

Romans 3:9-26 Total Depravity (Pt. 2): Sin Nature

**Because all are in bondage to sin all are hopeless apart from the gift of God's grace.**

**1) All are in bondage to sin (3:9-11).**

- a) "all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin" (**Rom. 3:10**; cf. Rom. 6:17, 20; Eph. 2:1)
- b) Ruined Character (**3:10**)—"none is righteous"
- c) Ruined Mind (**3:11a**)—"no one understands" (have an intelligent grasp; insight) (cf. Rom. 8:7; 12:2; Eph. 4:23)
- d) Ruined Will (**3:11b**)—"no one seeks for God" (orientation of the will inclined away from God) (cf. Rom. 9:16)
- e) **Application:**
  - i) There is no libertarian free-will.
  - ii) Human reason is present but perverted.
  - iii) Do not confuse enculturated habits with character.

**2) All are morally worthless (3:12-18).**

- a) "all have turned aside; together they have become worthless" (**3:12a**)
  - i) "turned aside"—whole life (behavior, thoughts, attitudes) oriented /inclined away from God
  - ii) "they have become worthless"—not that human life is without value, but humanity is in moral deficit, no profit
  - iii) "together"—Compare Tower of Babel (Gen. 11)
- b) "no one does good, not even one" (**3:12b**)—God's definition of "good"
- c) Corrupt/Corrupting Communication (**3:13-14**)
- d) Violence (**3:15-17**)
- e) Impiety (**3:18**)
- f) **Application:**
  - i) Be humbled by the reality that apart from Christ you have no moral capital (cf. Rom. 7:18).
  - ii) Praise God for the common grace that restrains humanity's wickedness. Praise God for the influence of the Church on society that has brought some enlightenment to moral issues. Pray for the Church's prophetic witness.

**3) All are silenced in guilt by the law of God (3:19-20).**

- a) "so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God" (**3:19**)
- b) "For by the works of the law no human being will be justified in His sight" (**3:20**)
- c) The helpless condition of human depravity is evident in that even the perfect law of God is of no avail to sinners, so wretched are we. It can only condemn (cf. Rom. 7:7-13; Gal. 3:21).
- d) **Application:** Realize your hopelessness in yourself. Repent of trying to justify yourself. Cast yourself on the mercy of God.

**4) One hope for all in the gift of God's grace (3:21-26).**

- a) "Justified" (**3:24**)—declared righteous by God
- b) "by His grace as a gift"—the operative power is God
- c) "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus"
  - i) "propitiation" (**3:25**)—wrath absorbing substitute
  - ii) "by His blood"—the death of Christ at the cross
  - iii) "so that He might be just" (**3:26**)—God never violates His righteous standards; every offense against His righteous law is punished
  - iv) "and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus"—God shows mercy, not by ignoring the demands of His justice, but by satisfying them in another, the Lord Jesus
- d) Our unrighteousness, punished in Christ, becomes a platform to display God's righteousness (**3:25-26**).
- e) **Application:**
  - i) "to be received by faith" (**3:25**)—believe on Jesus
  - ii) Magnify God's righteousness and grace in the cross of Christ.