

We Believe in Man's Need for Salvation

Romans 3:9-18, Romans 3:23, Romans 7:14-25, Romans 8:1-2

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Sometimes we need to step back and re-examine just what it is that we believe. Why? Well, it's because many believers take their faith for granted.

We tout the cultural narrative and claim we've read the Bible when in fact all we do is quote other people who claim to quote the Bible. We never read it for ourselves.

We claim that we believe in God, and even throw in Jesus for good measure, but our prosperity has clouded our eyes to our real need for God.

I often hear people say, "*All people are basically good.*" That one statement alone tells me that person hasn't read the Bible.

The fact is the Bible says just the opposite. According to scripture, mankind is sick! Mankind has gone off the deep end. Mankind needs saving.

If you don't believe me, and you don't believe the Bible, believe the evidence. Have you seen the news lately?

The fact is everyone needs to be saved. Saved from sin, saved from the world, saved from themselves, and especially saved from condemnation.

I was going to title this message "We Believe in the Depravity of Man" but I softened it up a little to "Man's need for Salvation." All of mankind is included in that statement.

It's easy to believe in heaven, a place of eternal bliss, eternal rest, and eternal life.

But we don't want to talk about the place of condemnation, the place of *"weeping and gnashing of teeth."* (Luke 13:24)

The place where *"their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched"* (Mark 9:48); *"the place of eternal torment"* (Revelation 14:11); the place we call "hell."

The fact is, we can't believe in heaven without believing in hell. This is why mankind needs deliverance, because we all deserve to go there.

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Because of this, we salvation. We all have transgressed the commands of God. None of us are innocent. None of us are clean. None of us are free from sin.

Romans 3:23, *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."*

But it wasn't always that way. Man was created innocent and blameless. You know the story. Adam and Eve had the whole Garden of Eden at their fingertips and God only made one rule.

Genesis 2:16–17, *"And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die."*

Because God is high and holy, any transgressions of a command of God brought a penalty – death. Death, right from the beginning, was the penalty for sin.

Well, you know the story. The serpent tempted Eve; Eve ate the forbidden fruit, and passed the fruit on to Adam, then along came God.

God asked in Genesis 3:11b, *“Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”*

Both Adam and Eve played the blame game and that’s what people have done ever since – failed to take responsibility for their actions.

Adam indirectly blamed God: Genesis 3:12, *“The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”*

Eve blamed the serpent: Genesis 3:13, *“Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”*

You can blame your sin on whoever or whatever you want. You can fool others and even fool yourself, but you can’t fool God.

God knows who’s responsible for your sin, as both Adam and Eve paid the penalty. They died and death and sin has been with us ever since.

Those who say people are basically good have never read the Bible to see what God has to say on the subject. The fact is, man is inherently prone to do bad since we all inherited our sin nature from Adam.

Think about it, you don’t have to teach a baby to misbehave, to be selfish, to be self-centered.

Now, skip forward to the days of Noah. This is what God had to say about mankind up to the time of the flood.

Genesis 6:5, *“The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time.”*

Then came the first great judgment on the Earth. God passed sentence on the sinfulness on the Earth, and all the Earth died except for Noah and his family.

But even after the flood, God knew that humans hadn't changed, so when Noah got out of the boat and made a burnt offering to God, God relented.

Genesis 8:21, *"The LORD smelled the pleasing aroma and said in his heart: "Never again will I curse the ground because of humans, even though every inclination of the human heart is evil from childhood. And never again will I destroy all living creatures, as I have done."*

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We're all naturally inclined to do evil. You don't have to teach sin to a child. Sin just comes naturally.

Jeremiah 17:9–10, *"The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? "I the LORD search the heart and examine the mind, to reward each person according to their conduct, according to what their deeds deserve."*

When someone says they're only following their heart – watch out! Paul tells us this very thing in Romans.

Romans 3:9, *"What shall we conclude then? Do we have any advantage? Not at all! For we have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under the power of sin."*

Paul's summing up what he said in the first 8 verses in chapter 3, *"Are we better than they?"* Are the Jews better off than the Greeks?

Now, Jews have an advantage since they're God's chosen people. God gave them the Law and many privileges, too.

But Paul explained in chapter 2, that God doesn't give them any preferential treatment. If anything, God will judge the Jew first and more severely because they have the law.

So, the Jew had the Law, and the Gentile had their conscience, but Paul charged both Jews and Greeks that they were *"all under sin."*

Under sin? What did he mean by *"under sin?"* Paul didn't say they committed sin, (which they had) but they were under sin.

R.C. Sproul said it best, *"We're not sinners because we sin, we sin because we're sinners."*

Without Christ and the power of God to release us, we're all under sin, we're prisoners, or slaves to sin. We can't help ourselves. It's our nature to sin. You see we've inherited Adam's nature.

Paul quotes Old Testament Scripture as his authority. In verses 10-18, Paul quotes from at least 9 different Old Testament passages, mostly from the Psalms and some from Isaiah and Proverbs.

This was a common practice among rabbis in that day, stringing similar verses together like pearls. They indicate their authority by stating: *"It is written."*

Romans 3:10, *"There is no one righteous, not even one."* Paul's quoting from Psalms 14:1-3 and Psalms 53:1-3. There is no one except Jesus Who is righteous.

When we read in Scripture of someone being righteous, they were only righteous because God imparted His righteousness to them. No one has ever stood righteous before God by their own doing.

Isaiah 64:6a, *"All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags."*

Our absolute best fails to measure up before God. Unless God is in it, unless God commands it and empowers it, our best efforts and actions are just filthy rags before Him.

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Romans 3:11, *“There is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God.”* None who understand – understand what?

For one, we don’t fully comprehend the consequences of sin. Romans 6:23a, *“For the wages of sin is death.”*

Often it’s a vicious cycle. The more we sin, the less we understand. The less we understand, the more we sin.

“There is no one who seeks God.” If left to himself, fallen man would never seek after God. Scripture teaches us over and over that God is the one who took the initiative.

It’s God who seeks us out, not the other way around. If we seek Him, it’s only because His Holy Spirit is drawing us.

John 6:44, *“No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day.”*

Herein is a basic problem, many don’t answer God’s call. You see, in these verses Paul is quoting from Psalms 14:1-3.

To put Paul’s quotes into context, these verse from Psalms 14 and 53 start in verse 1 with the phrase, *“The fool has said in his heart, “There is no God.”*

So, Paul continues with Romans 3:12, *“All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.”*

Are you catching the words used here? “All have;” “There is no one;” “Not even one.” None-Zero-Zip-Nada. This is all inclusive. It ropes in you and me.

“There is no one who does good, not even one.” Do you realize, we do no good unless we’re empowered by God to do it?

Some say God will never send a good person to hell and my answer would be *“Good in whose eyes?”*

Romans 3:13–14, *“Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit. The poison of vipers is on their lips. Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.”*

Now quoting from Psalms 5, 10 and 140, Paul talks about our beings, parts of our body, our throat, tongue, lips, mouth. We can’t do good in the eyes of God even if we tried.

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Conclusion

Romans 3:15–17, *“Their feet are swift to shed blood; ruin and misery mark their ways, and the way of peace they do not know.”*

Here, Paul’s quoting from Proverbs and Isaiah 59. For those *“under sin,”* that would be us, we often look for a way to “get over,” to cheat someone, to gain an unfair advantage at the expense of someone else.

It’s all about me. We’re selfish by nature and no peace is found for those caught up in sin. Isaiah 57:21, *“There is no peace,” says my God, “for the wicked.”*

There's no peace for those caught up in sin. Peace only comes from knowing Jesus. Romans 8:6, *"For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace."*

Peace will never be found in the ways of the flesh, the ways of sin, but only in Jesus.

Romans 3:18, *"There is no fear of God before their eyes."* Herein lies the problem. Look around, if there was a fear of God, would many of the events in our culture and in our world be happening today?

Proverbs 9:10, *"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."*

There is no *"fear of the Lord"* today. God is being left out of everything: Left out of our government; left out of schools; left out of our businesses; left out of our lives.

So, what standard shall we use? The world tells us that we can be moral outside of God. If that's true? By who's standards are we then moral?

If God's out of the equation, who's going to tell you what's moral and what's not?

Regardless, the fact remains that one day Jesus will return, and everyone will have to answer before Him. I shake in my boots at that very thought. I fear God.

Herein is the fact. We can't do good on our own. We can't buy our way into heaven. We stand condemn.

Paul sums up our condition in Romans 7:18–20, *"For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not."*

For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.”

And in desperation he cries out in Romans 7:24, *“Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?”*

We’re hopelessly lost. We stand condemned. We cannot save ourselves. But are you ready for the good news?

Romans 8:1–2, *“Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.”*

The key to escape condemnation is Jesus. It’s all about Jesus. Do know Him, not just about Him? Are you one of those *“who are in Christ Jesus?”*

It requires a drawing of the Holy Spirit to come to Jesus. But it requires a change of heart since our hearts are desperately sick and wicked. Only Jesus, through His Holy Spirit, can change our hearts.

Yes, all of mankind needs salvation and it’s only through Jesus that we can be saved.