All Humanity is Guilty before God

Romans 3:1-20

Introduction:

I. Religious Objections Examined – 3:1–8

A. Those who Argued that Right was Wrong – 3:1–2

“What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision?” (1)

Their problem was that it looked like receiving the law and circumcision were no profit to the Jews. What seemed like good was really bad.

Paul’s answer is:

“Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God.” (2)

Receiving the Word of God is a great privilege for the nation. The greatest advantage of receiving the Law was that they were born with immediate access to the Word of God. So, the right was not wrong after all.

B. Those who Argued that Wrong was Right – 3:3–8

1. Unbelief Actually Enhances God’s Faithfulness and should therefore be Encouraged!

“What if certain ones were unfaithful? (3a) – “For what if some did not believe?” [NKJV]

“Their unfaithfulness will not make God unfaithful? Will it?” (Sellers’ Translation -Machen p.197m) “Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect?” [NKJV]

What answer is Paul expecting? NO! [See v.4μὴ γένοιτο· “May it never be!” “God forbid!” “Perish the thought”]

“Certainly not!” Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written: “That You may be justified in Your words, and may overcome when You are judged.” (4)

This quote is from Psalm 51 - David’s penitential Psalm. David is confessing to God so that, when God judges David (as He will), it will be obvious to all that God is right. When people judge God for judging David, David’s words will prove that God is just.

This quotation means that the unrepentant Jew will not escape.

1. Unrighteousness Actually Enhances God’s Forgiveness and therefore it is Commendable to Sin!

God ought not to find fault with the Jew for his sin because that sin helps magnify His own character.

“But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unjust who inflicts wrath? (I speak as a man.) (5)

Paul’s answer again is μὴ γένοιτο - “Certainly not! For then how would God judge the world.” (6)

“For if the truth of God has increased through my lie to His glory, why am I also still judged as a sinner?” (7)

“And why not say, "Let us do evil that good may come"? -- as we are slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say. Their condemnation is just.” (8)

II. The Guilt of All Humanity – 3:9–20

A. The Catholicity of Human Sin – 3:9–12

1. The Racial Aspect – 3:9

“What then? Are we better than they? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin.

1. The Religious Aspect – 3:10–12

a. Men are Unrighteous – 3:10

“As it is written: “There is none righteous, no, not one;” (Psa. 14:1-3; 53:1-3; Eccl.7:20)

When he says “none,” there are no exceptions. Not even my mother!

b. Men are Unreasonable – 3:11a

“There is none who understands;”

c. Men are Unresponsive – 3:11b

“There is none who seeks after God.”

d. Men are Unrepentant – 3:12

“They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one.”

B. The Criminality of Human Sin – 3:13–18

1. Man’s Wicked Words – 3:13–14

a. Are like the Vileness of the Sepulcher – 3:13a

“Their throat is an open tomb;”

b. Are like the Venom of the Serpent – 3:13b–14

“With their tongues they have practiced deceit; The poison of asps is under their lips”; “Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.”

2. Man’s Wicked Ways – 3:15–18

a. Murder – 3:15

“Their feet are swift to shed blood;

b. Misery – 3:16–17

“Destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace they have not known.”

c. Mutiny – 3:18

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

C. The Culpability of Human Sin – 3:19–20

1. The Law Shows Man’s Condition is Helpless – 3:19

1. He Is Convicted – 3:19a

“Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped,

1. He Is Condemned

“and all the world may become guilty before God.”

1. The Law Shows Man’s Case is Hopeless – 3:20

“Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”