

Romans 3.9-20

“Guilty! From Head to Toe!!”

Well known story by Hans Christian Andersen...

About Emperor was Very Fond of his Appearance and his Clothing

Clever MEN came to Town to WEAVE Special Garment CLOTH for Emperor

They Explained CLOTH was ONLY VISIBLE to **Wise & Pure in Heart**

Emperor --- had Some Inner Doubts – BUT gave Weavers MEDAL for Labors

BIG DAY Comes > Emperor marches in Parade > Whole Village came to See

Emp Boldly Paraded MAGIC Weave > Showing all Wisdom & Pure HEART

All those WISE / PURE Hearts surely SEE & Appreciate BEAUTIFUL Garment

Awkward Silence of Crowds - No ONE Dared Speak – Certainly NOT Laugh!

Until Little Child stated the Obvious “The Emperor is NAKED!”

3 Chs Romans > Paul has PARADED Human Race before Judgment of God

Text Today - LAST Legal Brief of Paul, God’s Prosecutor’s

From Emperors to Unemployed – Sons & Daughters – Somebodies & Nobodies

ALL Humanity GIVEN Countless Opportunities of MERCY > been Squandered

1. Gentiles have Natural Revelation in God’s Creation –  
but they Suppress the Truth of God and Exchange it for a Lie
2. Critical Moralists – have Truth of God written on the Conscience,  
but they Do the Very Things they Condemn in Others
3. Religious – Trust in their Rituals and Reputation for Righteousness,  
and have Lost the Relationship which Those Rituals Represent

What a shock for Many who Think they can stand before Heaven’s Emperor  
Wearing ROBE of their Rituals, Religion, or Self-Righteousness!

Apostle Paul > whole testimony of Scripture > says “Hey, you are NAKED!”

## 1. What have we Done?

### a. We have Sinned Against God: Ungodliness of Sin

v. 11 “there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God.”

v. 18 "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

v. 19 “and the whole world will be held accountable to God”

SIN First & Foremost AGAINST God, Taught by David in Psalm of Repentance

“Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight” Psalm 51.4

Adultery w/ Bathsheba / Murdered Uriah, husband / AGAINST GOD ONLY?

VIOLATION OF HIS LAW, HIS PEOPLE, HIS GLORY AND HONOR

NO ROOM FOR HIM in our THOUGHTS / His Glory not our Chief Concern

We have DETHRONED God and ENTHRONED Ourselves

MAN is FULL of FEARS – Spiders, Dentists, Cracks in the Sidewalk,

Bumps in Night, Ancestral Spirits, Death/Taxes, Viruses: not just IN Computer

ALL THESE THINGS PASS AWAY > No Fear of Him who is ETERNAL

v. 18 "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

Many Terrible EFFECTS of Sin > DAMAGES Every Part of LIFE & SOCIETY

WORST PART OF SIN > What it does to God > MAKES HIM ANGRY

AROUSES HIS HOLY, JUST, RIGHTEOUS WRATH

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and  
unrighteousness of men... Romans 1.18

v. 19 “and the whole world will be held accountable to God”

“The best man, the noblest, the most learned, the most philanthropic; the greatest idealist, the greatest thinker, say what you like – there has never been a man who can stand up to the test of the law. Drop your plumb-line, and he is not true to it”

Martyn Lloyd-Jones

b. Been Captured by Sin: Pervasiveness of Sin > from HEAD to TOE

v. 9 “Jews and Gentiles alike are all UNDER sin”

SIN PERSONIFIED > Cruel Tyrant with Strong, DEADLY GRIP

ON TOP OF US – CRUSHING US WITH ITS INESCAPABLE BURDEN

vs. 13-17 Deliberate Listing of BODY PARTS > We’re Created for Serving God

String of OT Quotations (Psalms, Eccles, Isaiah)

Common Teaching Technique of RABBI’s / String Passages like PEARLS

Vs. 13 & 14 – Quotations from 3 OT Psalms > All Refer to ORGANS of Speech

Paul teaches us four things about our sins of speech:

1. Our words kill people. v. 13 “Their throat is an open grave.”
2. Our words deceive people. v. 13 “They use their tongues to deceive.”
3. Our words hurt people. v. 13 “The venom of asps is under their lips.”
4. Our words curse people. v. 14 “Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness.”

Vs. 15-17 DIRECTION of Man’s Life / best understood in Reverse Order

v. 17 “the way of peace they do not know.”

“The wicked are like the tossing sea, which cannot rest, whose waves cast up mire and mud. "There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked." Isaiah 57.20,21

“In the last 3,421 years of recorded history only 268 have seen no war.”

Will Durant, *Lessons From History*

“Such is a just description of man’s ferocity, which fills the world with animosities, quarrels and hatred in...families, neighborhoods... and nations. The most savage animals do not destroy so many of his own species to appease their hunger, as man destroys his fellows to satiate his ambition” Robert Haldane

NO PEACE – with God, with Neighbor, or with Self

v. 16 “ruin and misery mark their ways”

SOMETHING PEOPLE EXPERIENCE / AND Bring on Others

v. 15 "Their feet are swift to shed blood"

END is DEATH = SEPARATION / Physical and Spiritual

HEY! Wait a Minute! This does not DESCRIBE Me, My Family, My Friends!?

Maybe You're

Life can be GOOD on PIRATE SHIP, Nice Pirates, CULTURED, REFINED

SOME Say their Prayers before taking their Grog / Share their Wenches

Sunday Mornings Chapel Service / Sunday Afternoons String Quartet Concerts

Life on Ship – Might BE Picture of Brotherhood, Kindness, Cultural Refinement

ONE PROBLEM – It is a Pirate Ship / Fugitives from International Law

ALL IS JOY AND BLISS ON THE SHIP / everything Hunky Dory

UNTIL THAT SHIP MEETS A SHIP Carrying Something the Pirates WANT

Or UNTIL THAT SHIP IS Confronted by the LEGAL AUTHORITIES

HUMAN RIGHTEOUSNESS – some Influence in Man's World, NOT GOD'S

Hope in LOCK-Down > FAMILY Time > Play BOARD Games

3 Sons Young > MONOPOLY > 1 son Took so Seriously GUARD \$ @ Night

Game of "Monopoly" – has its own CURRENCY – Rich in Monopoly Money

MONOPOLY Money to BANK?? / LAUGHED at as FOOL / Worthless Paper

OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS HAS NO CURRENCY IN GOD'S ACCOUNT

The way to God is wide open. There is nothing standing between the sinner and his God. He has immediate and unimpeded access to the Savior...Nothing now stands between the sinner and God but the sinner's "good works." Nothing can keep him from Christ but his delusion... alas, sinners cannot part with their "virtues." They have none that are not imaginary, but they are real to them. So, grace becomes unreal... The main thing between you and God is not so much your sins; it is your damnable good works" John Gerstner

### c. Effects All of Us: Universality of Sin

v. 10 “no one righteous, not even one”

#### 1) Moral Failure

v. 12 “All have turned away, they have together become worthless”

ECHOES WORDS OF JESUS: “if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.”  
Matthew 5.13

Movie “AGONY and ECSTASY” – Michelangelo finished 1<sup>st</sup> attempt at Painting Sistine Chapel > He was NOT PLEASED WITH THE RESULT THINKING about problem while HAVING a DRINK > in a LOCAL BAR

Wine was Sour > Shouted “Bartender! This wine is sour”

Bartender – Came to Table – Tasted Wine – Spit it Out

STRUCK wine barrel with a Hammer > Gallons of Wine Ran into Street

“IF the wine is SOUR, Throw it OUT”

Michelangelo then > destroyed original Frescoes on Sistine Chapel >

Began HUGE ARTISTIC PROJECT in Sistine Chapel All OVER Again

HARD TO HEAR words – Useless! Corrupt! Esp APPLIED to OURSELVES

BUT GOD BEGINS AGAIN > to make us a New Creation in Christ

v. 12 “there is no one who does good, not even one.”

“The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time.”

Genesis 6.5

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way

Isaiah 53.6

Problem: Not only NOT GONE GOD'S WAY / We've Gone our OWN WAY

Everyone's OWN WAY is in CONFLICT with Everyone Else's OWN WAY

## 2) Intellectual Failure v. 11 “there is no one who understands”

“Israelites...are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.” Romans 10.1-3

HUMAN WISDOM IS BANKRUPT IN TRYING TO KNOW GOD

DOES NOT MEAN UNBELIEVER CANNOT READ UNDERSTAND BIBLE

State Univ. course “The Bible as Literature” / Still Remember Mrs. Burke

I Liked her A lot > Not Know Jesus > She TOLD Me So > Admired BIBLE

Probably Remember Mrs. Burke – Good Grade! – Like Me / I liked Bible too

NOT that BIBLE or Christian Truths CANNOT BE EASILY UNDERSTOOD

ROMANS 1 – Secular Man DOES NOT WANT TO UNDERSTAND

“men who suppress the truth by their wickedness” Romans 1.18

“For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.”

Romans 1.21

“The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

1 Corinthians 2.14

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate."

1 Corinthians 1.18-21

## 3) Corrupt Human Will 3.11 “no one who seeks God”

LOOKS TO BE OPPOSITE OF HUMAN SITUATION

Many Religions / Houses of Worship / Spiritual Leaders > of ALL Varieties

RELIGIOUS SEARCHING AND PRACTICE > Not Equal to Seeking God

RELIGION CAN ALSO BE A WAY OF RUNNING AWAY FROM GOD

## JEWISH RELIGIOUS LEADERS were Jesus' STRONGEST OPPONENTS

Paul does not say, “No one seeks for spiritual blessings,” or “No one seeks for God to answer prayers,” or “No one seeks for spiritual power and experience and peace”... many people do that. But Paul is saying — that no one, in his or her natural self and ability wants to find God...  
 Tim Keller

“Prayers do not mean that we are seeking God. Seeking God means you are trying to find God, and to get into His presence... To seek God means to desire God above everything and everybody, to seek His glory, to be anxious to promote his glory. To seek God in the biblical sense means that God is the center of our thinking.”  
 Martyn Lloyd-Jones

### 2. What does this Mean?

#### THREE VIEWS OF HUMAN NATURE –

1. Man is Well 2. Man is Sick 3. Man is Dead

1. WELL – very popular, BASICALLY GOOD – needs some “fine tuning”

Occasional “SPIRITUAL Tune-up” / THERAPY Session/ Some COUNSELING  
 Human Race Getting BETTER & BETTER? – ANSWER = More EDUCATION  
 Join Hands & SING – ‘Kum Bay Yah’ or ‘We are the World’ or ‘Imagine’

2. SICK – view of Pessimist / Grim Appraisal / Reaction to Misguided Optimism  
 Been Celebrating EARTH DAY for 50<sup>th</sup> yrs but Still FOULING Mother EARTH  
 NEVER going to ERRADICATE this Virus! Back Again! On Steroids Next Yr!  
 State of New York more 15 k Died of Corona Virus > Still Many Dying – LESS!

“The number is down because we brought the number down. God did not do that. Faith did not do that. Destiny did not do that. A lot of pain and suffering did that.”  
 Andrew Cuomo, New York Governor / Roman Catholic!

3<sup>rd</sup> View: DEAD – Biblical view, Not Well, Not Just Sick > Lifeless before God  
 Distinction between NATURAL INABILITY and MORAL INABILITY

“you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.”  
Genesis 2.17

“As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins” Ephesians 2.1

“If all the great outstanding figures in history, whose judgments are worthy of serious consideration, if all the prophets, psalmists, philosophers, fathers of the church, reformers, poets, artists were asked their opinion, would one of them assert that man was good, or even capable of good? No, there is none righteous, no not one. The doctrine of original sin...is fundamental...THE doctrine which emerges from all honest study of history”  
Karl Barth

Here in ROMANS >> Mind of the Sinner REJECTS the True Way of God

MIND does NOT want to Surrender to God’s Sovereignty and Righteous Rule

Need GIFT of Salvation – Renewal of Mind / New Way of Thinking about God

CONCLUSION - Total Depravity > Rejected by those who Misunderstand It

Refers to EXENT of Sin / NOT the DEGREE of Sin = Every part of our Being

NOT AS BAD AS WE COULD BE – not all drunkards, felons, and murderers

NOT AS GOOD AS WE SHOULD BE – no one is fully devoted to God

“The phrase ‘total depravity’ ...signifies a corruption of our moral and spiritual nature that is total not in degree (for no one is as bad as he or she might be) but in extent. It declares that no part of us is untouched by sin, and therefore no action of ours is as good as it should be, and consequently... we cannot earn God’s favor, no matter what we do; unless grace saves us, we are lost.” J.I. Packer

HOW can we ASSESS issues that are not Directly taught in the Bible??

3 Questions: Reasons for Kindness, Charity, Good Deeds, Help Others?





Scan Wider Context of Romans >> 3. How can we get Undone?

SOMEONE finds Self Tied up with Ropes > Wants to GET UNTIED?

FIRST – Find the End of the Rope = Conclusion of Paul about Our Situation

v. 9 What shall we conclude then? Are we any better ? Not at all! We have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin.

JEWS HAVE ADVANTAGE OF OPPORTUNITY – v. 1 “Much in every way”

BUT NO Saving ADVANTAGE – Cannot Escape God’s Righteous Judgment

v. 20 no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law

a. Embrace the Gospel of Christ Receive God’s grace in X > No other Hope

SEMINARY Director in KZ > Need Stamp of Government on a Document

Went to Akim for his help > Gladly, just buy a newspaper subscription

NO NEWSPAPER – NO STAMP – NO WAY AROUND IT

American > I suggested we send students to picket his office

Student / LAWYER – Only way to legally protest is with approval from Akim

THEN WE WOULD HAVE TO BUY TWO NEWSPAPER SUBSCRIPTIONS

v. 19 “Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God.”

GOD WILL NOT TAKE NEWSPAPER SUBSCRIPTIONS > Perfect Justice

WE can Think up our Excuses – And Have Them Ready –

WHEN WE BEHOLD HIS GLORY > They will be QUICKLY FORGOTTEN

Righteous Saints were SILENCED before God > Job, Isaiah, Habakkuk, John

The Lord said to Job: “Shall a faultfinder contend with the Almighty? He who argues with God, let him answer it.” Then Job answered the Lord and said: “Behold, I am of small account; what shall I answer you? I lay my hand on my mouth. I have spoken once, and I will not answer; twice, but I will proceed no further.”

Job 40.1-5

“No man can justify himself before God by a perfect performance of the Law’s demands – indeed it is the straightedge of the Law that shows us how crooked we are.”  
v. 20 J.B. Phillip’s New Testament in Modern English

Paul BUILDING THIS CASE for 3 Chapters

1.20 “so that men are without excuse.” / 2.1 “You, therefore, have no excuse”

NOW THE PROSECUTOR HAS FINISHED HIS CASE

ACCUSED is GIVEN a CHANCE to DEFEND HIMSELF > Dramatic Silence

b. Proclaim the Gospel of Christ

Ap Paul > ETERNALLY Important Question – DESTINY of Human RACE

Do you HEAR Me? Sharing what God’s Word says about WHO in Heaven / Hell

Your Eternity: Spouse/Kids/Grandkids, Neighbors, Classmates, Colleagues, Ene

But it’s EASY to Get NUMB about things that are REALLY IMPORTANT

Home in USA when 1st American – that we knew of – DIED of Corona VIRUS

24 hr NEWS Cycle BUZZING Couple Days – AMERICAN Died from VIRUS!

NOW almost 3 million GLOBAL Citizens HAVE Virus – 200,000 Now DEAD!

NOT HEADLINES! > OLD News – More Important News on FRONT PAGES!

“These chapters challenge us to share Christ with others. We cannot monopolize the good news. All around us are men and women who know enough of God’s glory and holiness to make their rejection of him inexcusable. They too, like us, stand condemned. Their knowledge, their religion and their righteousness cannot save them. Only Christ can. Their mouth is closed in guilt; let our mouth be open in testimony!”  
John Stott

SAME ONE WHO SENDS US OUT WITH A GREAT COMMISSION said

“No one can come to me, unless the Father who sent me draws him” John 6.44

DOCTRINE of Man’s Inability > Great ENCOURAGEMENT to Evangelism

“I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes”  
Romans 1.16

“faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.”  
Romans 10.17

“for God's gifts and his call are irrevocable.”  
Romans 11.29

WHY WE PRAY **FOR** SINNERS & **NOT TO** SINNERS > they will not choose

PRAY WITH CONFIDENCE > GOD WILL BRING HIS ELECT to Salvation

Jesus “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him”

John 6.44

I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. John 10.16

SINNER NEEDS TO HEAR THIS TRUTH – he cannot come unless God calls

Many **WRONGLY THINK** they Can **WAIT** – older, after marry, parent, retire

For he says, "In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.  
2 Corinthians 6.2

WE CANNOT EVEN CHOOSE THE TIME TO BE SAVED / No Boasting!

We did **NOT CHOOSE** time of Natural Birth/ or New Birth> **ALL** of **GRACE**

**PERHAPS YOU ARE STILL NOT CONVINCED** > Do not Need Christ

Heard message about Man's Condition > Last Several Messages > **NOT ME!**

Pastor Donald Barnhouse > had a Neighbor like You – many years ago

**PASTOR** tried to convince Man > He **NEEDED** Jesus and His Salvation

Man - **NOT NECESSARY** > Doing many good works, charitable activities

Man became **GRAVELY ILL** – Not expected to Live to end of the Day

**PASTOR** came to Visit “Do you mind if I stay here and watch?”

“I would like to see what it is like for a man to die without Jesus Christ, what is death like for someone who is so good they do not need God?”

TEARS came to Man’s FRIGHTENED EYES and fell down his wrinkled cheeks  
 Last Hour of man’s life on earth / Became FIRST HOUR of his Eternal Life  
 Barnhouse told story of man’s repentance and faith at the funeral a few days later

YOU MAY HAVE LOTS OF EXCUSES NOW – but when you see God  
 NO WORD CAN BE SPOKEN IN YOUR DEFENSE / it will be Too Late  
 Your Tongue will Stick to the Roof of your mouth > Silenced by His Majesty

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Romans 3.<sup>9</sup>What shall we conclude then? Do we have any advantage? Not at all! For we have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under the power of sin. <sup>10</sup>As it is written:

“There is no one righteous, not even one;

<sup>11</sup>there is no one who understands;  
 there is no one who seeks God.

<sup>12</sup>All have turned away,  
 they have together become worthless;  
 there is no one who does good,  
 not even one.”

<sup>13</sup>“Their throats are open graves;  
 their tongues practice deceit.”

“The poison of vipers is on their lips.”

<sup>14</sup>“Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.”

<sup>15</sup>“Their feet are swift to shed blood;

<sup>16</sup>ruin and misery mark their ways,

<sup>17</sup>and the way of peace they do not know.”

<sup>18</sup> “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

<sup>19</sup>Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. <sup>20</sup>Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God’s sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin. NIV