

SMALL GROUP LESSON

WHAT ADVANTAGE?

ROMANS 3:1-20 AND PSALM 51:1-12

JANUARY 15, 2017

Throughout the first two chapters in the book of Romans, Paul has stated over and over again that everyone is a sinner; everyone has turned away from God. Even the Jews, God's chosen people have chosen to disobey Him. That persistent theme is also expressed in chapter three, and it raises a number of questions that are addressed in the first twenty verses. They will be the subject of this week's lesson. So take some time to study this important passage of Scripture, along Psalm 51:1-12 which describes David's confession of sinfulness. Our pastor's sermon on this passage of Scripture would also be a great resource to which you can turn for answers to the four questions listed below. That should prepare you for an interesting discussion as you meet with your fellow group members this week.

1. Do people who are raised in a Jewish or in our case a Christian environment, who have gone through the membership requirements—circumcision for Jews and baptism for Christians—have any advantage over those who have not? If we are all sinners subject to God's judgment and condemnation, why bother? Read verses 1-2.
2. And what about God's character? Is He a just and trustworthy God who keeps His promises, even when we do not? Does His judgment of our sins somehow enhance His righteousness and His goodness? Does His truthfulness in dealing with our sins bring Him additional glory because He is absolutely impartial and just? If so, perhaps we should be praised instead of punished because our sinfulness has proven to be beneficial to His reputation? Read verses 3-8.
3. Take a look at verses 9-18. These verses are a collection of quotes from the Old Testament. What do they say about mankind's sinfulness with regards to both Jews and Gentiles or in our case Christians and non-Christians?
4. What purpose does the Law of God fulfill? Why was it given to us? Can it ever be the means by which we are saved? Read verses 19-20.