

The Jew Without Excuse

Romans 2:17-3:10

Pastor John Miller

Tonight we're going to look at Romans 2:17-3:18. I want you to follow with me. Paul says, "Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God." Now, I want you to get an understanding of where we're at. I was going to ask the guys to throw the outline up on the screen, but I forgot to tell them beforehand. How many of you still have the outline in your Bibles? Look at that for just a moment. We're in the section called "Condemnation." In this section, which began back in chapter 1, Paul is actually showing the world...guilty before God. He does that by first calling the Gentile world, the pagan Gentile world, and showing that God by creation has revealed Himself to them, but they have rejected God's revelation. They have suppressed it. They have abandoned it, and then they've turned to idolatry and immorality. So, in the outline we have: Condemnation-The Wrath of God Revealed (1:18-3:20). The question that is answered in this section: Is the world lost? Answer: All the world is guilty before God. As you see, that will be our last verse tonight, chapter 3:19, because we're going to finish up this section as we look at the last two, C and D, the Jew Condemned and the Whole World Condemned. So, we've seen the Heathen Condemned, and we've seen the Moral Man Condemned. Tonight we see the Jew, or the religious man, Condemned, and then we're going to see the World Condemned, guilty before God. What Paul is trying to do is lay the foundation for the gospel. I really urge you, do not miss the next two Wednesday nights. We're going to take two entire Wednesday nights looking at the doctrine of justification by faith, how God makes righteous the unrighteous. All these condemned guilty sinners can be made righteous by trusting in Jesus Christ and having the righteousness of God given to them through faith. We're going to spend two weeks on that important doctrine of justification by faith. I don't want you to miss that.

We've come to the section: Jews Condemned, or the religious man condemned. I want you to see that, I believe, he's talking to specifically the Jews. Notice in verse 17, "Behold, thou art called a Jew." I want you to notice in verse 28, "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly..." then I want you to look at verse 29, "But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly." Now look at chapter 3:1, "What advantage then hath the Jew?" So, you get the idea that Paul is talking to who? The Jews. The application can be made to religious folk. We don't have any trouble believing that God will condemn or judge the wicked, licentious, idolatrous, pagan, wicked Gentile world. Right? We have a hard time believing that God would condemn a moral man. We have a hard time believing that God would condemn a moral man, and we also have a very hard time believing that God would condemn a religious person. What we need to be able to accept, and this is where we submit to the authority of God's Word and our minds are shaped not by popular opinion or what is en vogue or what the culture is saying or what our feelings are, is that whether you're moral or religious, if you haven't been regenerated, if you haven't been born again, if you haven't had the righteousness of God given to you by faith in Jesus Christ, then you are under the wrath of God. You're under the condemnation of God. Sometimes we think, "Well, if a person is sincere in their religion, if they're sincere in their

religion, then maybe they'll still go to heaven." The Bible is very clear that only those who have been born again will see the kingdom of God. Amen? We need to accept what God tells us in His Word.

In verse 17 down to verse 24 we see the law cannot save the Jew. What we're going to find here is that the Jews had things that they depended upon, they relied upon, as any religious person does, they rely upon their baptism, catechism, works, good deeds, their religiosity. We're going to find that the Jew was boasting in the fact that God gave to them the law. We're going to see that the law could not save. There are four things that the Jews hid behind or boasted in that were false hopes, as many religious people do today, that cannot save. Go back to verse 17 and let's read to verse 24.

"Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, 18 And knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; 19 And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness; 20 An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law. 21 Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? 22 Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?" or do you rob temples? "23 Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? 24 For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written..." and he's drawing there that "as it is written" phrase from Isaiah 52:5.

Now I want you to notice what the Jews were boasting in, which could not save them. First of all, that they were called Jews. They were boasting in their race as well as in their religion. A lot of people think they are going to heaven because of their race. Race nor religion can get you to heaven. By the way, the word "Jew" comes from the word Judah, which was one of the tribes of Israel, and the word Judah means praise. There were 12 tribes, but they adopted the name of the one tribe, Judah, and became known as Jews. Notice what he says in verse 1, "... and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God..." so you're resting in the law and make your boast of God. We are Jews. We have the law, and we have the true and the living God. All that is fine, and God did give them the law. They were the stewards of the law. Our Bible is, in a sense, a Jewish book. If you ever meet a Jew you can say, "Thank you." And they'll say, "What are you thanking me for?" "My Bible," or "Thank you for my Savior." Did you ever think about that? Jesus was a Jew. When I think about all the anti-Semitism in the world today, Jesus Christ, the savior of the world, was a Jew. Jesus said, "Salvation is of the Jews." Our Bible came to us because of the Jews, and they are a preserver of God's law. They were given the law. The law cannot save. This is basic and elementary. I want you to turn with me to Romans 3:20, (we'll get it next Wednesday night), "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight..." so no one can be righteous, which is what we need not morality, not religion, we need righteousness. No one can be righteous by the deeds of the law, but why did God give the law? Romans 3:20, "...for by the law is the knowledge of sin." Go back with me to chapter 2.

Why did God give the law? He gave us the law to show us that we were sinners. Right? That's why the law was given. It wasn't given to save us. The law cannot justify because we are sinners, and we are under the condemnation of the law. We, in the flesh, cannot keep the deeds of the law. Then they boasted, verse 18, that they knew God's will, "...and approvest the things that are more excellent..." so they know the law of God, they knew the will of God, they were being instructors out of the law. They taught the Gentiles, and then notice verse 19, "And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind." The reference to the blind here is a reference to the Gentiles. They were a guide to the Gentile world. "A light of them which are in darkness..." again, the Gentiles. "An instructor of the foolish..." again, the Gentiles. "... a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law." Then Paul drives the point home. He asks them a series of searching questions beginning in verse 21. They had the law. They knew the will of God. They had the God of Israel, but they didn't completely keep the law themselves. Anyone who says they are saved by keeping the law understands that you aren't keeping the law. When Jesus says, "If you have anger in your heart towards somebody, you've already committed murder," we're all busted. Which one of us hasn't murdered somebody on the freeway. When Jesus says, "If you look lustfully after someone, you've already committed adultery in your heart." We've all broken the law, and when the law uncovers our attitude as well as our actions, it also covers sins of omission, knowing right and not doing it, which is sin, then we've all broken that law. We can't keep the law because of the weakness of our flesh. It's only through being born again do we have the Holy Spirit and God writes His laws on the fleshly tablets of our hearts, that then we can live out God's law and we can live the things of God. It's not living the law that saves us. We live the law because we're saved and only because the Holy Spirit gives us that power and the ability.

They were teaching others, they did not teach themselves, verse 21. That is one of the challenges of being a teacher. Right? You know that as parents. You tell kids not to do something, then we do it. That's one of the challenges of being a pastor, living what I have preached. More than once my wife has said, "You need to listen to your sermon from last Sunday." "Really?" It just makes me mad. But, oh how right she is. It's easy to tell others. It's easy for me to stand up here and tell you how to live the Christian life. It's not easy for me to live the Christian life. I struggle just like you do. That's why the Bible says, "Be not many teachers knowing that you shall suffer the greater judgment or condemnation. To whom much is given, much is required." He says, "Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?" Good question. "22 Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols..." the Jews hated idolatry. After the Babylonian captivity they were free of idolatry, but they didn't mind robbing pagan temples and selling the proceeds to help them in their way. So he says, "...dost thou commit sacrilege?" Notice verses 23 and 24. He says, "Thou that makest thy boast of the law..." we have the law, but "...through the breaking the law dishonourest thou God?"

A lot of religious people do that, "I'm a Christian," or "I'm religious," or "I believe in God," but they don't live the Christian life—they dishonor God. They say one thing and do another. He is saying that you are condemned. "For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles

through you, as it is written." Remember when King David committed adultery with Bathsheba, and Nathan the prophet came to him and exposed his sin. Do you know that one of the things that Nathan said to David was, "You have caused the enemies of God to blaspheme." One of the sad and tragic things is when a person professes to be a Christian and they don't live like a Christian. They live like the world, and other people say, "Oh! You said you were a Christian. Oh, look what you're doing." God is blasphemed because of the claim to be religious, which you don't live your faith.

Notice in verses 25-29, the second thing the Jews boasted is not only do we have God's law, and they didn't keep it, but they had a rite or ritual. It was called circumcision. This was paramount for the Jew. There was a rabbinical teaching in that day that no man circumcised would go to hell. Actually, they believed that Abraham would stand at the gate of hell, and he would turn away any Jew from going into hell. The Jews actually believed that Gentiles were created by God so that they could fuel the fires of hell. Jews are going to heaven, Gentiles are going to hell, we have the law, we have the rites, we have the rituals. In other religions, it might be baptism. In Christianity we baptize, but baptism can't save you. In Christianity we have communion, communion can't save you. You can eat the bread and drink the cup tonight, that's not going to wash away your sins. Baptism nor communion cannot save you. Church attendance can't save you. You say, "Well, why did I come tonight?" Because you're saved and you love the Lord, and you want to study His Word. Amen? You don't come to church so you can go to heaven. You're going to heaven, so you go to church. I want you to notice this section where they put their confidence in this rite of circumcision, verses 25-29. He says, "For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law...", so it's only beneficial if you are a keeper of the law, "...but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. 26 Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law...", and that's a reference to Gentiles. If they're doing what is in the righteousness of the law, that is, the moral standards within the law, "...shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? 27 And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfill the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law?" Now, I'm going to ask you to quote these verses for me tonight. Every Christian ought to memorize these verses. Basically what he is saying, the rite or ritual, the outward cutting away of the flesh, and he is going to say it's the circumcision of the heart that God looks for, is not going to save you. It's not going to save you. This is so apropos today. People think you can get saved by being baptized, or you get saved by being confirmed, or you get saved by going through catechism, or you get saved by having communion, or you get saved by your penitence, or you get saved by doing good works. These things cannot save; the law, legalism, circumcision, rites and rituals.

Remember again, Jesus told Nicodemus, a very religious Jew, a teacher of the Jews, He said, "Nicodemus, you must be born again to see the kingdom of God." Paul the apostle, the very writer of these words, was a devout Jew. He was possibly a Pharisee. He was a very devoted Jew, a very religious Jew, a Hebrew of Hebrews. He was of the tribe of Benjamin. In keeping the law, he was blameless. He was circumcised at eight days old. He had all the religious pedigrees, but He said all those things that were in my pedigree of religion that you would think could get him to heaven....by the way, if anyone could get to heaven by their religion, guess

who that would've been—Paul the apostle, Saul of Tarsus. He said that all that was in my plus column for my pedigree, he said, "I count but refuse. I count it garbage. That I may be found in Christ having not my righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness which is of the faith of Jesus Christ." So, religion can't get you to heaven, and circumcision certainly was paramount to the Jews. That was essential. So, he is saying that if the Gentiles, who are uncircumcised, by I believe their regeneration, verse 26, if they are believers, if they are saved and God writes His laws on their hearts and gives them the Holy Spirit, they are going to go to heaven even though they don't have that rite or that ritual. That's an important point that we need to know.

I want you to notice in verses 28-29, he says, "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: 29 But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." Now, circumcision was an outward rite of an inward work. Just as baptism is an outward rite or ritual of an inward work, it's a work that God does in the heart. If you have not been born again, being dunked in water will not save you. It'll get you wet, but it won't save you. All you will be is a wet sinner. Some people say, "Are you a Christian?" "I've been baptized." "Have you been born again?" "I've been baptized." "Have you been born again?" "I go to church." That's not the issue. Baptism doesn't save. We're saved by grace, through faith, it's not of ourselves, it is a gift of God. It's not of works, lest any man should boast. If baptism saved us, then we could say, "We're saved by works." For the next several weeks we're going to be plunging deeply into salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. It's the only thing that can save. We found out that the heathen are without excuse. The moral, good man is without excuse, and even the religious individual who doesn't have Jesus Christ is without excuse.

I believe that you can take verses 28 and 29, and to apply it today you can read it like this, "For he is not a Christian, which is one outwardly, neither is Christianity that which is outward in the flesh, but he is a Christian which is one inwardly, and baptism is that of the heart and the spirit and not of the letter whose praise is not of men but of God." I want you to notice how this section opened in verse 17. "Behold, thou art called a Jew..." the word Jew or Judah, means praise. Then he ends it in chapter 2, verse 29, "...whose praise is not of men, but of God." A lot of religious people have the praise of men. "Wow! Look at their robe." "Wow, look at their good deeds." God looks at the heart. Do you know that Jesus said at the end of the sermon on the mount that many will say in that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name? Did we not do many wonderful deeds in Your name?" Jesus will say, "Depart from me you workers of iniquity. I never knew you." I know it's hard to accept, somebody with a robe, someone that's a cleric, someone that's a pastor, someone that's a priest, someone that's very religious, very sincere...Let me say something. Sincerity doesn't save your soul. You can be sincerely wrong. You can be sincere and be deceived. The object of your faith is what is important, and if the object of your faith is not Jesus Christ, then you will not be saved. If the object of your faith is, "I'm an American," or "I'm a Jew," or "I'm an Italian," or whatever race you want. If the object of your faith is religion, "I'm a Baptist," "I'm a Pentecostal," "I'm a Bapticostal," "I'm a Presbyterian," "I'm a Revivalite," "I'm a Calvary Chapelite," or whatever you want to be. "I'm a Methodist," "I'm a

Lutheran." If therein lies your faith, then it's not a solid foundation. My faith is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. I dare not trust the sweetest frame, I wholly lean on Jesus name. On Christ the Solid Rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand. Amen? We need to examine our lives tonight and say, "Am I trusting that I'm going to heaven because my parents were Christian or I got baptized or I went to Sunday school or I just believed that there is a God or I'm trying to live the Christian life or have I really been born again?" "Am I trusting in my religion, or am I trusting in Christ and have a relationship with Him?"

Now as you move into chapter 3, verses 1-9, the Jew begins to argue with Paul. Paul is creating his own straw man here. The arguments are Paul's, but he knows them. He was a Jew, a very religious Jew. He knows the thinking of the Jew. He knows the mind of the Jew, and he is going to bring up about four arguments or objections, and he is going to answer them. I want you to pay attention with me and I will point them out. The first objection that the Jew would raise to what Paul has said, the Jew would say, "Yeah, the pagan is guilty. He is condemned, and yeah the moral man is condemned, but we're Jews. We have the law, and we have circumcision. We have the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God has revealed all these things to us, and God's going to save us because we're Abraham's seed." Notice the objection in verse 1 of chapter 3. The Jew would say to Paul, "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?" Objection 1, good question. What good does it do to be a Jew? What good does it do to be religious? Why should I try to do a rite or a ritual to get to heaven? Speaking of the Jews, Paul says, "Look, you Jews (and we Jews, because he was one)...," he answers them in verse 2. "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? 2 Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God." See now, what Paul is saying here is that there are advantages to being a Jew. He is not saying that it's a disadvantage, except for the fact that you have a greater light and to greater light brings greater responsibility. What he is saying is that you are equally sinners under the wrath of God if you haven't come to Christ. He is trying to show them their equal to the Gentiles in guilt but not equal in blessings or privileges. They have privileges that no one else has. Did you know that you, right now as Christians, especially you right here, right now sitting in church with a Bible in your lap, hearing the Word of God being taught, you have privileges that some people in some parts of the world don't have? Do you know that that is going to mean you're going to be judged more strictly? That's why last week I said, "Oh," some would say, "I'm not going to church anymore or read my Bible anymore because I don't want to be judged more strictly." It's a privilege to have a Bible. It's a privilege to know the truth. It's a privilege to be able to come to church and to open God's Word and read and understand. So the Jews had that privilege, but that privilege doesn't mean that they are automatically saved or that they're going to go to heaven.

The oracles of God pertain to the prophetic Word in the Old Testament that pointed to the coming of Messiah, Jesus Christ, and God had given them His Word. As I mentioned, the Bible is a Jewish book, but now look at the second objection in verse 3. Paul answered the first objection in verse 2. The second objection is in verse 3. "For what if some did not believe?" Okay, God gave us His oracles. God gave us His law, but just because some Jews don't believe, "...shall their unbelief make the faith of God..." the King James says faith of God, but

it's faithfulness of God, "...without effect?" That's a good question. Notice the question mark at the end of verse 3. So some Jews don't believe but, "That doesn't mean God still won't save us. That doesn't mean God still isn't going to keep His promises. That doesn't mean God isn't going to do what He said He would do." So, Paul says in verse 4, in his answer, he says, "God forbid..." God forbid the idea that He would be unfaithful (end of verse 3), God will be faithful. God will keep His promises, so perish the thought is what "God forbid" means. "...let God be true..." keeping His promises, "... but every man a liar; as it is written..." now get your pens and paper ready. I am going to give you all the Old Testament references that Paul uses to answer the Jewish argument. There is a whole series of verses, primarily from the Psalms, that Paul uses to answer the arguments of these Jewish religious people. In verse 4 he is quoting from Psalm 51:4, "That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged." He's quoting from Psalm 51:4, where David had sinned with Bathsheba, and in that repentant Psalm he talked about God looks at our hearts and God knows our hearts and God will judge us for our sin, but we need to have a contrite and repentant heart.

I want you to notice the third objection, verse 5. The objector says, "But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man)." In other words, this straw man argument that Paul is posing in verse 5 is worldly thinking, ungodly thinking, but it's the way sometimes people think. Now, these are some challenging verses to understand in Romans, but let me see if I can clear them up and make them as simple as possible. In verse 5, this is the way the argument goes. It's kind of bizarre and gets a little philosophical. The argument goes, "If I sin and it makes God look good, the law of God is broken and God's Word is not kept. If it commends the righteousness of God, then how can God blame me for helping Him out to look good?" I'm paraphrasing, but that's what they're saying. "If my sinning magnifies God's goodness and God's grace, then I'm helping Him out here and God can't really judge me." Notice Paul's answer, verse 6, perish the thought. "God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?" If God can't judge people that are sinners because their sin magnifies God, then God could judge no one. So Paul says, "That's just flat out stupid." God forbid—perish the thought. If your sin makes God look good, how can God judge me? Well, how can God then judge the world. That would be impossible for God to judge anyone, verse 6. Now this argument gets really bizarre. It's the last argument, verse 7. He says, "For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory..." so if I lie and I make God look good, and He is glorified, "...why yet am I judged as a sinner?" Isn't it funny how we can weasel out of our responsibility? You know, it's kind of like finding bugs out in the forest. Have you ever turned over a log and the bugs are under the log, and when the daylight exposes them what do they do? They run. Where do they run? Under another log. They run under another log. You turn the light on, the bugs run, and then you open something and they run again. Paul is chasing these religious people like bugs everywhere, you know. He's pulling off the logs from over them. He's pulling off all their arguments, and they come to this last argument. This is really bizarre, this argument here in verse 7. It says, "For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner?" Paul answers them in verse 8. He says, "And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,)" In other words, what Paul is going to say here isn't true, but he says people are accusing me of saying this. Here it is in

verse 8. "...Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just." Then he closes in verse 9. "What then? are we..." that is Jews, "...better than...Gentiles? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin." That's the conclusion of the Jew or the religious man guilty before God, but what he is saying is that the end does not justify the means.

You can't say, "Let us do evil that good may come." This is a direct statement in the Bible, the end does not justify the means. We can't lie to people to get them in a church. We can't lie to people to get them into heaven. We can't lie to people to get them to trust Jesus, and we can't use means that are ungodly or worldly that are inconsistent with the message that we preach. I'm all for being a contemporary Christian, but even the methods we use in the contemporary church need to be consistent with the message. We can't compromise the message. Methods change. Methods are many, but principles are few and a lot of Christians aren't discerning today. They think that we could do evil that good may come, that we could do this and we get the church full. We can do this and people become Christians. We can do this and people will come to Christ. We can't use an ungodly method to a godly means. We can't do evil that good may come. "Well, I know it's not true, but if I lie to them then I can get them to church." The end does not justify the means. They were actually saying, "Hey, I can lie. I can steal. I can cheat. I can be religious. It's just going to magnify God's grace. It's just going to make God look good, therefore God shouldn't judge me." Paul says, "God forbid." We can't do evil that good may come, and we've proven that the Jews and the Gentiles are all the same.

Now we move into this last passage that is an argument, again for the Jews, that shows the whole world is guilty before God. We see the heathen world, the moral world, and now we see the whole world wrapped up and indicted before God. So, they are brought before the judgment bar of God, and we see the charge, the indictment and the defense, in verse 19, as well as the verdict. Here's how this whole section on condemnation wraps up. Beginning in verse 10, follow with me. It says, "As it is written..." the first quote is from Psalm 14:1-3, "There is none righteous, no, not one: 11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God..." Psalm 14:2, "...They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Now, what is this saying? It's saying, no one is righteous. Right? It's pretty simple and pretty clear. Then he comes to Psalm 5:9 and quotes in verse 13, "Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: 14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness..." by the way, that's a quote from Psalm 10:7, and now we have their feet. He's quoting from Isaiah 59:7, "Their feet are swift to shed blood: 16 Destruction and misery are in their ways: 17 And the way of peace have they not known: 18 There is no fear of God before their eyes." That's Psalm 36:1. No fear of God before their eyes, which was the reason that they had so turned to sin. Then he says, "19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped..." I want you to underline that in your Bible, "every mouth stopped," "...all the world...guilty before God." So, in this courtroom scene, a very austere courtroom scene, the heathen, the moralist, the religious man, the whole world is brought before the judgment bar of God. The charge is in verse 9, "...all are under sin..." under sin's penalty, under sin's power.

This included every one of us before we were saved. We are all guilty, condemned sinners. You say, "I was a good person." You were back earlier in chapter 2. "Well, I'm religious." We just read about you. "Well, I was really messed up. I was shooting heroin in my eyeballs. I was snorting cocaine and drinking alcohol and sleeping around." "I was just robbing banks," and "I was in prison." You were in chapter 1. All the world...guilty before God. This, of course, again you're saying, "This is a depressing text." That's why I said don't miss the next two weeks. We are going to find out how God saves these miserable, wretched sinners—by His grace.

The charges are in verse 9, all are under sin, and the indictment. There are 14 indictments or indictments brought against them. They are charged with all these things. I just want to point them out to you. I don't have time to go into them. The first is in verse 10, there is none righteous. The second is in verse 11, there is no one who understands. The third, verse 11, none seek after God. What they're seeking is the appeasement of their own conscience. They are not really seeking God. In verse 12 is the fourth, they've all turned aside. The fifth, verse 12, they are all unprofitable, and again in verse 12, there is none that doeth good, the sixth. The seventh, and this is pretty graphic, verse 13, their graveyard throats. It says in verse 13, "Their throat is an open sepulchre....," so you throw a body in a tomb and you just leave it open. The Jews would actually paint the sepulchres white so they wouldn't touch them and be contaminated. This is an open grave. If you're walking through the cemetery at night, you fall in and land on a body, Agh!, and you'd be contaminated. Notice how every part of man is tainted by sin. They have graveyard throats, deceitful tongues, verse 13, which is number 8. They have poisonous lips, verse 13. They have cursing mouths. Years ago, I was studying this very verse, verse 14, cursing mouths, and the phone rang. It was back in the days when you had landlines in your house with an answering machine. It was the freakiest thing I've ever had happen. Someone comes on my answering machine cursing me; just vile, horrible cursing on this answering machine. I was praying, "I hope this isn't someone from the church." I had just read verse 14, and I turned on my answering machine. Beep! You blankety-blank blank blank and then Beep! It was unbelievable! A living illustration of verse 14, "Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness." We see that in the world around us today. Their feet, verse 15, are swift to do evil. Destruction and misery in their way, verse 16. Then verse 17, they do not know the way of peace, and verse 18, this is the reason or the cause, there is no fear of God before their eyes. This is why the world is in such a mess. Now, take this list and watch the evening news. A lot of these things you read in this list will appear in your evening local news. This is what theologians call total depravity, that every part of man is tainted by sin.

I'm going to have to go back, and we'll talk about this more next Wednesday night. Notice their defense, in closing, verse 19. "So, Mr. Pagan, what is your defense?" His mouth is shut. He answers nothing. He answers, "Guilty." "Mr. Moral Man, what is your defense?" Every mouth is shut and all the world is guilty before God. "Religious Man, what is your defense?" All the world is guilty before God and every mouth is stopped. So the verdict, verse 19, guilty before God. The heathen had creation, but they rejected it. They're guilty. The moral man had a conscience. He rejects it, and he's guilty. The Jews had the law, and they reject it, don't keep it, and they are guilty. In verse 9 of chapter 3, "...all under sin." In verse 19 of chapter 3, "...every mouth is stopped, and all the world...guilty before God."

I can't leave us there tonight, all the world is guilty before God. For the next few weeks we are going to be talking about how God makes righteous the unrighteous, but when I read that phrase, "All the world guilty before God," I can't help but think of John 3:16. "For God so loved the..." what? Gentile world and the Jewish world, the religious world, the moral man, the pagan man, "For God so loved the world..." that He did what? "...gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him..." would have what? "...everlasting life." That's what we're going to celebrate right now. Let's pray.