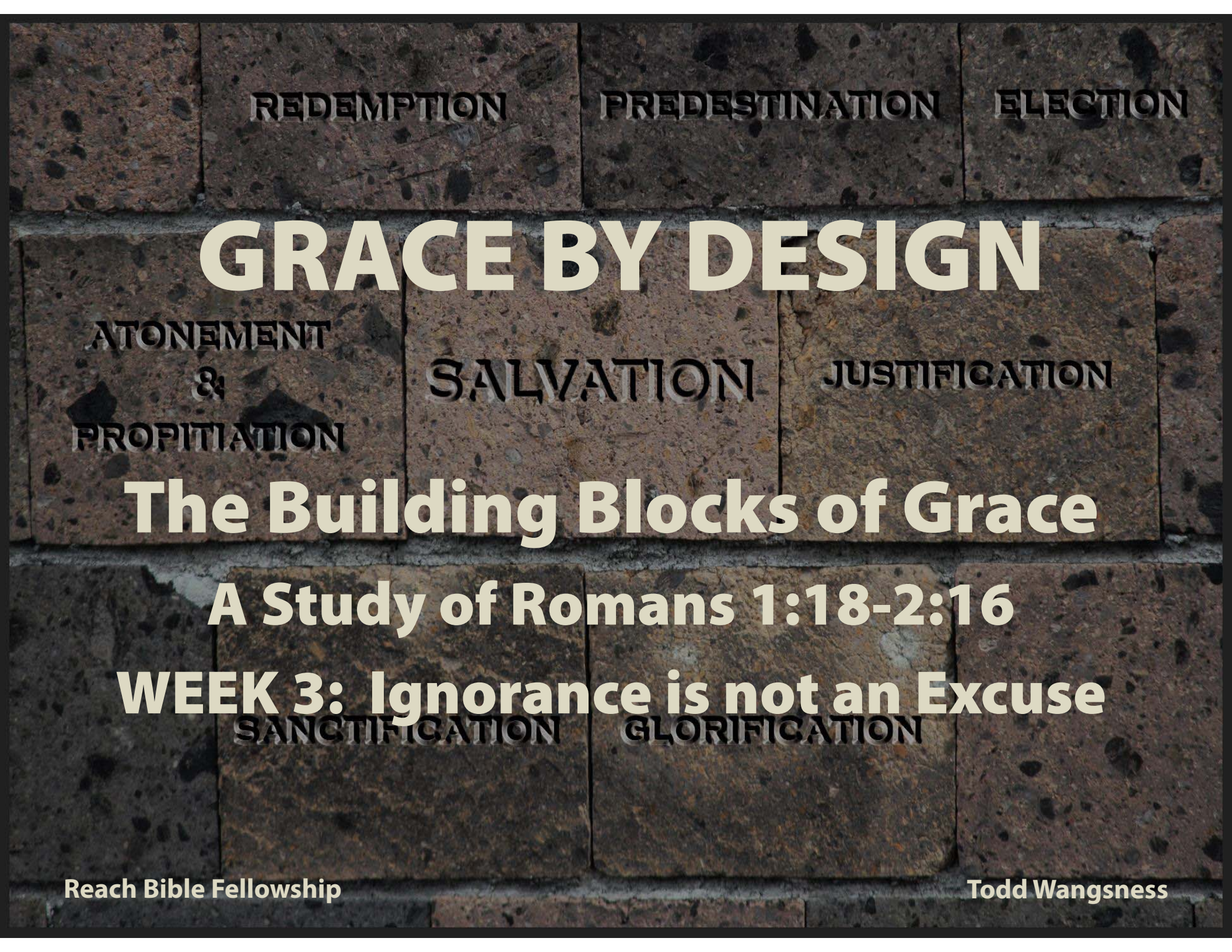


GRACE BY DESIGN

The Building Blocks of Grace

A Study of Romans 1:18-2:16

WEEK 3: Ignorance is not an Excuse

Reach Bible Fellowship

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Grace By Design: Study Outline

Week 1:	Romans	Overview of Grace and Salvation
Week 2:	Rom 1:1 – 1:17	Introduction to Romans
Week 3:	Rom 1:18 – 2:16	Justification – Ignorance is not an Excuse
Week 4:	Rom 2:17 – 3:20	Justification – Knowledge isn't Good Enough
Week 5:	Rom. 3:21 – 3:24	Justification – Righteousness of God Revealed 1
Week 6:	Rom. 3:25 – 3:31	Justification – Righteousness of God Revealed 2
Week 7:	Rom. 4:1 – 4:25	Justification – Faith vs the Law
Week 8:	Rom. 5:1 – 5:11	Sanctification – Peace with God 1
Week 9:	Rom. 5:12 – 5:21	Sanctification – Peace with God 2
Week 10:	Rom. 6:1 – 6:14	Sanctification – The Christian's Struggle with Sin 1
Week 11:	Rom. 6:15 – 6:23	Sanctification – The Christian's Struggle with Sin 2
Week 12:	Rom. 7:1 – 7:25	Sanctification – The Law Can't Save (But the Spirit Can!)
Week 13:	Rom. 8:1 – 8:17	Sanctification – Life in the Spirit
Week 14:	Rom. 8:18 – 8:30	Glorification – From Suffering to Glory
Week 15:	Rom. 8:31 – 8:39	Glorification – God's Everlasting Love
Week 16:	Rom. 9:1 – 9:33	Israel's Rejection and God's Purpose
Week 17:	Rom. 10:1 – 10:13	Israel and the Mystery of the Church 1
Week 18:	Rom. 10:14 – 10:21	Israel and the Mystery of the Church 2
Week 19:	Rom. 11:1 – 11:36	The Salvation of the Jewish people
Week 20:	Rom. 12:1 – 12:2	Living the Transformed Life
Week 21:	Rom. 12:3– 12:8	Gifts of the Spirit
Week 22:	Rom. 12:9– 12:21	The Christian Walk
Week 23:	Rom. 13:1 – 13:14	Love Fulfills the Law
Week 24:	Rom. 14:1 – 14:21	Not Judging the Weak in Faith
Week 25:	Rom. 15:1 – 15:25	Bearing One Another's Burdens
Week 26:	Rom. 16:1 – 16:25	Conclusion and closing remarks

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Romans 1

:18-19 ***For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against ALL ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. 19 because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them.***

- **The Gospel message is two-fold:**
  - **It teaches about the Law (God's perfect standard of righteousness) and our inability to live to that standard.**
    - ***Gal 3:24-25 Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.***
    - **We'll get into this much more in Rom 6-7**
  - **And it teaches that there is One who *is* perfect and willingly died for us to have His righteousness imputed to us through "substitutionary atonement". (Ref 2 Cor 5:21)**

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- **Paul introduces the concept of *guilt* in Rom 1:18 – 3:20**
- **Then he discusses *substitution* beginning in Rom 3:21 – 4:25**
- **Christianity is the only religion that teaches we need a Savior**
  - **All others teach that you need a guide or some other kind of help to teach you how to live.**
  - **Or that we can save ourselves by being "good" people and doing "good" things.**
  - **God says our "hearts are desperately wicked!"**
    - ***Jer 17:9 "The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?"***
    - ***Rom 3:10-12 As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; 11 There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. 12 They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one."***

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Romans 1

:20-21 ***For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, 21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.***

- **Those "without the Law" (people that don't know God's word) are without excuse and are under the wrath of God**
- **God has revealed two aspects of Himself to every man who has ever lived (those *with the Law* and those *without the Law*)**
  1. **The fact of God's existence through <u>evidence of creation</u>**
  2. **An innate knowledge of right and wrong, good and evil, that is <u>ingrained in every man's conscience</u>**

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The fact of God's existence through evidence of creation…

- **Mankind would rather believe he is a result of a random event of evolution with nothing other than a biological, chemical existence.**
- **Instead of acknowledging that a Creator created us in His image with awesome potential, but <u>accountability</u> to our Creator.**
- ***Psa 19:1-3 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. <u>There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard</u>.***
- ***Psa 139:14 I will praise You, for <u>I am fearfully and wonderfully made</u>; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well.***

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Romans 1

:22-25 ***Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. 24 Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, 25 who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature (creation) rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.***

- **We still have idols – even in our "enlightened" age**
- **We worship images and idols**
  - **Money, fame, pornography, alcohol, drugs, food, etc.**
  - **Any appetite of man can (and easily does) become an idol to us**
    - **It is so easy for us to worship the "creation" instead of the Creator**
  - ***Jer 16:19-20 The Gentiles shall come to You From the ends of the earth and say, "Surely our fathers have inherited lies, worthlessness and unprofitable things." 20 Will a man make gods for himself, Which are not gods?***
  - **We make God in our image, <u>without</u> accountability**
  - **We become TOTAL FOOLS when we abandon God and place ourselves on the throne**

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Romans 1

:26-27 ***For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. 27 Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.***

- ***1 Cor 6:18-20 Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body. 19 Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20 you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.***
- **God has put in place natural consequences for violating His laws about sexual conduct**
- **We can call these curses, but – in reality – they are natural, God-given laws that exact a price when broken**

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- All sin incurs the wrath of God, and results in eternal separation from God
- However, some sins are more harmful than others
  - Sexual sins – in particular – sear our conscience more grievously
    - or have the potential to adversely affect more lives (including innocents)
  - The bible expressly states that homosexuality is particularly harmful to us.
  - *"but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body"*
- *Prov 6:27-29 Can a man take fire to his bosom, And his clothes not be burned? 28 Can one walk on hot coals, And his feet not be seared? 29 So is he who goes in to his neighbor's wife; whoever touches her shall not be innocent.*
- Cause and Effect
  - We suffer the effects of an inexorable spiritual Law when committing sexual sins
- Should we harshly "judge" those who are engaged in sexual (or other) sins?
  - *Gal 6:1 Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.*
  - We should "hate the sin" but "love the sinner"!
    - Keep in mind that – when you point a finger at someone – you have three fingers pointing back at yourself!

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Romans 1

:28-31 ***And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, 30 backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31 undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful;***

:32 ***who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.***

- **We see a 'cause' and 'effect' scenario here**
  - **If we – by our thoughts and actions – show we don't wish to be mindful of God, then He removes Himself from us and we are 'given over' to a debased mind**
  - **Debased minds then descend into all manner of evil activities and thoughts**
  - **We see this at a societal level also**
    - **Degradation in the arts**
    - **Violence**
    - **Lack of empathy and compassion**

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"It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses, to remember that the dullest most uninteresting person you can talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship, or else a horror and a corruption such as you now meet, if at all, only in a nightmare.

All day long we are, in some degree helping each other to one or the other of these destinations. It is in the light of these overwhelming possibilities, it is with the awe and the circumspection proper to them, that we should conduct all of our dealings with one another, all friendships, all loves, all play, all politics.

There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations - these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit - immortal horrors or everlasting splendors."

-- C. S. Lewis "The Weight of Glory"

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Romans 2

:1-4 ***Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things. 2 But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things. 3 And do you think this, O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God? 4 Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?***

- **Does Rom 2:1 contradict John 7:24 and Mat 7:1-2?**
  - **While these verses touch on the concept of judging others, John 7:24 encourages "right judgment" - meaning evaluating situations with discernment and fairness, while Romans 2:1 highlights the hypocrisy of judging others when you are guilty of the same sins, essentially saying that by judging others, you condemn yourself**
  - **The key difference is that John 7:24 allows for a form of righteous judgment, while Romans 2:1 warns against self-righteous judgment based on hypocrisy**

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Romans 2

:5-11 ***But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, 6 who "will render to each one according to his deeds": 7 eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; 8 but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness— indignation and wrath, 9 tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek; 10 but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 11 For there is no partiality with God.***

- **Our own thoughts and actions will stand in witness against us when we stand before our Maker**
- **We who have knowledge of God and His Word are under additional indictment because of the revelation that has been given to us**
- **We have a "handwriting of requirements" against us unless we have Jesus nail it to the cross by accepting Him as our Savior (Ref Col 2:14)**

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Romans 2

:12-16 ***For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law 13 (for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified; 14 for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, 15 who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them) 16 in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.***

- **The fact of God's existence through our conscience…**
  - ***Jam 4:17 Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.***
  - ***Jam 2:10 For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.***
  - **If anyone sins against the Law of God or violates their own conscience, they have transgressed the Law of God and are GUILTY and fall under the wrath of God.**

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- **Consequently, those *"without the Law"* and those *"with the Law"* are GUILTY before God and are equally deserving of the righteous wrath of God.**
  - ***Rom 3:19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.***
  - ***Rom 3:20 Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.***
  - ***Rom 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God***
  - ***Rom 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.***
- **God's isn't merely 'displeased' with sinners**
  - **His Righteousness demands that ALL sin be punished by death!**
  - **We are under His wrath until/unless we accept His free gift of salvation!**

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- **God promised mercy and forgiveness even to Old Testament saints**
- ***Isa 55:6-7 "Seek the Lord while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near. 7 Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the Lord, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon."***
- ***"abundantly" (Heb 'raba'): Without reservation, beyond reasonable expectation, to increase greatly or exceedingly***

- **There is only one sin God cannot forgive**
  - **He cannot forgive us if we refuse His offer of Salvation**
  - **That IS the Unforgivable Sin**
  - **We effectively "trample the Son of God underfoot" (Ref Heb 10:26-31)**

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BUT…that's not the end of the story!

- ***2 Pet 1:3-4 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.***

- **The thief on the cross led a profligate life and even joined the other criminal hanging on the other cross in reviling Jesus.**
  - ***Luk 23:39-43 Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us." 40 But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? 41 And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong." 42 Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom." 43 And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."***
  - **All he had to do was ask for forgiveness from Jesus!**

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Questions to ponder…

- **What significance does the torn veil in the temple at Christ's crucifixion have for us as New Testament believers? Ref Mat 27:51**
- **Does God love us more when we go to church regularly or give a large offering (or attend a mid-week bible study)?**
- **When we go down to the altar to give ourselves to the Lord, do we now have a 'free-pass' to enter into heaven?**
  - **Are there other requirements we have to meet?**
  - **If so, does that mean "works" are required of us?**
    - **Ref Mat 7:21, Gal 6:7 and 2 Cor 13:5**
- **So, are we supposed to "white-knuckle" it after we're saved in our fight against temptation and sin?**
  - **Isn't that a form of works?**