

Pt 11 Romans 3:9-20, There Is None Righteous

A sermon series by Pastor Byron Chesney, Porchlight Baptist Church www.pbcknox.com

Romans 3:9-20

- (9) What then? are we better *than they*? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;
- (10) As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:
- (11) There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.
- (12) They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.
- (13) Their throat *is* an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; 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 ways:
- (17) And the way of peace have they not known:
- (18) There is no fear of God before their eyes.
- (19) Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.
- (20) Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

Last Sunday we looked at the first 8-verses of this chapter and we saw where Paul answered 4-different questions that the Jews would ask concerning God's righteousness and whether he was fair or not in judging them of their sins only brought glory to him?

1. First question: Romans 3:1 What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?
 - a. **Paul's answer - You were given the oracles of God.**
2. Second question: Romans 3:3 For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?
 - a. **Paul's answer - God forbid, let God be true, but every man a liar.**
3. Third question: Romans 3:5 But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?
 - a. **Paul's answer - God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?**
4. Fourth question: Romans 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? (8) ...shouldn't we do evil, that good may come?...
 - a. **Paul's answer - God's damnation is just.**

Which brings us to the Jew's 5th and final question which Paul raises in our opening text this morning in verse (9) *What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;*

So it all comes full circle from where it started. What advantage then has the Jew? Here he asks, "Are we better than they?" (meaning the Gentiles) Notice that Paul uses the word "**we**" when addressing the Jews. Of course, he would, after all, he is a Jew himself.

In other words, because we are Jews, are we going to receive preferential treatment from God? Is he going to give us an advantage over the Gentiles?"

It would be similar to people that are born in the United States, which is supposedly a Christian nation, asking if we are better than everyone else in God's eyes? Surely since I was born in the U.S. God will treat me better than someone from North Korea!

But look at Paul's answer: *9c... No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;*

Pay very close attention to what the Bible is saying here. Just because this was written with a Jewish audience in mind doesn't mean that it does not apply to us today. The Bible was written in such a way that it is meant for EVERYONE and not just solely for the listening audience at the time.

When it comes to the Bible there are really only two classes of people: **Jews** and **Gentiles**. Anyone that is born outside of the Hebrew race is considered a Gentile. That would include Romans, Greeks, Asians, Africans, you name it. Even the Samaritans which were a mix of Jew and Gentile were considered Gentiles by the Jews.

Here the Bible says that both Jews and Gentiles are all under sin – that covers everyone, including you and I.

- (10) As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:
- (11) There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.
- (12) They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

Of course, it should be obvious when the Bible says "**none**" and "**not one**" this does not include the Lord Jesus because He certainly was and is righteous and always good.

That word "**Righteous**" means: **Innocent, Holy, and Just in character and deed.**

The fact that all humans are unrighteous, unprofitable, and unfit is not a New Testament concept. Man has always been and always will be this way.

When it says there is "**none that understandeth**," it is meaning having understanding of Spiritual matters and the holy nature of God. Man thinks that he is the smartest thing on earth and evolving into even smarter men. Sadly, man has not evolved, we have become more depraved, more evil, and more sinful. There is very little separating us from animals.

...there is none that seeketh after God.

This little tid bit seems to rile some people up. Many like to believe that they truly seek after God but that's just not true. People may seek for some kind of religious experience or some kind of god to worship but people do not seek after the True Living and Holy God. Unless God the Father draws them, they do not seek Him.

I'm not a Calvinist but I agree with their assessment that man is totally depraved. It takes action on God's part to move any man to seek after Him.

Jesus Himself says this: **John 6:44** No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

So, it requires God drawing you to ever seek after him and be saved.

The reason we cannot seek after God ourselves is because we are Spiritually dead. Dead things cannot seek after anything, they just rot and stink. A natural man does not have it within him to seek after God. Turn over to 1 Corinthians and let's read what Paul says about this to the Church at Corinth:

1 Corinthians 2:9-16

(9) But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

(10) But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

(11) For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

(12) Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

(13) Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

(14) But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

(15) But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

(16) For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

I am glad that God came and sought me out back in 1972. I sure wasn't looking for him when he found me. I didn't even know I was lost until the Father drew me, the Holy Spirit Convinced and Convicted me that I was sinner, and the Lord Jesus Christ Saved me.

All of these verses that Paul writes in verses 10, 11, 12, is a reflection of what King David said in: **Psalms 14:1-3**

(1) **To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.** The fool hath said in his heart, *There is no God.* They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, *there is none that doeth good.*

(2) The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, *and seek God.*

(3) They are all gone aside, they are *all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*

David says the LORD looked down from heaven to see if there was any that understood or any that sought after God – and there wasn't any and still aren't any today.

The truth is we are all miserable wretched sinners by nature. The only thing good about us is the Lord Jesus – period. There is absolutely nothing good, holy, or righteous in our filthy flesh.

- **Job** writes in **Job 14:1-4** Man *that is* born of a woman *is* of few days, and full of trouble. (2) He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not. (3) And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringest me into judgment with thee? (4) Who can bring a clean *thing* out of an unclean? not one.
- **David** writes in **Psalms 51:5** Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.
- **The Prophet Isaiah** writes in **Isaiah 64:6-7** But we are all as an unclean *thing*, and all our righteousnesses *are* as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. (7) And *there is* none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.
- I think the **Apostle Paul** captures it best and makes it very relatable to us: **Romans 7:18-25** For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good

thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not. (19) For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. (20) Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. (21) I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. (22) For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: (23) But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. (24) O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? (25) I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

(13) Their throat *is* an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; 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 ways:

(17) And the way of peace have they not known:

(18) There is no fear of God before their eyes.

Here Paul lists 9 qualities that represent sinful man:

1. Throat open sepulchre = Grave
2. Tongues of deceit = Deceptive
3. Lips of poison = Deadly
4. Mouth of cursing
5. Mouth of bitterness
6. Swift to shed blood
7. Ways are destruction and misery
8. Know no peace
9. No fear of God

I think that last one sums up why they have all the other 8; they do not fear God.

The Bible says in:

Psalms 111:10 The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do *his commandments*: his praise endureth for ever.

Proverbs 9:10 The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy *is* understanding.

(19) Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. (20) Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

The Jews felt that by following the Law it would assure them Salvation, but that notion is nowhere to be found in Scripture, instead we are told the Law was given as a "schoolmaster" to teach us right from wrong until Christ came to set everything in order. Listen to what Paul wrote to the **Galatians 3:22-26**: But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. (23) But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. (24) Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. (25) But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. (26) For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

So, no one can be justified by the Law, we can only be justified through Jesus Christ. And that is what Paul will go on to say in the next verses which we will look at next time.