

And in Romans 3:23 we are told that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." This cannot mean that we all fall short of the splendor of God's magnificence, for that would simply mean that we are not God but are finite, and this is not blameworthy.

The "glory of God" here must mean God's glorious attribute of righteousness (because this "falling short" is related to sin) as reflected in His perfect standard of righteousness -- His Law -- and the verse must therefore mean that all human beings have sinned (i.e., have transgressed the Law of God, since sin is transgression of the law) and continue to sin (i.e., fall short of God's standard of righteousness, which reflects God's glorious attribute of righteousness)

Paul provides a good deal of evidence to show that unsaved human beings are unrighteous. He does this by pointing out various ways in which human beings transgress the Law of God, especially by violating the Ten Commandments (see pages entitled "Man's unrighteousness as revealed by the righteous Law of God summarized in the Ten Commandments, as developed by Paul in Romans 1:19-3:20")

But now we must ask: What about those human beings who do not have the Ten Commandments, who do not possess the revealed Law of God? Are they unrighteous? And if so, by what standard?

Paul takes up these questions in 2:14-15, where he identifies the standard by which the gentiles are shown to be unrighteous:

For when the Gentiles who do not have the Law do by nature the things of the Law, these not having the Law are a law to themselves, who show the Law's work written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or even defending them.

Paul summarizes his evidence concerning mankind's unrighteousness in 3:9-10, 12:

What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; as it is written, "There is none righteous, not even one; . . . All have turned aside, together they have become useless; there is none who does good, there is not even one."