

## Romans Chapter 3: (9-20)

### *No One Is Righteous:*

**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;

This is a difficult position, because historically the priority of the Jews is that they have the scripture, they are the chosen race, they should be saved but unfortunately Paul is saying that gentiles with conscience and the Jews with special revelation they are all under sin. Once you are under sin the legal position is death. Paul is mentioning here a qualitative thing, they are all under sin. Today he goes into graphic detail what sin is and the nature of sin. Unless we understand the nature of sin, it will be very hard for us.

Sin is integral to our personalities, so therefore if you understand the effects of sin then you know the residual effects when you become a Christian and you know how this control us, how it manipulates us, how it gives us a false sense of security. So it is very important to understand the effects of sin, the legal standing, how it affects our minds, our motives, our will, our tongue, our relationship with each other and our relationship to God. These are many parameters on which verses 10 onwards to 20 tell us.

**Legal Standing: No one is righteous, no not one.**

Basically righteousness is a legal position. The Greek word is ‘**Dikaiois**’ which basically either is a root word where you kind of may have righteousness which is basically a noun or you are justified or make righteousness which is basically a verb.

If you do not have righteousness it is: Dikaiois which means no righteousness and the legal standing is basically everyone has no righteousness. What is righteousness? It is like the laws of the universe like speed of light, law of gravity, law of thermodynamics, constant like pi, they do not change. When God created universe it was uniquely tailored after what He wants and so we cannot change any of these things, so therefore when we are made in the image of God there is a moral code hardwired inside us, so that we will behave like God, so therefore in the Garden of Eden there was only one moral standard (you do not take of the fruit of the tree of knowledge and good and evil), which means you do not get to decide what is right or wrong. When Eve took the fruit what she was essentially doing is taking the job of God and deciding what would her moral code be. So He rules over us, Ten Commandments or a conscience in our hearts and this is basically not optional. Man righteousness is conformity to God’s standard of behavior and this is either ethical which means how we act or a legal standing.

Romans 2:

**14** For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law.

**15** They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them.

So the gentiles have a law, moral code hardwired into them, so they know what righteousness is and God's righteousness is simply himself acting like himself from without uninfluenced by anything that is not himself. There is no moral code outside God. If there is a moral code outside of God that means God has to submit to something, so therefore it cannot be. So God's righteousness is just acting like himself.

**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;**

Roman 1:

**21 For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.**

They are morally corrupted and minds were basically changed. We change into a secular mindset, so once we decouple from God then we adopt a man-made kind of mindset where we think that everything revolves around us. This is a mindset that we are born with, it revolves around us and it takes pleasure in things that are done for us. This mindset destroys the church. The biblical mindset is different.

Colossians 1:

**15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.**

**16 For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.**

**17 And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.**

This means that all things in this universe are made in reference to Him. This means that world is made by Christ and it is for Christ. This means that everything revolves around Christ.

Steve Jobs did not believe in God. He asked, if God knew about starving children and the preacher replied that yes, God knew everything. Jobs never again considered Christianity. In his idea he has got certain ideas what God should be like. Years later on when he got the disease he said, "Sometimes I believe in God, sometimes I don't. I think it's 50-50 maybe. But ever since I've had cancer, I've been thinking about it more. And I find myself believing a bit more. I kind of – maybe it's cause I want to believe in an afterlife. That when you die, it doesn't just all disappear. The wisdom you've accumulated. Somehow it lives on." This is a man centric kind of idea. It is like his knowledge about Apple must live on. It is like he goes up there and tells God how to do an ipad.

John 9: There was a blind man and the people thought that his father or mother has done something wrong that is why he is born blind.

They asked this question because they have a secular mindset. So when something bad happens to us, we always think that we have done something wrong. When something bad happens to us we cannot except it due to human mindset. Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.” So when he was healed it glorified God. So therefore the mindset is completely different. We got sin is a human mindset that interprets the entire world with respect to us and us alone. So when we talk about free will and predestination, we talk about our point of view. If we look at it from God’s point of view, we will see an entirely different light.

The next is motive.

**11 THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS,  
THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD;**

Here Paul is saying that not only everyone is unrighteous, they do not understand, they do not even seek for God. This is a criteria for judgment.

Romans 2:

**6 He will render to each one according to his works:**

**7 to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life;**

**8 but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury.**

That means basically no one seeks for God. Paul puts criteria in that verse.

Steven Rice, she looked at the survey of 100,000 people. She talked with them about why they have religion. Out of those 100,000 people she identified 16 criteria why people have religion; curiosity, acceptance, for family, for honor, for power, for romance, saving, social contacts, status, eating, vengeance.

When Steve Jobs was younger there was a book written by two authors. Steve started to look into religion. He actually went to India to learn under the Maharishi. He had to go under the second command and then he considered being a Hindu ascetic.

*“Steve had been flirting with the idea of being sadhu.” Most Indian sadhus live a monk-like existence of deprivation as a way of focusing solely on the spiritual. But Steve was obviously too hungry, too driven, and too ambitious for that kind of life. “It was a romance,” says Brilliant, “with the idea of being a renunciate.”*

So therefore he thought about being a Hindu ascetic is not for him. Then the next thing he went for Buddhism. *“His interests migrated toward Buddhism, which allows for more engagement with the world than is permitted ascetic Hindus. It would enable him to blend a search for personal enlightenment with his ambition to create a company that delivered world-changing products. This appealed to a young man busy trying to invent himself, and it would continue to appeal to a man of infinite intellectual restlessness.”* So therefore he chooses Buddhism because it fit into his program, man-centered idea, Steve Jobs is so

important that God could fit him. That is the problem with Steve Jobs until he crashes into his cancer.

*“Among other things, Buddhism made him feel justified in constantly demanding nothing less than what he deemed to be “perfection” from others, from the products he would create, and from himself.”*

So it makes him justified so he was rude to his employees and give them a hard time. He was searching for a god that could fit into his lifestyle.

There are people in this world that say that they went to heaven and they just talk about the streets are paved with gold and all their stuff which actually is non-relevant. So they are not seeking God even there. We are all seeking for ourselves. Deep inside even when we first became Christian we are looking for someone to heal our wounds and accidentally we found God. People do seek the things God gives but only a heart regenerated and purified with a spirit can seek for who he is in himself.

Jonathan Edwards is a great Christian pastor in America and he says, “you cannot seek God, by default mode we do not seek God, it is only the Holy spirit that regenerates our heart that causes us to seek God.”

Jesus says, “no one comes to me unless the father who sent me draws him, I will raise him in the last day”

In 2 Timothy Paul says,

**24 And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil,**

**25 correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth,**

This means God grants repentance, we cannot decide it on your own, God gives it to you.

Martyn Lloyd-Jones, a doctor and a pastor, said, “*Seeking [God] is much more active than asking [God] for things*’. The moment you realize this content to the word seek you will begin to see the apostles statement is quite right.

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

John Piper will say, “*To seek God will be to enjoy God*”. Do you enjoy God for God’s sake alone or for the things that He gives you and that will determine the quality of your life. So that is important no one seeks for God, no one is righteous, our minds are corrupted and our will.

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

It means that we have taken a detour. God is to fulfill all our desires through His created world, moreover He gives you the whole world and He gives you his law, He gives his moral will. If we follow His moral will in His created world you will be in heaven because we are created for that. Instead we take detour to temporal fleeting pleasures which are destructive and we also self-justify ourselves. We like shoes, we buy as many shoes as possible then you like bags and you buy as many bags as possible but then you got the law of diminishing return. It means that more you buy the more you have to buy. It is a very poor substitute for your life.

Men righteous is a conformity to God's standard of behavior but what has men done. Jesus says how can you believe from one another and do not seek glory to come from God. So basically what we are doing now instead of conforming to God's standard of righteousness we actually have our own standard that is for ourselves or for other people to look upon us with some admiration. Eve saw in the Garden of Eden saw the tree was good for food, was delighted to the eyes and that the tree was more to desire then she decided what she wants to do. It is her level of justification. Tim Keller makes it very easy, *“Righteousness is a validating performance record which opens doors”*.

Harold Abrahams in the show *Chariots of Fire* and he is racing the 100 meters. This show was made after true life event on Eric Liddle and he actually said, *“And now in one hour's time, I will be out there again. I will raise my eyes and look down that corridor; 4 feet wide, with 10 lonely seconds to justify my existence. But will I?”* So for him as a runner 10 seconds to justify, he has decided that to him to justify his existence in the world must be the record. And then he says, *“I am 24 and I've never known it. I'm forever in pursuit and I don't even know what I am chasing”*. A lot of people feel this in their life, because what they have done instead putting God's will at the center of their life they put their own self-justification, their own record.

Prince Charles quotes, *“All the time I feel I must justify my existence”*. For him his existence is becoming King, but he is still a prince even after 70 years.

*Marius Pontmercy* is a fictional character, one of the protagonists of Victor Hugo's 1862 novel *Les Misérables*. His friends all died being shot by the French revolution. He says, *“Oh my friends, my friends, forgive me, that I live and you are gone... There's a grief that can't be spoken, there's a pain goes on and on.”* He is crying about where his friends all got killed but he did not get killed. It is guilt of surviving. A lot of soldiers when they come back from war, there guilt is that they are alive. They should be happy, on their knees to thank God of their life, instead they are guilty their friends have died and they cannot understand why they did not die. What is so special about you that you did not die? And then they actually feel that they do not deserve not to die and so therefore they feel guilty because they need to self-justify.

**No one does good.**

There are so many people in this world that do good things, how Paul can here say that people do not do good. I think the do good is in relationship to God. The nature of good

works is that they take a form and a motive. The form must be in accordance to God's will. We cannot say, I do good to this man, every day I gave him something good to drink. So it has to be in accordance to God's will, good things.

Second one is motive for God's glory. Two things must correlate, but the trouble is a lot of that is for personal gain, a lot of people do good in order to feel good about themselves and they are ordered to justify their existence because when you actually do good to people you actually feel good. This is something that is hardwired in our hearts, it is in our DNA. When you do good, you feel you are good person you justify your existence that somehow God will give you some reward, but that is actually for personal gain. If we are doing good because we want to go to heaven, we are actually doing good for ourselves. That is the problem that is the huge-huge problem. So the only way we can be good is when you do good and the motive is for God's glory because we reciprocate His love, not in order to get something in return, because we seek him therefore it becomes a good work. The good work is not in relationship to men.

God's gives us free salvation, so therefore when we reciprocate it is not in order to get salvation; it is a reciprocation of a love that is freely given and undeserved. That is the cornerstone of the gospel.

**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";

This is flattery that permit human speech, kind word hides insidious things. Politicians use such language where they say one thing and do the other.

Pastor Kong Hee says, *"Real prosperity is ... Having the financial abundance to obey God's will whenever He wants you to, and however he wants you to and whoever he wants you to."* Again twist of God's words.

**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."

**18** "THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES."

This is the biggest indictment of them all. The modern day idea of Jesus Christ is that, He wins at you, puts it up there, we quickly solve the problem of gospel without the pangs or the fear of God to understand what we have been saved from. A lot of people do not understand what we are saved from. Jesus is your friend; Jesus is your buddy and everything else. We need to understand that enormity of how fearful and great he is and how sinful we are unless we understand this chasm from which we have been saved, we will never appreciate the love of Lord Jesus Christ, so therefore it brings this idea of fear, fear of God.

Isaiah 66:

**2 All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the LORD. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.**

So the fear of God means we have to tremble at God literally as it were. God is such an enormous person.

Philippians 2:

**12... work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,**

**13for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure**

We tremble when we live our lives every day learning righteousness and living according to it because God is at work inside us. Some people describe God's wrath is like this huge tempest of a storm and Jesus Christ is God's grace, inside the boat you can see outside the storm and the storm is horrific. The fear causes us to stay inside the boat and this boat is the grace of God. The function of the fear is to stop you from running away.

Karsten Piper, son of John Piper, was young, he was like 6 years old when he went to visit a friend and this friend had a huge dog taller than Karsten and the dog looked at him and growled a little and then Karsten started running towards the car. As he was running towards the car the dog lobed and bounded towards him in a very menacing manner and then the owner started to shout out from the window. Karsten, he does not like people running away from him. His growl is your protection but if you run from it, it will be your destruction. Which means the dog functions in two ways, if you run from the dog he will kill you, if he growls and you stay it is your protection.

Noah inside the arc, the tempest outside is the fear of God that keeps you inside that means you have so fear of God you cannot go outside, you go out you will die and the fear drives you inside into the grace of God and if you understand fear in that way then you will understand what Christianity is. A lot of us do not understand the fear of God.

Hebrews 12:

**28 ..... offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe,**

**29 for our God is a consuming fire.**

So the right way to worship.

Romans 11:

**20.... So do not become proud, but fear.**

**21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you.**



Fear functions as a preservative against running away from God. It stops you from being proud and hard-hearted. Perfect love cast out fear.

Nehemiah 1:

**11 O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant, and to the prayer of your servants who delight to fear your name,**

Nehemiah is saying that I delight to fear your name.

Isaiah 11:

**2 And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him,  
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the Spirit of counsel and might,  
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.**

**3 And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.**

It means that Jesus Christ delights to fear his own father. So the fear actually is not just terror, it actually has blissful love and enjoyment. Delight and fear are two emotions that are not bound together but in fact they are.

Donald Trump, *"No regret, never asked God for forgiveness"* because he does not have anything to apologize for.

*"I have great relationship with God. I have great relationship with the Evangelicals,"*

This is the man that tells you why I have never asked God for forgiveness, something wrong with other people, because he is never a sinner. If we meet someone who say I am forgiven for my sin, I never have to ask for forgiveness, also we had a problem, because there are some churches that say that.

Men-centered gospel, *"For the first time in eight months, God, I heard Him cry and He said, 'My son, Kong, thank you. Thank you for going through this. I need you to go through this alone so that you and City Harvest Church can be the man and the ministry I call it to be. I'm so sorry, but you need to go through this by yourself to bring a change to your generation,'"*

So here we have God apologizing to man. This is like the end of the world. This is how sin pervades our generation and given a chance all of us will be like that too.

Why do people do this, William Golding in 1954 wrote a book called "Lord of the Flies" in it he tells a story of a group of boys who are lost in an island and very soon the boys seem to divide in two groups, one group had their own rules; you must not steal from each other food, you must be kind to each other, when you collect food you collect together and it did fairly well. Another group were total savages, given a chance they will kill each other, they will rape each other, they will take the food, they will swindle, they will do all sorts of horrible-horrible things to each other. So why did one group behaved well and one group didn't. the difference that Lord of the Flies explains the group that had no hope of ever being rescued behave like savages, the group that continue to harbor hope that one day they will be saved



by the British soldiers and the Royal Navy, they kept their cool and they obeyed. So it is a hope or the fear of God that actually controls our behavior.

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

**20** For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

So what does it mean so that every mouth will be stopped? So when we will be in God's court of law every mouth will be shut. It means that we cannot argue anymore, because God knows everything.

The Jews love the law, they thought that it will bring salvation. The law is like an x-ray, it tells you about the disease that will cause your death. The Jews took the x-ray and try to save themselves. They should have taken this x-ray and see a doctor.

**21** But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—

**22** the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction:

So where is our righteousness, we grab our x-rays or the x-ray forces you to go to Jesus.

There are five applications.

1. It destroys our pride.
2. Salvation is not based on our performance in the law.
3. The law is just an x-ray, it shows your problem.
4. Following the law will never save you.

So therefore there is no pride. We get to trust God more, because we have no ability to make the choice, no righteousness by compliance to law. If we do not trust ourselves who must we trust, God, and this applies to entire life.

Greater confidence. Because our salvation depends on what Christ choice of you. If the bible says no one seeks for God. None of us seek for God, we are actually seeking heaven and God is the way. So our confidence is actually not on our ability to obey the law, but our confidence now is on the fact that he choose us. If he chose you surely you are going to make it right.

So all self is sinful, all is glorified in Christ, so therefore you cannot judge other people. If you are really touched by Grace, you will be so grateful that you are saved; you will not look another person and criticize that person, because you have tasted the forgiveness of Christ. When we taste grace, we show grace to everyone, we become softer people but instead the church is built of judgmental people and there is a sad part. The church is a place of grace. We are all saved by grace not by our works. The gospel really free us to be softer people to tell there is no more judgment between

people, between grace, we are all one in the new creation. There is greater love for his grace.

Charles Spurgeon, *“Too many think lightly of sin, and therefore think lightly of the Savior. He who has stood before his God, convicted and condemned, with the rope about his neck, is the man to weep for joy when he is pardoned, to hate the evil which has been forgiven him, and to live in honor of the Redeemer by whose blood he had been cleansed.”*

Lastly a great impotence for evangelism because we know that every single person in the world is lost. No one seeks for God, no one is righteous and the confidence will be in the power of the gospel and understanding of the darkness.