

Romans 3.9-20 Indictment of guilt, Total Depravity 1, 2 & 3, Closing Statement on Guilt 043-047

[Romans 3.9-10 Indictment of Guilt 043]

A good summary of what we have already studied in Romans is by Donald Gray Barnhouse—a vivid description:

“In the 1st chapter, a horrible picture is drawn of mankind lying in the slime of depravity, dishonoring his body and worshipping even creeping things. In the 2nd chapter, there is another horrible picture of man caught like a rat in a trap of his own making, rushing madly, seeking an escape which does not exist, dashing himself against philosophy, against ethics, against religion and its ceremonies. In the early verses of this 3rd chapter, there is a 3rd picture of man in vicious sophistry seeking to argue himself out of his predicament by defaming the righteousness of God.” —DG Barnhouse

The bulk of the book is a righteous God giving righteousness to an unrighteous humanity. But Paul spends considerable time to expound this major section because of the nature of the human heart. He has to convince the reader that we stand condemned before a righteous and holy God—before our hearts are willing and receptive to the issue of resolving the problem of unrighteousness.

I. Introduction	1.1-17
II. Provision of God’s Righteousness	1.18-8.39
A. Condemnation	1.18-3.20
...	
3. Guilt of All Mankind	3.9-20
a. Summary Indictment of Guilt	3.9

Verse nine is a summary indictment. In our minds we generally think ‘I’m OK.’ and we compare ourselves to one another and we have a knack for suppressing the reality of where we stand. It’s like a little boy with his face covered with chocolate frosting and his mother is accusing him of eating the cake but he says, “No, not me, I did not eat the cake!’ even though all the evidence points at him. The book of Romans lays out all this evidence and it is as if it were before the ‘ultimate’ supreme court, you might even say. And we have been seeing the book from the aspect of the Law. Paul is laying down evidence, though not in a secular court, before the ultimate judge in an ultimate court. We may follow that analogy because Paul uses a lot of legal terms.

Ultimate Court Room

- > Opening Statement - 1.18 *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,*
All humanity stands under the wrath of God, i.e., condemned.
- > Presentation of evidence against Gentiles/Humanity- 1.19-32
The evidence is primarily against the gentiles and/or all of humanity. God is saying that He has adequately revealed Himself to all, but man in general has rejected that revelation. So the revelation is adequate to many accountable, but not adequate to save — which is in the rest of the book of Romans. Man is therefore without excuse. Instead man has rejected that revelation and in doing so he is changed resulting in inward corruption and he only declines. There is nothing in mankind that commends man to God.
- > Evidence against Jews - 2.1-29
Paul is laying out evidence, data after data, as a lawyer would in a courtroom. This is a spiritual courtroom.
- > Arguments of defense - 3.1-8
He is dealing with the defense or protests that go against the evidence that convicts. Paul knocks down these arguments of the Jews.
- > Final Charge - 3.9
Now we are going to see in verse nine where he makes the final charge. Hence, we say, it is a summary indictment with legal terms.
- > Final Proof - 3.10-18
He will give final proof in his closing statement. This comes from the final authority, Scripture itself, a series of quotations from the Law.
- > Closing Statement - 3.19-20
- > Court Decision - CONDEMNED
There is a solution for man standing condemned. But that is the decision of the court: man stands condemned under wrath. This is written for the believer to understand the situation of the unbeliever —so that we might be able to better share the gospel.

3.9 What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin;

After presenting the evidence and dealing with all the issues of a courtroom, Paul asks the question: What then?

3.9 What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; What is the

conclusion we should come to? Are we better than they? It is interesting that he includes himself; He accused Jewish people, in chapter two, of violating God's law, violating even the latter part of the Abrahamic Covenant which deals with circumcision. And they don't practice what they preach. 'Are we better than the gentiles?' This whole question is one word in the Greek text and only occurs right here. The meaning is not totally clear. Another translation is similar to what was asked at the beginning of chapter three: What is the advantage of the Jew? It deals with a Jewish mindset : they had a superior attitude and thought that they were exempt, so Paul is emphasizing this to that portion of the audience. The Jew was even more resistant.

The answer is 'None at all'. There is no advantage when it come to right standing before God.

3.9 What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin;

So he gives the indictment: 'We have already charged.' This is a summary of 1.18 to 3.8.

3.9 What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin;

What is the evidence? That 'both Jews and Greeks' (the gentiles or non-Jews)...

I. Introduction	1.1-17
II. Provision of God's Righteousness	1.18-8.39
A. Condemnation	1.18-3.20
1. Guilt of Humanity	1.18-32
2. Guilt of Jews	2.1-3.8
3. Guilt of All Mankind	3.9-20
a. Summary Indictment of Guilt	3.9

3.9 What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin;

All are under sin. That is the conclusion. He had addressed the Jews for the first time in 2.1: *You* are without excuse also, like the gentiles.

Under sin

> Under wrath - 1.18 *For the wrath of God is revealed from*

heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

All are under wrath.

> Without excuse - 1.20 *For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.*

All are without excuse. They have had adequate revelation.

> Given up by God - 1.24 *Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them.*

26 *For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural,*

28 *And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,*

God gave them up. Man stands abandoned by God. And the culture experiences the consequences of that; They decline, degenerate and experience the wrath of God. You can observe it.

> Worthy of death - 1.32 *and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.*

To be under sin means that humanity is worthy of death.

> Without excuse - 2.1 *Therefore you have no excuse, everyone of you who passes judgment, for in that which you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things.*

> Self condemned - 2.1 *Therefore you have no excuse, everyone of you who passes judgment, for in that which you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things.*

> Storing up wrath - 2.5 *But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,*

They are storing up wrath for themselves.

> Condemned - 3.8 *And why not say (as we are slanderously reported and as some claim that we say), "Let us do evil that good may come"? Their condemnation is just.*

The conclusion: they are condemned.

I. Introduction	1.1-17
II. Provision of God's Righteousness	1.18-8.39
A. Condemnation	1.18-3.20
1. Guilt of Humanity	1.18-32
2. Guilt of Jews	2.1-3.8

- 3. Guilt of All Mankind 3.9-20
 - a. Summary Indictment of Guilt 3.9
 - b. Scriptural Proof of Depravity 3.10-18
 - 1) Sinful character 3.10-12

Now in verse ten he will give the Biblical or Scriptural proof of depravity. He strings together OT passages, beginning with Psalm 14. He deals with virtually every area of who we are as human beings. He starts with our character, verses 10-12, and he shows and defines what ‘depravity’ means, ie, the concept or Biblical doctrine of depravity. This is a key passage and one of the most extensive in all of Scripture where it gives us the details of what depravity is all about.

Ultimate Court Room

- > Opening Statement - 1.18
- > Presentation of evidence against Gentiles/Humanity- 1.19-32
- > Evidence against Jews - 2.1-29
- > Arguments of defense - 3.1-8
- > Final Charge - 3.9
- > Final Proof - 3.10-18

3.10 as it is written, “THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE; 11 THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD; 12 ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE.”

Again, we look at the text sentence by sentence. Notice, is this the beginning of the sentence here? Actually it begins after the second question in verse nine which ends with a semi-colon, so these three verses continue to explain the charge—with quotations from the OT.

3.10 as it is written, “THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE;

This little phrase ‘as it is written’, is commonly used in the Bible and refers to the Scriptures. Sometimes it is an application and there are similarities to what the NT writer is developing based on a concept in the OT, ie, not a verbatim quotation; they had some flexibility as we do when we refer to a concept or incident in the Bible. Also, we quote from different translations as did the NT writers from the Masoretic text or the Septuagint. The writer of the book of Hebrews always used the Septuagint. Of course the NT writers are inspired. So, Paul quotes or alludes to, or summarizes. Here we have them in capital letters since

they are taken from the New American Standard translation which uses capitals for quotations. First he summarizes a passage and later on gives it in more detail.

3.10 as it is written, “THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE;

‘There is none righteous.’ Everything he is going to talk about will deal with the relation with God. Apart from Christ, all humanity is unrighteous. He begins here with the subject of depravity.

There are a lot of misconceptions about the meaning of Total Depravity. (After he finishes with ‘unrighteousness’ or depravity, he explains the solution.) Examples of misconceptions about it include:

Misconceptions

1. As wicked as can be
Not all are as wicked as they could be.
2. Less than human, like stone
We are not like an inanimate thing.
3. Lacking in knowledge of God
The non-believer is not lacking knowledge: Romans one tells us that God has revealed Himself and man rejected that knowledge. And we have noted that there is no atheist—he has just convinced himself that there is no God. Psalm 14 begins with that.
4. Lacking in conscience
The conscience is seared, totally destroyed, but it is there.
5. Incapable of kindness toward others
The unbeliever is capable of kindness—some of the kindest people are unbelievers. They are attempting to please God by their acts of kindness, so that is not a description of depravity either.

A cute little girl that has not accepted Christ has to be classified as being depraved! So here is a description:

Description of Total Depravity

- > ‘Man is wholly inclined to evil continually’ (Westminster)
Our nature is such that we are *inclined* towards evil. Has anyone had to teach their children to do wrong things? Children are inclined in that direction. You have to teach them the correct way; otherwise their nature will carry them because they are depraved.
- > Totally unable to do anything good spiritually
Another description: they are totally unable to do anything spiritually.
- > Having no ability to gain anything from God

They have no ability to gain anything from God. There is no goodness in us that warrants God treating us any different from a Manson. We are totally depraved. The whole point of Romans and Galatians: there is a tendency within us to try to do things that merit a standing before God, but we can't; there is nothing we can do.

> Totally affected by sin

Our whole being is affected by sin—every aspect of who we are is corrupted by sin. That is what we mean by *total* depravity; there is not an area that has not been affected by sin.

We are going to look at different aspects in terms of how we are affected by sin. There are some things built into the culture that restrain our tendency such as parents. Also the conscience built into us helps restrain us from doing evil. Government also is designed to restrain sin (Romans 13). The Holy Spirit restrains evil also (2Thessalonians two), using conscience and everything else.

Importance of understanding Depravity

1. Nature of Unbeliever

First it tells us the nature of the unbeliever, what he is like. It is important to know the nature of mankind in order to be able to effectively reach them, able to share the gospel. If we don't know the nature of man we cannot present the gospel. In fact part of presenting the gospel is convincing him that he has a need. If we do not understand how desperate the unbeliever is, then your sharing the gospel is actually deficient to that extent.

2. Nature of Believer in flesh

But secondly, this was written to believers and there is an application we can draw. We can see clearly what we are like apart from Christ. And, when we receive Christ, we receive a new nature but the old nature was not removed. We still have that lost old nature and this is a description of what the flesh, the old nature is like. Paul goes into a little detail dealing with a believer, a person who has been justified, in Romans chapter seven. You will see the effects on the believer who has received justification. So we still have all of these characteristics in the old nature; this is what brings us down as believers. The whole Christian life is designed to walk in the Spirit that we may put to death that old nature.

We need to know who we are and what we are like in the flesh.

3. Why salvation must be by grace and is necessary

The third reason is that it makes it clear why salvation is by grace—because there is nothing in us that we can do to earn a right standing or salvation, in any way. It is only by what God has done and nothing pertaining to what we have done brings us into a saving relationship. All of that is simply by faith. So Depravity shows

why salvation must be by grace and why salvation is necessary, because apart from it we remain in this totally depraved condition.

This, then is a brief introduction to the doctrine of Total Depravity. Now to the passage itself:

3.10 as it is written, “THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE;

‘There is none righteous’ can be taken as somewhat of a summary statement. I take it as a summary of everything he is going to talk about, the condition of being in a state of unrighteousness. What does that mean? It goes to the heart of who we are, the very heart of our character and I am going to compare this portion to Psalm 14 because I think part of the passage is directly quoted from it and it is a summary of total depravity. He is dealing with where we are spiritually.

Another passage where Paul describes depravity is in Ephesians two which we can see as somewhat parallel to the Romans passage, though briefer. First he says in 2.1, *you were dead in trespasses and sins*, I think that is spiritual deadness. Notice that it is in the past tense. He is writing to the Ephesians who have received justification or salvation, but in the past, before trusting in Christ they were dead spiritually. That is a description of depravity and that is in our spirit.

Then in 2.2, *in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world*. So depravity looks at how we have lived; we live in conformity to the course of the world, in the spirit of ‘*the prince of the power of the air*’—that is satan. Depravity also involves the influence, effects and temptations of sin by satan himself.

So, we have the world, satan and thirdly we have the flesh: Ephesians 2.3 *we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest*. ‘We too’: Paul includes us all since we were this way ‘indulging in the desires of the flesh and of the mind’, responding to whatever was inside us, the origin of sin is the inward part, the spirit, the heart. ‘And were by nature children of wrath’; this is total depravity, being under sin.

So there are three elements described in Ephesians 2.1-3, the influence of the world, satan himself, but it also involves the flesh and the mind and our very nature, leaving us in a condition of being by nature children of wrath. ‘Even as the rest’; that is, all of humanity, the universal aspect to it which we have in verse 10 as well:

3.10 as it is written, “THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE;

‘There is none righteous, not even one, the universality, all of humanity—total depravity touches every one and that is the emphasis of this passage, what Paul is demonstrating in chapter three. So we are spiritually dead.

Again, we cannot do effective evangelism without a proper understanding of man’s need!!!

[Romans 3.9-12 & Psalm 14.1-3 Total Depravity-1 044]

Total Depravity affects heart, mind, will, speech, emotions, body, actions

1. Spirit - Romans 3.10,
Isaiah 64.6 *For all of us have become like one who is unclean, And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; And all of us wither like a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.*
Ecclesiastes 7.20 *Indeed, there is not a righteous man on earth who continually does good and who never sins.*
Psalm 143.2 *And do not enter into judgment with Your servant, For in Your sight no man living is righteous.*
Ephesians 2.1-3

Spiritual Deadness

1. Unrighteous - Romans 3.10 as it is written, “THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE;
2. World - Ephesians 2.2 *in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air; of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.*
3. Satan - 2.2
4. Flesh & mind - 2.3 *Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.*
5. Deserving wrath - 2.3
6. Other words used to describe depravity:
lost: in a desperate situation,
blind: not able to see spiritual things,
naked: not having spiritual covering--righteousness,
helpless: nothing we can do to change the condition,
evil: unrighteous,
defiled: corrupted,
darkened: dangers out there; if you can't see them you will fall into pits,

condemned: a legal term; it comes from different perspectives,
useless: in verse 12, have lost the purpose for which we were created,
corrupt: not the same as the original creation,
in bondage: we are slaves,
enemies: do not have a right standing ...

Total Depravity

1. Spirit - Romans 3.10, No one, and it affects the whole being.
Isaiah 64.6 *For all of us have become like one who is unclean, And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; And all of us wither like a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.*
Ecclesiastes 7.20 *Indeed, there is not a righteous man on earth who continually does good and who never sins.*
Psalm 143.2 *And do not enter into judgment with Your servant, For in Your sight no man living is righteous.*
Ephesians 2.1-3
2. Heart - Jeremiah 17.9 *The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?*
The heart is incurable; that is depravity. Deceitful. The unbeliever cannot understand himself, no perception of who he really is in relation to God. The gospel is design to give him that understanding so that he can see his true condition.
Mark 7.20 “...*That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man. 21 “For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, 22 deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. 23 “All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man.”*
It is also a heart issue. Jesus says all these things come from the heart. Actions emanate from an evil heart, or rather from a depraved heart or one that is unrighteous, etc.

3.10 as it is written, “THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE; 11 THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD;

This probably comes from Psalm 14. It stresses the universal aspect—there is not a single one that stands in a right relationship with God including the cute little girl we mentioned earlier. Then verse 11:

3.10 as it is written, “THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE; 11 THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD;

‘There is none who understands’. This is another aspect, our minds, our understanding, our rational capacity. We don’t understand, not referring to education, or to all things, but referring to the unbeliever, Romans one: ‘that which is known about God is evident’. There is understanding about who God is, for God ‘made it evident’, has revealed Himself. 1.20 *For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.* They have ‘understanding’, just like the Ephesians described as ‘dead’, they are breathing, walking. He is talking about their deadness as human beings, spiritually. He doesn’t have spiritual understanding; he doesn’t recognize his condition. He doesn’t realize that he can take it one step further and trust in a provision that God has made. 2Corinthians 4.4, he is blind to spiritual things, cannot see them.

Total Depravity

1. Spirit - Romans 3.10, Isaiah 64.6, Ecclesiastes 7.20, Psalm 143.2, Ephesians 2.1-3
2. Heart - Jeremiah 17.9, Mark 7.20-22
3. Mind - Romans 3.11 *THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD;*
 1.28 *And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,*
Ephesians 4.17-18 So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;

Our minds are depraved; our flesh is depraved so we have to renew our minds. In ‘futility of their mind...darkened in their understanding’: that’s depravity. ‘Ignorance’ is a heart issue—these are internals.

Psalm 14 Summary

There is a correspondence between Romans 3.10 and Psalm 14.1. There are some elements in 3.11 like those in 14.2

Romans
 3.10 ... “THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE;

3.11 THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD;

Romans
 3.12 ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE.”

Psalm 14
 1 The **fool** has said in his heart, “There is no God.” They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds; There is no one who does good.

2 The LORD has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men To see if there are any who understand, Who seek after God.

Psalm 14
 3 They have all turned aside, together they have become corrupt; There is no one who does good, not even one.

Then, in 3.12 it is closer in terms of quotation from 14.3 Notice how it begins: this is a description of a fool. Put this with what Romans one says: being a fool is a product of making conclusions of rejecting truth. It is not that people are ‘foolish’ and then say things; it is people believing certain things and *becoming fools*. It is not just a characteristic of fools, but because he has already believed that there is no God that *makes him a fool*. Romans 1.21 *For even though they knew God, They had knowledge... they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, They rejected God... but they became futile in their speculations, As a result, their minds are distorted, are looking at things from a distorted perspective, concluding there is no God and their foolish heart was darkened. So: 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, A product of rejecting the revelation that God has made. This describes the whole evolution/creation debate. Note the sequence: God reveals Himself clearly —> no one has a defense —> man rejects that revelation—> results in man’s thinking, his whole being, changes*

his outlook or perspective on things and ‘speculates’ on how things came about, and, having rejected the creator, decides on evolution! This also is how the ‘atheist’ reaches his conclusion.

3.10 as it is written, “THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE; 11 THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD;

God is probing: are they any that understand? Paul answer: ‘There is none.’ This parallels Psalm 14.2 as above.

3.10 as it is written, “THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE; 11 THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD; 12 ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE.”

Verse 12: more of a quote of Psalm 14.3. ‘*All have turned aside, together they have become useless*’. They cannot fulfill their purpose anymore....*not even one*.

Total Depravity

1. Spirit - Romans 3.10, Isaiah 64.6, Ecclesiastes 7.20, Psalm 143.2, Ephesians 2.1-3
2. Heart - Jeremiah 17.9, Mark 7.20-22
3. Mind - Romans 3.11, Ephesians 4.17-18
4. Volition - Romans 3.11 *THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD; 12 ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE.*”

It is a matter of choices; seeking for God is a decision, a choice—I’m going in this direction. So part of our depravity involves our will. We don’t see God and we all turn aside. In our own nature we don’t seek for God.

[Romans 3.11-13 & Psalm 14.1-3 Total Depravity-2 045]

James 1.13 *Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. 14 But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. 15 Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.*

John 8.34 *Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.*

In other words, the choices we make are controlled by another; a slave does what the master demands. We are under sin and sin is a slave master controlling our wills. The choices we make are dictated by our own flesh. Sin stems from these choices, so our wills are affected.

You might ask: What about all these Scriptures that indicate and even command us to seek the Lord? Jeremiah 29.13 ‘*You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.*’ And there are others: Psalm 9.10 *And those who know Your name will put their trust in You, For You, O LORD, have not forsaken those who seek You.* It almost indicates that we have a capacity or an ability to seek God.

Well, we have a volition and we do make choices, but the doctrine of depravity tells us that the choices will always be against God. In fact, many of these passages, if not all of them, particularly in the OT, pertain to Israel and a lot of them are in the prophets like the Jeremiah where he is calling Israel back to themselves, speaking to believers and calling upon them to seek Him. He is not talking about the unregenerate, lost heart. The unbeliever, I think, always chooses this path that leads away from God.

Now the *new* nature, here is the good news: God has given us a new nature in which He has given us new life and it is spiritual. So we have a new life with a new spirit...

New Nature

- > Spirit - New nature with eternal life, regenerated
- > Heart - tender to God. Also now the heart is tender to God, we are inclined and sensitive to spiritual things. It is only in Christ that we get a new nature. Apart from Christ we remain in our deadness. So it is based on the finished work of Christ on the cross, which we describe as regeneration.
- > Intellect - can be renewed, changed from being darkened, without understanding. Ephesians 4: Paul describes the unbelieving mind and intellect. And in the same context he tells us to renew our minds—by learning Biblical principles, by studying God’s Word. So if we neglect God’s word, we are actually thinking the old thoughts, as the unbeliever. Hence, the importance of studying the word consistently. It is in the new nature that we can have the renewing of our minds.
- > Volition - empowered to obey. We have a new capacity in the new nature, the empowerment of the HS to be able to obey God’s word,

to do what He desires, to obey what is right and we know what is wrong.

So there is hope for the believer: we don't have to live in the flesh—which is just like the unbeliever. We have a new option in the new nature; we have the nature and the walk of the Spirit. That is what the Christian life is all about, walking in the Spirit as opposed to walking in the flesh.

I. Introduction	1.1-17
II. Provision of God's Righteousness	1.18-8.39
A. Condemnation	1.18-3.20
3. Guilt of All Mankind	3.9-20
a. Summary Indictment of Guilt	3.9
b. Scriptural Proof of Depravity	3.10-18
1) Sinful character	3.10-12
2) Sinful conduct	3.13-17

We have looked at the sinful character; now in verses 13-17 we will focus more on the outworking of that character. This can be described as Sinful Conduct. So beginning in verse 13 the emphasis is on what we do and our conduct.

3.13 “THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN GRAVE, WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY KEEP DECEIVING,” “THE POISON OF ASPS IS UNDER THEIR LIPS”; 14 “WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS”; 15 “THEIR FEET ARE SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD, 16 DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR PATHS, 17 AND THE PATH OF PEACE THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN.”

Verses 13-17 are one sentence. Paul strings together several other passages or clauses from the OT and these are primarily from the Psalms, or at least poetic material and if you know the nature of poetry, especially Hebrew poetry you realize that oftentimes it is very vivid, very nonliteral, lots of images which is exactly what we have here. We have a picture of the throat as an open grave, a mouth full of cursing, feet that are swift to shed blood—a path that you take that leads to death.

You can imagine these images and understand the ideas behind them.

3.13 “THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN GRAVE, WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY KEEP DECEIVING,” “THE POISON OF ASPS IS UNDER THEIR LIPS”;

First, notice the ‘throat is an open grave’. To get the context: from where is Paul drawing these images? It appears that they are coming out of Psalm 5. Reading this will give us context, but also, how is Paul *using* this passage? This will be insightful for us because sometimes Biblical writers use the OT in different ways.

Psalm 5.1 *Give ear to my words, O LORD, Consider my groaning.*
2 *Heed the sound of my cry for help, my King and my God, For to You I pray.*
3 *In the morning, O LORD, You will hear my voice; In the morning I will order my prayer to You and eagerly watch.*
4 *For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness; No evil dwells with You.*
5 *The boastful shall not stand before Your eyes; You hate all who do iniquity.*

It is a ‘Lament Psalm’. This means the writer is in some deep difficulty, that is, his life is threatened or he is in some sort of trouble and he is lamenting and taking it as a prayer to God. In a lament psalm there are different parts to it, in fact it follows a certain pattern:

Lament Psalm 5

1. Cry for help - 5.1-3

David is crying out and we have to think about the situation. He is in pain. This is parallelism: *Give ear...heed the sound of my cry*. Not that God is not listening or hearing, but it is the Psalmist's way of drawing God into the prayer that he is offering: *In the morning, you will hear...in the morning I will order my prayer to You and eagerly watch*.

2. Confession of trust - 5.4-7

Then there is a confession of trust: because he knows the nature of God he can petition and ask on the basis of the nature of God. We should, in our prayers, appeal to Him on the basis of who He is. 4 *For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness;* In other words, He is a God of justice and righteousness and love; He doesn't take pleasure in wickedness. *No evil dwells with You*. He is a holy God so we can appeal on the basis of His holiness.

David is in the midst of trouble; we do not know the situation, but he is surrounded by evil. It could be early in his rulership; he was anointed king, but Saul was still in power, was still the king. In the context of that rulership, Saul attempted to kill David on several occasions—I have counted at least 11 times. So he is appealing to God on His holiness; He doesn't take pleasure in this wickedness.

5 *The boastful shall not stand before Your eyes; You hate all who do iniquity.* He acknowledges that people are inflicting pain on him.

6 *You destroy those who speak falsehood; The LORD abhors the man of bloodshed and deceit.* If this is not early in his career, he did have struggles later on as well.

7 *But as for me, by Your abundant lovingkindness* He is appealing on the basis of God's loving kindness [*khesed* in Hebrew] *I will enter Your house,* He is going to enter the presence of God, is going to offer a prayer. *At Your holy temple I will bow in reverence for You.* He is submitting himself to this holy God.

3. Petition to intervene - 5.8 Here is the petition which is the heart of the prayer for God to intervene in his circumstance. *O LORD, lead me in Your righteousness because of my foes; Make Your way straight before me.* 'Help me get out of this situation; rescue me'.
4. Lament - 5.9-10 Verse 9 is the one that Paul seem to be quoting. This is the actual *lament*; David is lamenting the situation he finds himself in and he is describing those that are persecuting him. *There is nothing reliable in what they say; They are false witnesses. Their inward part is destruction itself. Their throat is an open grave; They flatter with their tongue.* This is what Paul quotes.

10 *Hold them guilty, O God; By their own devices let them fall! In the multitude of their transgressions thrust them out, For they are rebellious against You.* Paul doesn't quote verse 10, but it is David continuing his petition.

5. Praise for answer - 5.11-12
It concludes in verses 11 and 12. David is anticipating that God is going to intervene, that God is, in fact, going to deal with those that are afflicting him. So, he praises God for answering his prayer, in anticipation of it.
- 11 *But let all who take refuge in You be glad, Let them ever sing for joy; And may You shelter them, That those who love Your name may exult in You.* When God intervenes and answers, there will be exultation.
- 12 *For it is You who blesses the righteous man, O LORD, You surround him with favor as with a shield.* He has a right relationship with God so He will bless David. And in anticipation of the answer he praises God.

Psalms 5 & 140

Romans	Psalms
3.13 "THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN GRAVE, WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY	5.9 There is nothing reliable in what they say: Their inward part is destruction itself. <u>Their throat is</u>

KEEP DECEIVING," "THE an open grave; They flatter with their tongue.
POISON OF ASPS IS
UNDER THEIR LIPS";

140.3 They sharpen their tongues as a serpent; Poison of a viper is under their lips.

We can say that Paul is taking this in a broader sense. David is observing those that are persecuting him; they are unbelievers or they are acting in the flesh, and this is their character: *their throat is an open grave, they flatter with their tongue.* Paul is applying it in a broader sense: it is also a description of the unbeliever in general, not just in that particular historical situation that David was in, but under inspiration Paul takes the same concept because it is applicable to the unbelieving heart as well.

Then the last part 'The poison of asks is under their lips' That is not from Psalm 5. It is more than likely from another psalm, 140.3 *They sharpen their tongues as a serpent; Poison of a viper is under their lips.* In Romans Paul uses the word 'asps' which is probably a reference to the Egyptian cobra; he is saying that that poison is deadly. The bite of a cobra kills in seconds if there is enough of the poison injected into you. This is very vivid, picturesque language. If you opened a recent grave there would be a body, putrid odors—death. This is what the writer of the Psalms has in mind and what Paul is using here. This is a picture of what the unbelieving throat is like, and continuing, also their tongues.

3.13 "THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN GRAVE, WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY KEEP DECEIVING," "THE POISON OF ASPS IS UNDER THEIR LIPS"; 14 "WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS";

3.13 "THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN GRAVE, WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY KEEP DECEIVING," "THE POISON OF ASPS IS UNDER THEIR LIPS";

He moves outward from the throat to the tongue.

3.13 "THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN GRAVE, WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY KEEP DECEIVING," "THE POISON OF ASPS IS UNDER THEIR LIPS";

It is deadly, further out from the throat. Then in verse 14: This is what comes out of the mouth: instead of decay and odors and death, the mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.

3.14 "WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS"

Throat —> Tongue —> Lips —> Mouth —> Life

The whole idea is what our tongue produces: a life that brings death, destruction—death and putridness. This is the unbelieving heart; only deception comes out of it. And poison of asps is destruction. This is depravity. This is reality.

So it is our speech, our communication, the ways we speak to others, whether they be close to us or people in the culture. The book of Proverbs says a lot about speech, in terms of what we have in Romans 3, evil speech. Here is a list to show the many passages on evil speech:

Proverbs on Evil Speech

> Perverse - 2.12	> Destructive - 17.4
> False witness - 6.19	> Backbiting - 25.23
> Slandorous - 10.18	> Whispering (gossip) - 18.8
> Perverted - 10.31	> Flattering - 26.28
> Rash - 12.18	> Scorning - 29.8
> Lying - 12.22	> Hasty - 29.20

Total Depravity includes our spirit, heart, intellect, our will—every aspect of who we are has been touched by sin, all of who we are has been affected—including also communication:

5. Communication - 3.13

James gives another very vivid picture:

James 3.5-6 *So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire! 6 And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell.*

The imagery is of an entire forest set afire with just a small fire. This tiny little organ defiles everything else. ...by hell—very destructive. 8 *But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison.* And no one can contain the tongue; that's the old nature. We cannot contain the communication. It is a restless evil and full of deadly poison. Notice it is parallel to Paul's passage in Romans.

To go to a positive note, let's go back to Proverbs because they also speak of the potential of the tongue and the positive things from our speech—things that we do in a positive realm:

Proverbs on Righteous Speech

 from our new nature

> Honest - 4.24	> Life - 18.21
-----------------	----------------

> Wise - 8.6-8	> Gentile - 15.1
> Few - 10.19	> Appropriate - 15.23
> Nourish - 10.21	> Sweet - 16.21
> Reward - 12.14	> Precious - 20.15
> Healing - 12.18	> Corrective - 26.4

So our speech, our communication, has potential for both good and destruction or evil. And in the power of the Spirit our communication can speak truth and it can bring healing to those we speak with.

New Nature of the believer is the opposite of Depravity.

> Spirit - New nature with eternal life
> Heart - tender to God
> Intellect - can be renewed
> Volition - empowered to obey
> Communication - speak truth, healing

Walking in the power HS overcomes old nature. We learn later in Romans that we should not try to reform the old nature, not try to improve it. We have the alternative of walking in the Spirit which means walking in the new nature. We will see in chapter six that we are to put to death the old nature and to live eternal life abundantly in the power of the Holy Spirit.

[Romans 3.11-17 Total Depravity-3 046]

This is almost depressing. But it is reality, the world we live in. We may think that we are better educated and wouldn't do those things, have this sinful conduct. How could David, in his high position do things like the episode con Bathsheba? And could Israel be so hard-headed and reject what God had done—right after their exodus? Or later in their history, reject God who was in their midst? Or, in the Millennial Kingdom where satan is bound and there are ideal circumstances, what happens at the end? There is rebellion.

All of these things can be explained by the reality of the sin nature that not only the unbeliever possesses but that is all that he has. But also those of us who have trusted in Jesus Christ and are totally cleansed, totally forgiven, yet we have the old nature. In the next section of Romans we will see how to handle this.

So, we are in the depressing part of Romans, but in order to appreciate and appropriate what we find in the next section it is important, as believers, to be able to accurately describe it to the unbeliever who is in his depravity.

3.14 “WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS”;

Continuing in verse 14, we see the result of the evil in the mouth, the kind of communication the unbeliever has. Full of cursing; the idea of anger is there implicitly. Not only our speech is affected, but also our *emotions* are not what they would be if there were no sin. Some people lose control of their emotions and cursing and bitterness are the result. In fact, you think you cannot think of any aspect that is not affected by sin; that is the Biblical concept of total depravity.

Psalm 10

Romans	Psalms
3.14 “WHOSE MOUTH IS <u>FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS</u> ”;	Psalm 10.7 His <u>mouth is full of curses</u> and deceit and <u>oppression</u> ; Under his tongue is mischief and wickedness.

Verse 14 is taken from Psalm 1.7. And it goes further saying that *Under his tongue is mischief and wickedness*. This is synonymous parallelism: two lines, each line communicating the same idea using different words or images, reinforcing the first line. This *mischief and wickedness* is the outworking of the bitterness and anger and oppression that reside in the unbelieving heart. But of course, we have been emphasizing that we have that potential in the old nature.

Now we look again at the series of quotations. Romans 3.10 seems to be a summary of Psalm 14.1-3 because it captures an element of the first verse and it concludes with ‘there is not one, not even one.

Verse 11 is portions of 14.2 that are quoted. And in verse 12, verse three.

Quotes

Romans	OT
3.10	Psalms 14.1-3
3.11	14.2
3.12	14.3
.....	
3.13	Psalms 5.9, 140.3
3.14	10.7

Verse 13 comes from two places: Psalm 5.9 and 140.3. Now in verse 14 elements from Psalm 10.7. So Paul is stringing together sentences from Psalms of David and others. This brings us to the *emotions*.

Total Depravity

- 5. Communication - 3.13 James 3.5-6
- 6. Emotions - 3.14 “*WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS*”;
Ephesians 4.31 *Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. 32 Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.*
Colossians 3.8 *But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth.*

Again, other passages also quote from the Psalms. Ephesians 4.31—reinforcing Paul’s points of darkening of our minds and encouraging the renewing—deals with our emotions, the positive aspects of correcting. Remember, this is addressed to the believer; we still have the potential of all of that *bitterness and wrath and anger*; etc. Just as we have to renew our minds, we need to renew and reestablish a godly emotional state. This is part of dealing with our walk in Christ.

Colossians 3.8 is very similar: *anger* and *wrath* are emotional outbursts. So we revise or renew our speech, deal with our emotions bringing them under the power of the HS. What is the fruit of the spirit? love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness... These can come out of the Holy Spirit; that is where we gain the ability and the power to be able to have a stable or godly emotional state, where we can express love, joy, etc.

New Nature of the believer is the opposite of Depravity.

- > Spirit - New nature with eternal life
- > Heart - tender to God
- > Intellect - can be renewed
- > Volition - empowered to obey
- > Communication - speak truth, healing
- > Emotions - can be redirected

It is only the believer that can reinstate our emotions such that they are pleasing to God. They can be redirected in the power of the HS. Remember, we do not want to reform the old nature. What does Paul say? In Romans six: you can’t fix it, don’t try; put it to death! Now we have the new potential to live in the power of the Spirit, but it is through the new nature.

What happens when you try to ‘fix’ it? You end up in chapter seven: Paul’s own experience. ‘The very thing I want to do, I do not do. The things I hate are the things that I do.’ That is living in the power of the old nature. So you have to live in chapter eight

where it is the Spirit's power. This is the encouragement for us as believers. The *unbeliever*, the focus of this passage, has no power to do any of that. He first needs *regeneration* because he has no capacity to bring anything that gains merit before God.

3.14 “WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS”; 15 “THEIR FEET ARE SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD,

Now we look at verse 15: we move to the feet with a new set of images: of walking or our bodies and our actions. It does refer to body parts here; they are affected—just note the grey hair and other signs of degeneration. *Their feet are swift*—to do godly things? No, the other extreme—*shed blood*. ‘This is what my lifestyle is like, this is what I do as I walk the world. I kill people’. Jesus, in the sermon on the Mount, equates murder with anger which is the root of killing people. It is the end product of depravity—such as a Manson, without any restraints.

	Quotes	
Romans		OT
3.10		Psalms 14.1-3
3.11		14.2
3.12		14.3
.....		
3.13		Psalms 5.9, 140.3
3.14		10.7
.....		
3.15		Isaiah 59.7
3.16		59.7
3.17		59.8

Romans 3.15-17 come from Isaiah 59.7 & 8. Another series of quotes, of descriptive phrases or clauses. In the Isaiah context he is describing Israel, God's people. They have an old nature, that deadness.

Romans	Isaiah 59	Isaiah
3.15-17 “ <u>THEIR FEET ARE SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD,</u> <u>16 DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR PATHS,</u> <u>17 AND THE PATH</u>	Isaiah 59.7-8 <u>Their feet run to evil,</u> And they hasten to <u>shed innocent blood;</u> <u>Their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity,</u> <u>Devastation and destruction are in their highways.</u> 8 They <u>do not know the way</u>	

OF PEACE THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN.” of peace, And there is no justice in their tracks; They have made their paths crooked, Whoever treads on them does not know peace.

59.7: *Their feet run to evil.* Most of the quotes in the NT are not word for word. But oftentimes they capture the essence.

There are a series of parallel thoughts—that is synonymous parallelism. The major feature of Hebrew poetry is not rhyme, it is parallelism. It helps you understand what the writer is communicating. It also utilizes images or figures of speech.

The next line: *their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity.* The same idea: evilness or expressions of evil, the result of a life or a lifestyle. The second line reinforces the first: it not only affects our feet, our walking or running, but our thoughts of iniquity.

Then there is another parallel line: *Devastation and destruction are in their highways,* the results or end product: the direction in which they go, the choices they make. It is imagery of walking along a path or down the highway or interstate, including the direction we are headed. In verse 15 we are heading for destruction and devastation—for our life, unless we take a new path, trust in Jesus Christ.

Then Isaiah 59.8 is another clause that reinforces the prior ones: They *do not know the way of peace.* There is no peace in their path, just destruction and misery—the opposite of misery is peace. They don't know how to repair relationships; the only thing they have is *destroyed* relationships. Instead of contentment there is frustration. It continues with: *no justice*, usually self-centeredness. This is a series of evil actions all put in a row dealing with what happens in terms of choices. Paul ends with the lack of peace in verse 17.

But the Isaiah goes on with *crooked paths.* Everything is crooked: ‘I am going to try this.’ But it didn't work. Then he says: ‘I'm going to try that.’ But that didn't work. The end result of all this is that coming in contact with them gives you misery and problems. That's the old nature, deadness.

3.13 “THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN GRAVE, WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY KEEP DECEIVING,” “THE POISON OF ASPS IS UNDER THEIR LIPS”; 14 “WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS”; 15 “THEIR FEET ARE SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD, ... 18 “THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES.”

So you can see in Romans 3.13-18 a series of synonymous parallelisms reinforcing the idea of total depravity. Notice the parts of the body which taken together are *bodies* which are affected by depravity.

Throat —> Tongue —> Lips —> Mouth —> Feet —> Eyes

Total Depravity

- 5. Communication - 3.13
James 3.5-6
- 6. Emotions - 3.14
- 7. Body - 3.15

1John 2.16 *For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.*

In 1John 2.16, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the boastful pride of life. The only hope for the body is the resurrection.

- 8. Actions - 3.16
- 9. Conscience - though not explicit here, is also affected

New Nature

- > Spirit - New nature with eternal life
- > Heart - tender to God
- > Intellect - can be renewed
- > Volition - empowered to obey
- > Communication - speak truth, healing
- > Emotions - can be redirected
- > Body - awaits resurrection

There is nothing we can do with the body: it will continue to decline. We await the resurrection. It is only in Christ that we have release from the old nature—in the resurrection. We will spend the Millennium and Eternity without the old nature. Won't that be a glorious time. Only those that know Jesus Christ will have that which is 'glorification'. Today we are in the process of going in that direction if we continue to grow as a believer, but we won't arrive at glorification until we go to be with Him.

3.16 DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR PATHS, 17 AND THE PATH OF PEACE THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN."

We see degeneration in history, in the church, will see it in the millennial kingdom. Unbelievers are in misery, on a path of destruction.

3.16 DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR PATHS, 17 AND THE PATH OF PEACE THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN."

Unbelievers have no peace, no satisfaction, no inward peace which spills out in relationships with other people.

A. Condemnation 1.18-3.20

- 3. Guilt of All Mankind 3.9-20
 - a. Summary Indictment of Guilt 3.9
 - b. Scriptural Proof of Depravity 3.10-18
 - 1) Sinful character 3.10-12
 - 2) Sinful conduct 3.13-17
 - 3) Causa de su pecado 3.18

3.16 Quebranto y desventura hay en sus caminos; 17 Y no conocieron camino de paz. 18 No hay temor de Dios delante de sus ojos.

Verse 18: The fear of God is beginning of wisdom, a new way of living. But here it is total self-centeredness, no fear of God. That is depravity which affects everything. There is no way man has any merit before God because every aspect of who we are is tainted by sin. It is only in Christ alone.

[Romans 3.18-20 Closing Statement on Guilt 047]

Now to finish this section on Condemnation which is the longest section in Romans: the dilemma man is in. It begins in 3.9:

- 3. Guilt of All Mankind 3.9-20
 - a. Summary Indictment of Guilt 3.9
 - b. Scriptural Proof of Depravity 3.10-18
 - c. Summary Conclusion 3.19-20
 - 1) Superintending over Israel 3.19

Romans 3.18 is a small summary of what Paul said in 1.18-20, the cause of man's depravity. He continues to use the image of the courtroom and the legal language. It is about ultimate justice, in relationship to God. He builds the case against all humanity, including the Jews, and pronounces all guilty before a Holy God because of their total depravity.

3.18 "THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES."

He states that in our thinking, actions, emotions and communications, God is left out. There is no fear of the Lord. If you do a word study on 'fear' you will find several passages with it. It can also be translated 'reverence' or 'a respect' or a realization that it is the most important aspect of life. A 'fear' has this aspect to it: God could do whatever He wants and even wipe us from the face of the earth and He would be perfectly just in doing so. There is an awesomeness, a sense

of power that I don't want to mess with—I respect it, am in awe of it. By nature we do not have that; first we have to realize that there is a God, that He is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, sovereign, majestic, all of these things. Wow! That God loves me; I have a respect for that!

The *unbeliever* has every reason to fear being taken out! A real dread and fear that can be destructive because he has no basis because he is unrighteous, does not have a standing. That is what Paul is saying: they have no fear—until they realize their real situation which is the purpose of this passage—to give an understanding of what mankind is all about. So there is no fear of God and therefore he doesn't make a change, there is no understanding and he does not seek after God. He takes the path away from God.

It is a small phrase but has much insight into where we are spiritually—until Jesus Christ wipes us clean and gives us a new nature. Our tendency, even as believers, is to live just like the world. We neglect the awesome Word of God; we have an inspired and inerrant communication from God and we don't spend time in it. That is from that old nature. We need a *healthy* dose of the fear of God—respect and a mindfulness of what each thing means.

This verse 18 is probably from Psalm 36.1 *Transgression speaks to the ungodly within his heart; There is no fear of God before his eyes.*

- 3. Guilt of All Mankind 3.9-20
- c. Summary Conclusion 3.19-20
 - 1) Superintending over Israel 3.19

3.19 Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God; 20 because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

The two verses are one sentence. '...it speaks to those who are under the Law, **so that...**' which means that there is a *purpose*. We will see what are the purposes of the Law. Most people think they have to *do* something to please God. We don't have the concept that anything we do does not bring any merit whatsoever before God. We understand that when we are believers—that there is nothing we can do and that God has done it all.

3.19 Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God; 20 because by the works of the Law

no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

Verse 20 begins after a semicolon. *because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight*; There is nothing you can do, no obedience to perform to gain any merit before God. That will be the subject of the next major section of the book: How we become 'justified' in His eyes. That is a legal term.

for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin. Another purpose of the Law: to reveal to us who we really are so that now we may see that we can't meet that standard, 'I don't measure up'. The next step is that Jesus did everything that is required before God to justify us. The courtroom term would be 'to acquit us. We are guilty but we are going to be acquitted, not on the basis of us but we will be acquitted in the supreme, supreme court on the basis of someone else. Someone else took on that prison term that we deserve. Someone else paid the penalty for what we deserve—to go to the cross eternally.

The next section will show that if we accept that simply by faith, we are justified, acquitted and set free. Justification has two aspects: the sin is wiped clear—that's forgiveness of sin (past, present and future) which is the negative. The positive is that we are given righteousness, a righteous standing before God. It doesn't *make* us righteous; that is the growth process of the believer (chapters 6-8). We are *declared* legally righteous before a Holy God which is the ultimate acquittal before God.

Purpose of Law

1. Israel's Constitution - Exodus 19.5-6 *'Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; 6 and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.'* *These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.'*

This is at Mt Sinai, where God gave Law to the people; it is the Mosaic covenant, a constitution. It would regulate every aspect of their life. It would govern them as a nation; their part was to try to obey it! We will see later that part of it is to show that we can't do it. We need something beyond the Law; Israel demonstrated that. They needed a Messiah.

Are *we* under the law in that sense? Absolutely not. We are under grace. Some laws like the sabbath, and the dietary laws, were for that people's constitution and don't apply to us. But is it OK to murder now? No, because there are eternal and moral overriding aspects of the law that pertain to every culture at any time. Nine of the Ten Commandments are repeated in the NT.

- 3. Guilt of All Mankind 3.9-20
 - c. Summary Conclusion 3.19-20
 - 1) Superintending over Israel 3.19
 - 2) Silencing of Sinners

Another purpose of the Law is the silencing of sinners. It speaks to those, Israel, under the law **so that**—another purpose here. That *every mouth may be closed*. No one can come before the judge and say, ‘I was obedient to the Law’—because if you violate one law you are violating the Law, and you are guilty. When you stand before the judge he will ask and you will admit that you violated lots of parts. So you shut your mouth. A purpose of the Law is to make us speechless, to have no case in a court of law; you are without excuse. ‘I have no defense whatsoever.’

3.19 Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God;

This is a good summary verse 19:

“Until the mouth is shut, is stopped, and you are speechless and have nothing to say, you put up arguments, and produce all your righteousness: then the Law speaks and it all withers to nothing—becomes ‘filthy rags’ and ‘dung’ and you have nothing to say.”

—M Lloyd-Jones

Purpose of Law

- 1. Israel’s Constitution - 19.5-6
- 2. Revelation of God’s Standards

Another purpose of the Law is to reveal God’s standards. Before a Holy God it leaves us speechless; we cannot meet His standards.

- 3. Guilt of All Mankind 3.9-20
 - c. Summary Conclusion 3.19-20
 - 1) Superintending over Israel 3.19
 - 2) Silencing of Sinners
 - 3) Standing of World

Another purpose: all the world becomes accountable to God. You might ask how the gentiles fit into this; they are not under the Law. This illustration might help: all structural concrete should be tested to meet certain standards. The way they test concrete is that they take cylinders of the concrete to test them in the lab. So these test samples are

representative of the whole. If the test fails on the sample then that concrete is rejected because it does not meet the standard. That is the purpose of the sample.

3.19 Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God; 20 because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

I think Israel is God’s sample and if those who have the most revelation, had the presence of God and the blessing of God and had the standing of being the children of God—if *they* fail, how much more those who *do not* have all of that. So Israel is like a test sample and it condemns all the world. So the purpose of the Law is to condemn all.

Purpose of Law

- 1. Israel’s Constitution - Exodus 19.5-6
- 2. Revelation of God’s Standards
- 3. Condemnation of All

- 3. Guilt of All Mankind 3.9-20
 - c. Summary Conclusion 3.19-20
 - 1) Superintending over Israel 3.19
 - 2) Silencing of Sinners
 - 3) Standing of World
 - 4) Shortcomings of the Law

3.19 Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God; 20 because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

You can’t be justified; we do not have the ability to bring anything that has standing before God. That is depravity which Paul has shown us in verses 9 through 18. ‘Works’ means those produced by trying to obey the Law. No one could keep the Law except Jesus; He is the only one that perfectly obeyed the Law. We cannot gain any righteousness by self efforts, good works. And when you share the gospel, this is a point that you will want to make.

Works of Law

1. Works produced by observing law
2. Cannot gain righteousness by self-effort, good works
3. 3.28 *For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.*

This is an eternal statement.

Galatians 2.16 nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.

This was a major problem in the churches of Galatia. They were introducing legalism—by Judaizers. Very much like what Paul was saying in Romans.

3.2 *This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?*

When you trusted in Jesus Christ, did you receive the Spirit because you *deserved* the Spirit, by the works of the Law? No. Or, by hearing with faith? Yes.

3.5 *So then, does He who provides you with the Spirit and works miracles among you, do it by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?*

Here he is talking about the Christian life: we live the Christian life on the same basis as we received salvation; it is also by faith.

3.10 *For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT ABIDE BY ALL THINGS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO PERFORM THEM."*

If you want to earn merit before God, *perfection* is required. Perfect obedience: not just in actions but in motivation, in thought, every aspect—that is, no one can do it; no one can be justified by works alone.

3. Guilt of All Mankind 3.9-20
 - c. Summary Conclusion 3.19-20
 - 1) Superintending over Israel 3.19
 - 2) Silencing of Sinners
 - 3) Standing of World
 - 4) Shortcoming of Law 3.20
 - 5) Showing of Sin

3.19 Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God; 20 because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

The Law is what shows us sin. It is intended to show us that we are depraved. We don't reach the standards. Mankind stands condemned apart from Jesus Christ. This is the closing statement of his argument.

Works of Law

1. Works produced by observing law
2. Cannot gain righteousness by self-effort, good works
3. 3.28, Galatians 2.16, 3.2, 5, 10
4. Man in hopeless situation
5. Stand condemned Romans 7.7...*I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, "YOU SHALL NOT COVET."* This was Paul's own experience.

Purpose of Law

1. Israel's Constitution - Exodus 19.5-6
2. Revelation of God's Standards
3. Condemnation of All
4. Revelation of Sin Romans 7.7
5. Revelation of God's Nature
 - I. Introduction 1.1-17
 - II. Provision of God's Righteousness 1.18-8.39
 - A. Condemnation 1.18-3.20

We have completed the 'condemnation' and have seen the state of all men. Hopefully this helps us present the gospel to others. Our culture is in desperate need for the solution to sin (total depravity).