

NO DIFFERENCE

"For there is no difference: 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." Romans 3:22-24.

Things mundane are different. Politically, economically, scientifically, educationally, socially, even religiously, man has changed everything. But spiritually, we are still on the same level, in exactly the same place men were at the time Paul wrote. There are all sorts of mental distinctions, of social strata, of educational qualifications, of monetary differentiations, of political categories, of national barriers, but spiritually we are all alike. There is no difference in:--

I. There Is No Difference In Men's Need of Salvation.

All are alike in their need of salvation, no matter how else they may differ. Cultured man and ignorant man, rich man and poor man, moral man and immoral man, respectable man and reprobate, but all alike need salvation; for God says, "For there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." All are not equally bad, but all are guilty and have come short of the glory of God.

Sin is a fact of human life, and of human life alone. The lower animals do not sin, but all men sin. Man is the only earthly creature who suffers remorse for what he has done. He is haunted by something which he has or has not done. There are vast differences between men, but a common feature of all is the sense that there is a gap between what we are and what we ought to be. The best as well as the worst are conscious of this gap, or this contrast between "ought" and "is".

We were all born in sin. Philosophize, analyze, psychologize about it all you please, but God's Word still declares it. We have all sinned in practice. "There is none righteous, no, not one." "There is no man that sinneth not." "If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us." "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Your own hearts will tell you the truth of this. Your experiences and observations will verify these truths. Surely no intelligent, honest-hearted person would dare insist upon being sinlessly perfect.

"All have sinned." From the first man who breathed in Eden to the last man who will look on the sun, we are one family, under the rule and protection of one Providence, borne down by the same burden and looking for the same "better land." We are all conscious of the same tendency to do wrong. All are sinners. We have yielded ourselves to voluntary sinfulness. There are degrees of wickedness and guilt, but all have come short of the standard.

There is also no difference in the fact that we have all come short of the glory of God. The glory of God in this connection surely means the standards of holy, righteous living, presented as our rule of conduct, as God's blueprint for our lives, in the life, the character, the ministry, and the work of Jesus Christ. There are many people who take comfort in their own comparative goodness as they measure themselves by the evil lives of out-and-out sinners or even by the unclean lives of back-slidden church members. But this is not the standard, the measurement, or the yardstick. When we stand before God at the judgment-bar, the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ will be the criterion of justice. Which one of us has lived as Christ lived? Loved as He loved? Obeyed God as He obeyed

Him? Look away from yourself and others to Christ. All come short of that goal. Place life by Christ and be abashed, ashamed, etc.

There is no difference in the punishment for sin. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," is the universal declaration of God. What a leveler that word is. "The wages of sin is death."

You are a sinner. You have not measured up to the matchless, perfect, glorious life of the Son of God. You may be as good as the best in this town. Your life may be cleaner than any other life, but have you accepted Christ as your Saviour?

The words of our text are God's description of status of all unsaved people, and by unsaved we mean what the Bible means--those who have not received Christ as their Saviour from the guilt, power and consequences of sin. What is meant by this declaration?--

II. There Is No Difference In The Way Of Salvation.

This way is the same as all. The way to be saved is to "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ". The only way that any can be saved is to take the one way to life, which is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." Believing on the Lord Jesus Christ is the simple way, the universal way, and the only way of salvation. It is the way of God, the way of the Bible, and the only way for man.

The Lord Jesus Christ has provided salvation for all who will believe on Him. There is a balm in Gilead, and there is pardon on Calvary, for all who will avail themselves of the matchless grace of God. The blood of Christ will cleanse from all sin, for all time and eternity, for all those who come unto God by Him. His precious blood has never lost its power. Its crimson tide has never abated its force or lost its fulness. It's just as efficient today as it was when it flowed from Immanuel's veins.

III. There Is No Difference In His Willingness To Save All Who Come Unto Him.

1. God wants all men to be saved.

"As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live."

"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." II Peter 3:9.

There is the very heart of God speaking to our hearts.

God wants you to be saved, saved from sin, Satan, hell; saved for Christ, and to heaven.

If we die in our sins and are eternally lost it is because we have abused the love of God, refused the mercy of God, and rejected the offer of God.

2. Jesus Christ died for all of us.

"He was wounded for our transgressions...bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. All

we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way, etc." "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. Jesus bore the sins of all of us on the tree. His death is sufficient for all, but efficient to only those who believe on Him. Any soul may be washed clean in the blood. That is greatest news, the best news, and the most inspiring news in the world.

3. The Holy Spirit invites us all to come to Him and accept that salvation. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God for He will abundantly pardon." "And the Spirit and the bride say Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." How could God have made that invitation any simpler, broader, more inclusive, or more inviting? Hear the call of the Spirit as He pleads with you to accept the free bounty of God's love, the shed blood of God's Son. Turn your backs on Satan and sin and your faces toward the Saviour and salvation. Come to Christ now.

Whosoever will may come and take of the water of life freely. He is willing to save as well as able to save. The vilest sinner and the respectable sinner, the secret sinner and the open sinner, the learned sinner and the ignorant sinner, all may come and are urged to come and take of the water of life freely. If you want to have your sins forgiven, God is willing to forgive you if you are willing to receive His Son as Saviour. If you want to go to heaven, God is willing to take you there, provided you believe on Christ as the One who loved you and gave Himself for you.

Why does God emphasize the fact that there is no difference in men's need of salvation, or in the way of salvation, or in His willingness to save all who receive His Son?

1. Because it humbles human pride.
2. In order to encourage those who desire salvation to come to Christ to obtain it.
3. For the welfare of those of us who are saved, lest we imagine that we were saved because of some special goodness that God saw in us.
4. In order that those of us who preach the Gospel and teach it may have no hesitancy in using the same Gospel for all kinds and conditions of men. There is only one way of salvation, for rich or poor, cultured or uncultured. All people need that Gospel. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth.