

“Answer A Fool”
Romans 3:5-8

Introduction:

1. **IE:** One Of The Things I’ve Enjoyed Since Moving Out Of The City - Is The Darkness Of The Skies At Night! And - Last Week - There Were A Few Nights When The Skies Were Clear & Beautiful Here In Central Indiana! And - The Further You Get Away From The Lights Made By Man - The Lights Made By God Are Even More Vibrant! And Why Is That? Because - “The Darker The Night - The Brighter The Light” - Of The Moon & The Stars In The Sky!
2. Well - This Was The Truth:
 - That Paul Was Getting At:
 - In The Last Verses We Looked At:
 - In The Book Of Romans!
 - So - Let’s Turn Back To Romans 3 Together - Where:
 - In 3:4 - The Apostle Paul:
 - Made This Declaration:
 - About The Nature & Character Of God:
 - “Let God be true, but every man a liar!”
3. You See - To Paul:
 - God & His Nature - Was Like:
 - The Glory Of The Brightest Star:
 - In The Sky!
 - And - The Darker The Sky - If It Were Made Dark By The Sins & Unfaithfulness Of Mankind:
 - It Made The Righteousness & Faithfulness Of God Stand Out All The Brighter!
4. And - By Making This Point:
 - He Was Trying To Convince:
 - His Fellow Jews:
 - Of Their Own Unrighteousness:
 - And Their Need Of The Gospel! Their Need Of Christ!
 - You See - Paul Knew His People:
 - All Too Well!
 - After All - **He** Believed What **They** Believed:
 - Before Jesus Met Him On The Road To Damascus!
 - In Galatians 1:14 - Paul Explained That He Had:
 - “Profited in the Jews’ religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers!”
5. And So - In The Verses We Come To This Morning:
 - Paul Anticipates Some Questions:
 - And Some Objections:
 - That His Jewish Brethren Might Have:
 - About God & His Glory!
 - In Fact - They Might Have Been Questions & Objections **He** Had:
 - When He Was Fighting Against The Lord & His Church!
 - Let’s Look At Those Questions Together:
 - 3:5-8 - “But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man) / God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world? / For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner? / And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just!”
6. Now - It Is Normal & Natural:
 - To Have Questions:
 - For God - And:
 - About God!
 - But - The Problem With The Two Questions:
 - We Find Here:
 - Is That They Were **Not** Asked:
 - Out Of A **Sincere** Heart:

- But - With A *Skeptical* Heart!
- And Paul Knew This & Answered Them Accordingly!

7. Because - All Too Often:
 - When A Person Is Confronted:
 - With The Truths - That We've Looked At In Romans 2-3:
 - About The Nature Of God:
 - And His Righteousness:
 - As Well As:
 - The Nature Of Man:
 - And His Own Un-Righteousness!
 - That Person Turns Into:
 - A "*Devil's Advocate*" - In The Truest Sense:
 - Of That Term!
 - And - Instead Of Asking Questions:
 - From A *Sincere* Heart!
 - They Start Asking Questions:
 - From A *Skeptical* Heart!
 - IE: Isn't This What Jesus Himself Faced:
 - When All Of His Enemies Joined Together To Question Him & "Entangle" Him With His Own Words? (Matthew 22:15-46)
 - The Pharisees / The Saducees - All Asked Questions - Not To Be Taught By Jesus, But To "Tempt" Him!
 - And - By Those Same Questions:
 - They Questioned:
 - The Character Of God!
 - 8. Now - Genuine Sincere Questions:
 - Are To Be Welcomed:
 - As Well As - Prayerfully & Thoughtfully Answered!
 - But - We Also Need To Be Prepared For:
 - Skeptical & Cynical Questions:
 - Like The Ones We Will Look At This Morning!
 - And Sometimes:
 - We Will Need To:
 - As It Says In Proverbs 26:5:
 - "Answer A Fool According To His Folly, Lest He Be Wise In His Own Conceit!"
 - And Paul Shows Us How!

* First - Paul Deals With:

1. ***A Question About God's Righteous Character!***
 - In 3:5-6 - "But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man) / God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?"
 - In The First 4 Verses Of This Chapter:
 - Paul Dealt With The Jewish Pride:
 - In Their *Privilege* & Their *Practices*:
 - As Jews!
 - And - Now:
 - He Deals With A Question:
 - About Their *Purity*:
 - As Jews!
 - That Is - What Is The Point:
 - Of Purity?
 - *If* - Like Paul Stated:
 - *Their* Impurity & *Their* Unrighteousness Makes:
 - *God's* Purity & *God's* Righteousness:
 - Stand Out *Even More*?
 - So - Paul First Addresses:
 - The Skeptics Claim About God's Character!
 - In 3:5a - "But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say?"

- To “Commend” Here Means To Make More Clear & Conspicuous!
 - Now - There Is Some Truth:
 - To This Claim!
- **IE:** Again - “The Darker The Night, The Brighter The Light” - Of The Moon & The Stars In The Sky! In The Daytime, You Can’t See The Stars, Because They All Blend In With The Light Of The Sun!
 - And - So It Is With God & His Glory!
 - God’s Truth:
 - Will Always Stand Out:
 - Against The Dark Backdrop Of Our Lies!
 - And - God’s Righteousness:
 - Will Always Stand Out:
 - Against The Dark Backdrop Of Our Unrighteousness!
 - And So Will A Christian’s:
 - Against The Dark Backdrop Of This World! Which Is Why Jesus Said In:
 - Matthew 5:16 - “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven!”
- And So - There Is **Some** Truth:
 - To This Claim!
 - But - **As Skeptics** - They Begin:
 - Their Question With The Word:
 - **“If!”**
 - You See - They Either Denied:
 - The Righteousness Of God:
 - Or Their Own **Un**-Righteousness:
 - Which Is Probably The More The Case!
 - But This Claim:
 - Leads To:
- The Skeptics Conclusion About God’s Character!
 - In 3:5b - “What shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?”
 - This Question Betrays The True Nature Of Their Heart! They Are Insincere & Skeptical:
 - Because They Are Questioning:
 - The Righteous Character Of God!
 - *They Ask* - If The Light Of God’s Glory:
 - Is Even More Clear:
 - Against The Darkness:
 - Of Man’s Sin:
 - Is It Right For God:
 - To Impose His Wrath:
 - Upon Us / Upon Me:
 - **For** That Sin?
 - Is God’s Wrath Right?
 - Is God Right At All?
 - In The Mind & Mouth Of A Skeptic:
 - This Kind Of Question:
 - Is Nothing Less Than An Attack On The Character Of God Himself!
 - And It Is Wrong!
 - And This Is Why:
 - Paul Distances Himself:
 - Even As He Writes This Question On Paper!
 - 3:5c - “I Speak As A Man!” - He Says!
 - This Is Not The Kind Of Question:
 - That Comes From:
 - A Sincere Heart - Or:
 - From The Heart Of A New Man!
 - And So - In 3:6 - We Find:
- The Skeptics Correction About God’s Character!
 - Paul’s Answer To This Skeptical Question Is Strong!
 - 3:6 - “God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world”

- One Thing That Christians & Jews Agree On Is That There Is A Judgment Day Coming!
- But - Isn't This Also The Longing Of Every Soul! Even Unbelievers, Agnostics, Atheists! They Want Justice In This World!
 - Well - There **Is** Coming A Day When All That Is **Wrong** Will Be Made **Right!**
 - And God Himself Will Be The Judge!
- And - Even As Abraham Asked:
 - About God's Character - In Genesis 18:25 - "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"
- Here - Paul Affirms That:
 - God's Wrath Is Always Right!
 - And - God's Wrath Is Always Just!
 - And - Whoever **Receives** God's Wrath **Deserves** God's Wrath:
 - Because God Himself Is Just!
- This Is The Truth:
 - No Matter What People Say:
 - Or Think About God!
 - Because You Can't Change The Truth About The Nature Of God!
 - **IE:** Like You Can't Change The Color Blue To Black By Just Calling It That!
 - But - Aren't These The Kinds Of Question We Hear Even Today?
 - Maybe Not In The Same Form:
 - But In Words Like These:
 - "Why Do Bad Things Happen To Good People?"
 - Or - "How Could A God Who Is Good Let So Many Bad Things Happen?"
 - Or Even - "How Could God Send Someone Who Never Heard About Him To Hell For Eternity?"
 - Many Times:
 - When These Questions Are Raised:
 - They Are Not Asked:
 - From A Sincere Heart:
 - But From A Skeptical Heart!
 - Many Times - The Person Asking The Question:
 - Is Not Really Looking For:
 - The Truth In The Answer!
 - But - No Matter The Intent:
 - The Answer Is The Same!
 - 3:4 - "Let God Be True, But Every Man A Liar!"
 - God Is Always Just!
 - And His Wrath Is Always Right!
 - Deuteronomy 32:4 - "He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he!"
 - The Best Way To Be Prepared:
 - For These Kinds Of Questions:
 - Is To Be Rooted & Grounded In The Truth About God & His Character!

* But Then - Paul Deals With A Related Question:

2. ***A Question About God's Righteous Conduct!***

- In 3:7-8 - "For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner? / And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just!"
 - In These Verses:
 - We See:
- The Skeptics Claim About God's Conduct!
 - In 3:7a - "For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory!"
 - To "Abound" Here Means To Amplify!
 - **IE:** Like What Happens With A Public Address System - When You Sing Or Speak Into A Microphone - The Amplifier Takes The Sound And Amplifies It So Everyone In The Room Can Hear!
 - And - Just Like The Previous Claim:

- There Is Some Truth:
 - To This As Well!
 - After All - In Psalm 76:10 - We Are Told That - “Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee!”
- But - God’s Truth Is Amplified:
 - **Not - By** The Lie:
 - But - **Against** The Lie!
 - And - **Against** The Dark Backdrop Of Deception & Sin!
 - **IE:** Again - “The Darker The Night, The Brighter The Light!
 - But - Darkness Doesn’t Actually Contribute Anything To The Light! And So - Man’s Nature Doesn’t Contribute Anything To The Nature & The Glory Of God!
- This Is Why:
 - God’s Faithfulness:
 - Is Highlighted Against:
 - The Dark Backdrop Of Our Unfaithfulness!
 - But - Once Again - This Claim Leads To:
- The Skeptics Conclusion About God’s Conduct!
 - In 3:7b - “Why yet am I also judged as a sinner?”
 - This Question Also Betrays The True Nature Of The Skeptic’s Heart! They Are Insincere!
 - Because They Are Questioning:
 - The Righteous Conduct Of God:
 - And His Glory!
 - *They Ask* - If The Light Of God’s Truth:
 - Is Amplified:
 - Against The Darkness:
 - Of Man’s Lies:
 - Is It Right For God:
 - To Judge Us / Me:
 - As A Sinner:
 - **For** Those Lies?
 - Is God’s Judgment Right?
 - Is God Right At All?
 - And This Leads To Another Conclusion:
 - Not Just About:
 - The Glory Of God:
 - But Also About:
 - The Grace Of God!
 - We See This From The Part Of:
 - 3:8 - That Is Still The Words Of The Skeptic:
 - “And not rather . . . Let us do evil, that good may come?”
 - The Phrase:
 - “Let Us Do Evil, That Good May Come” May Have Been:
 - A Common Accusation Against Christians By The Jews:
 - Because Of Our Emphasis On God’s Grace!
 - But Here - They Are Taunting:
 - Both Christ & Christians:
 - By Saying - If Jews Are Judged Sinners - Why Aren’t Christians!
 - After All - Christians Can Get Away With Anything They Want!
 - All They Have To Do Is Appeal To God & His Grace!
 - Of Course - Paul Deals With This:
 - A Bit Later - In 6:1-2 - When He Addresses This Same Question For Christians - “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? / God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?”
 - But - In The Mind & Mouth Of A Skeptic:
 - This Kind Of Question:
 - Is Also An Affront On The Conduct Of God Himself!
 - And It Is Wrong!
 - And This Is Why:

- Paul Distances Himself Even Further:
 - By Adding In 3:8:
 - “As we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say!”
- And - With These Words:
 - We See:
- The Skeptics Correction About God’s Conduct!
 - Paul Wants Them & Us To See:
 - That With These Kinds Of Questions:
 - And - These Kinds Of Conclusions:
 - About God:
 - They Are Not Just:
 - Misunderstanding:
 - The Nature Of God!
 - Nor Are They Just:
 - Misinterpreting:
 - The Truth Of God!
 - They Are:
 - Maligning & Reproaching:
 - God & His Ways!
 - Even To The Point Of Slander & Blasphemy!
 - And So - Paul Affirms That:
 - God’s Judgment Is Always Right!
 - And - God’s Glory:
 - Is Always The Same!
- This Is The Truth:
 - No Matter What People Say:
 - Or Think About God!
 - Because You Can’t Change The Truth About The Nature Of God!

Conclusion:

1. But - As Christians:
 - We Need To Be Ready For These Kinds Of Questions!
 - For Questions That Are Sincere:
 - But - Even For Questions That Are Skeptical & Cynical!
 - Even As We Are Told In 1 Peter 3:15:
 - “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear!”
2. Because - I’m Pretty Sure:
 - These Are The Kinds Of Questions:
 - That We Are Going To Be Faced With:
 - As The Death Toll Continues To Rise - As A Result Of This Coronavirus Pandemic!
 - Questions & Objections!
 - Whether - Sincere Or Skeptical!
3. How Will You Answer?
 - How Can You Be Ready?
 - Like Paul - You Need To Be:
 - Rooted & Grounded:
 - In The Truth About:
 - God!
 - About His:
 - Righteous Character:
 - As Well As His:
 - Righteous Conduct!
4. Perhaps Today - Even As A Christian:
 - You Have Questions:
 - That Come From A Sincere Heart!
 - Remember - You Can Take Those Questions:
 - To The Lord!

- After All - We Are Told In:
 - Philippians 4:6 - To - “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God!”
 - Even When You Turn:
 - To The Book Of Psalms:
 - You Find Many Honest & Sincere Questions:
 - To The Lord:
 - About The Cares & Anxieties Of Life!
 - Because - The World In Which We Live:
 - Is A Broken World!
 - And It Leaves Many Questions:
 - Unanswered!
 - But - That Is Why - In Christ:
 - We Can Sing These Words:
 - “Are we weak and heavy laden / Cumbered with a load of care? / Precious Savior, still our refuge / Take it to the Lord in prayer!”
5. Perhaps Today:
 - You Have Sincere Questions:
 - About The State Of Your Own Soul!
 - You Can Take Those Questions:
 - To The Lord As Well!
 - And - You Must!
 - Because - Like The World In Which You Live:
 - Apart From Christ:
 - You & Your Life Is Broken Too!
 - And Leaves Many Questions Unanswered - Because Of Your Sin!
 - But - God Has An Answer For You Today!
 - As Psalm 34:18 - “The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit!”
 - Jesus Came To Be The Answer:
 - To The Sincere Question:
 - “What Must I Do To Be Saved?”
 - And The Answer Given:
 - To The Philippian Jailor In Acts 16:31:
 - Is The Same Answer For You:
 - “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved!”
 - Turn From Your Sin & Turn From Your-Self:
 - And Turn To & Trust In:
 - The One Who Died For You, Was Buried, And Rose Again - All:
 - To Bring You “Out Of Darkness Into His Marvelous Light!” (1 Peter 2:9)
6. But - There’s A Warning:
 - In These Verses As Well!
 - If You - Or Anyone Else:
 - Asks These Questions:
 - Out Of A Skeptical Heart:
 - Be Warned!
 - Because - When You:
 - Use Your Questions:
 - To Question The:
 - Character & Conduct:
 - Of God Himself:
 - Paul Adds - At The End Of 3:8:
 - “Whose Damnation / Judgment Is Just!”
7. What Questions:
 - Do You Have This Morning?
 - And - What Are Your Questions:
 - Like?
 - Are They Sincere?

- Or - Are They Skeptical?

- * Do You Have Questions For The Lord Today?
- * If So, How Are You Asking Them?
- * With A Sincere Heart? Or With A Skeptical Heart?
- * And - Are You Willing To Trust Him With His Answer?

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