

Romans 3:9-20

⁹ What then? Are we any better? Not at all. For we have already made the charge that Jews and Greeks alike are all under sin.

¹⁰ As it is written:

“There is no one righteous,
not even one.

¹¹ There is no one who understands,
no one who seeks God.

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

Psalm 14:1-3 and Psalm 53:1-3

¹³ “Their throats are open graves;
their tongues practice deceit.”

Psalm 5:9

“The venom of vipers is on their lips.”

Psalm 140:3

¹⁴ “Their mouths are full of cursing and of bitterness.”

Psalm 10:7

¹⁵ “Their feet are swift to shed blood;
¹⁶ ruin and misery lie in their wake,
¹⁷ and the way of peace they have not known.”

Isaiah 59:7-8

¹⁸ “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

Psalm 36:1

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. ²⁰ Therefore no one will be justified in His sight by works of the law. For the law merely brings awareness of sin.

Berean Study Bible

1 – with thanks to my Pastor, John Farr.

Four black nuns – a sermon to preach at the Vatican. Romans 3:10-12

None righteous. 10

None that understand. 11a

None who seek God. 11b

None who do good. 12b

2

Guilty as charged. Romans 3:9-20

Charge of guilt. 3:9

Guilt is assigned to everyone. 9 “that Jews and Greeks alike”

Guilt is serious for everyone. 9 “are all under sin”

Proof of guilt. 3:10-18

Guilt is assigned to everyone. 10a “no one righteous”

Guilt is serious for everyone. 12a “All have turned away”

Verdict of guilt. 3:19-20

Guilt is assigned to everyone. 19 “whole world held accountable”

Guilt is serious for everyone. 20 “no one will be justified”

3

You need a legal advocate. Romans 3:9-20

Your plea – I’m not that bad. 9

The evidence – yes you are. 10-18

The judgement – you are bad. 19-20

Your attorney – Jesus pleads for you. 1 John 2:1

4

P-P-P-Problem. Romans 3:9-20

Problem. 3:9

No one is better than another. 9a “we are no better than they”

Everyone is as bad as the other. 9b “alike are all under sin”

Proof. 3:10-18

Internal proof. 11 “understands”

External proof. 12 “turns away”

Principle. 3:19

Everyone is responsible. 19a “the Law says”

Everyone is accountable. 19b “whole world accountable”

Purpose. 3:20

God’s Law does not grant justification. 20a “no one justified”

God’s Law does give teaching. 20b “awareness of sin”

5

Problem? What problem? Romans 3:9-20

There is a problem. 3:9

The problem is universal. 9 “Jews and Greeks alike”

The problem is eternal. 9 “are all under sin”

Who is the problem? 3:10-12

Everyone is the problem. 10,11,12 “There is no one”

No one is exempt. 10,11,12 “not even one”

What is the problem? 3:13-18

The problem is worse than I know. 13-18 “...deceit...”

The problem is solved by who I know. 18 “fear of God”

Be aware of the problem. 3:19-20

Accountability is to God. 19b “held accountable to God”

Awareness is in God’s Law. 20b “law brings awareness”

6

Life in a leaky boat. Romans 3:9-20

Titanic sank 15 April 1912

We are sailing where others have gone before us. 3:9

We are all in the same boat. 9 “Jews and Greeks alike”

The boat we are in is the Titanic. 9 “are all under sin”

We have a problem that others have had before us. 3:10-12

Everyone needs the life boat. 10,11,12 “There is no one”

No one can reach safe harbour. 10,11,12 “not even one”

We have a problem that is worse than we thought. 3:13-18

Bad news: We cannot fix the problem. 13-18 “...deceit...”

Good news: Someone can fix the problem. 18b “fear of God”

The problem can be fixed using the owner’s manual. 3:19-20

We must follow the maker’s instructions. 19b “held accountable to God”

We must follow the maker’s rule book. 20b “law brings awareness”

Greek lexicon, cross-references, commentary, and illustrations

Jews and Greeks alike are all under sin. 9b

There is no distinction, ^{23f}for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
Romans 3:22b-23

God has consigned everyone to disobedience so that He may have mercy on
everyone. Romans 11:32

The Scripture pronounces all things confined by sin, so that by faith in Jesus Christ
the promise might be given to those who believe. Galatians 3:22

²God looks down from Heaven upon the sons of men to see if any understand, if any seek God. ³All have turned away, they have together become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one. Psalm 14:2-3

Surely there is no righteous person on Earth who does good and never sins.
Ecclesiastes 7:20

We all like sheep have gone astray, each one has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid upon Him the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53:6

As it is written, 10a

Romans 3:10b-12	Psalm 14:1-3
<p>There is no one righteous, not even one.</p> <p>¹¹There is no one who understands, no one who seeks God.</p> <p>¹²All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.</p>	<p>¹The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt; their acts are vile. There is no one who does good.</p> <p>²The LORD looks down from heaven upon the sons of men to see if any understand, if any seek God.</p> <p>³All have turned away, they have together become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.</p>

Romans 3:10b-12	Psalm 53:1-3
<p>There is no one righteous, not even one.</p> <p>¹¹There is no one who understands, no one who seeks God.</p> <p>¹²All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.</p>	<p>¹The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt; their ways are vile. There is no one who does good.</p> <p>²God looks down from heaven upon the sons of men to see if any understand, if any seek God.</p> <p>³All have turned away, they have together become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.</p>

Romans 3:13a	Psalm 5:9
	For not a word they speak can be trusted;

<p>Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit.</p>	<p>destruction lies within them. Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit.</p>
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Romans 3:13b	Psalm 140:3
<p>The venom of vipers is on their lips.</p>	<p>They sharpen their tongues like snakes; the venom of vipers is on their lips.</p>

Romans 3:14	Psalm 10:7
<p>Their mouths are full of cursing and of bitterness.</p>	<p>His mouth is full of cursing, deceit, and violence; trouble and malice are under his tongue.</p>

Romans 3:15-17	Isaiah 59:7-8
<p>¹⁵Their feet are swift to shed blood; ¹⁶ruin and misery lie in their wake, ¹⁷and the way of peace they have not known.</p>	<p>⁷Their feet run to evil; they are swift to shed innocent blood. Their thoughts are sinful thoughts; ruin and destruction lie in their wake. ⁸The way of peace they have not known, and there is no justice in their tracks. They have turned them into crooked paths; no one who treads them will know peace</p>

Romans 3:18	Psalm 36:1
<p>There is no fear of God before their eyes.</p>	<p>An oracle is in my heart regarding the transgression of the wicked: There is no fear of God before his eyes</p>

whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, 19a

¹⁷Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I have not come to abolish them, but to fulfill them. ¹⁸For I tell you truly, until heaven and earth pass away, not a single jot, not a stroke of a pen, will disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Matthew 5:17-18

Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, in whom you have put your hope. John 5:45

All who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. Romans 2:12

²³Before this faith came, we were held in custody under the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. ²⁴So the law became our guardian to lead us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. Galatians 3:23-24

⁸Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it legitimately. ⁹We realize that law is not enacted for the righteous, but for the lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinful, for the unholy and profane, 1 Timothy 1:8-9

every mouth may be silenced, 19

¹Do not judge, or you will be judged. ²For with the same judgment you pronounce, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. ³Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye but fail to notice the beam in your own eye? Matthew 7:1-3

You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on another. For on whatever grounds you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things. Romans 2:1

But the Lord is in His holy temple: let all the Earth keep silence before Him. Habakkuk 2:20

the whole world held accountable to God. 19b

¹²I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, ³⁷for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned. Matthew 12:36-37

So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God. Romans 14:12

For we must all appear before the tribunal of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. 2 Corinthians 5:10

And no creature is hidden from His sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account. Hebrews 4:13

no one will be justified in His sight by works of the law. 20a

For we maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law. Romans 3:28

Know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified. Galatians 2:16

I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing! Galatians 2:21

Now it is clear that no one is justified before God by the law, because 'The righteous will live by faith'. Galatians 3:11

the law merely brings awareness of sin. 20b

What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, "You shall not covet." Romans 7:7

The Law reveals the "dirt" of sin but cannot wash it away.

By showing humanity's inability to keep God's standard, the Law drives people toward grace.

Through Your precepts I get understanding; Therefore, I hate every false way.
Your word is a lamp to my feet, And a light to my path. Psalm 119:104-105

Service suggestion

Theme

Aim

Call to worship

Special item

Children's talk

Communion

Music and songs

Songs with a maritime theme

Bridge over troubled water (Simon and Garfunkle)

Dear Lord and Father of mankind

Eternal Father, strong to save (The Navy Hymn)

It is well with my soul

Jesus pilots my ship (Hinson, Gaither)

Jesus, Saviour, pilot me

Master, the tempest is raging

My lighthouse
Will your anchor hold?

Songs about sin

He paid a debt He did not owe, Ot 120
My Jesus I love Thee... for Thee all the follies of sin I resign, H 443
O happy day | washed my sins away
Rock of Ages | Be of sin the double cure,
Sinners Jesus will receive
What a friend we have in Jesus all our sins and griefs to bear, H 421, 422
What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus,
Yield not to temptation, H 749

Songs about salvation

A wonderful Saviour is Jesus my Lord | His perfect salvation, H 625
Amazing grace | I once was lost but now am found, H 380
Amazing grace, my chains are gone, 1067
At Calvary | Years I spent in... ⁴Oh, the love that drew salvation's plan, H 716
Blessed Assurance | ¹Heir of salvation, purchase of God, H 687
Blessed be the rock of my salvation, SiS 473
Come let us sing for joy to the Lord... ^{ch}to the Rock of our salvation
Consider Christ, ¹the source of our salvation, Ot 2
Happiness is the Lord | Having a part in His salvation, CWH 9
He Lives (I serve a risen Saviour) | ^{ch}He lives, He lives, salvation to impart! H 725
I go to The Rock ^{ch}for my salvation, Ot 100
I love to tell the story | ²The message of salvation, H 653
I surrender all | ⁴Oh, the joy of full salvation, H 378
Jesus, name above all names | ²Hope of salvation, Eternal God. SiS 226
Live for the Kingdom | ^{ch}Now is the moment, The day of the salvation, Ot 15
Living in the rhythm of grace | ¹Because of salvation there's no condemnation, Ot 73
My faith has found... | ³Salvation by... Salvation through His blood. H 669
Now I belong to Jesus | Jesus came down to bring me salvation, CWH 40
Old church choir | ^{ch}I got a sweet salvation and it's beautiful, Ot 74
Praise Him! Jesus, our blessed Redeemer! ²our hope of eternal salvation, H 225
Salvation belongs to our God, 620
Send me out | ¹Jesus, Lord of my salvation, Saviour of my soul. Ot 57
Sing unto the Lord a new song... ¹Tell of His salvation day by day, Ot 37
Stand and bless the Lord | ²and His salvation, ours, (Fettke) Ot 91
The Church's one foundation | ²Her charter of salvation, H 289
Turn your eyes upon Jesus | ³His perfect salvation to tell, Ch 147
What the lord has done in me | ⁴I will sing salvation songs, Ot 65
When the saints go marching out | ³Our story is salvation
Worthy of all praise | ¹Jesus, Lord of creation, King of Salvation, Ot 1
You can trust Him | ^{ch}is the loving God of our salvation, Ot 92

Thought starters for personal reflection or group discussion.

1. Do you like “messing about in boats”? What is the extent of your boating experience?
 2. Read Isaiah 57:20-21. Why is the sea an appropriate metaphor?
 3. Suggest why God used a world-wide flood (rather than, say, earthquakes), and what is symbolised by Noah’s ark.
 4. Captain Smith of the Titanic may, or may not, have said, “Not even God Himself could sink this ship.” What is wrong with this mindset?
 5. Did God deliberately sink the Titanic? Why did it sink? Why didn’t God stop the ship from sinking? (Other “Why didn’t God...” questions)
 6. Is it appropriate to think of Jesus as our lifeboat? What might be a better metaphor?
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