

## Getting Started

Read Romans 3:9-20 asking God to show you how you commit any of the sins listed. If you are convicted of anything, confess and ask for forgiveness and commit to turn from those sins by His grace.

- Jews have at least one advantage over Gentiles: they have been entrusted with God's Words. However, in the final analysis, why are Jews and Gentiles essentially equal? (Romans 3:9)
- How does Paul use the repeated words "no one" and "all" in Romans 3:9-18?
- Optional: Take time to read the OT passages that are quoted in Romans 3:9-20 for their entire context.  
Romans 3:10-12 ... Psalm 14:1-8; Ecclesiastes 7:20  
Romans 3:13a ... Psalm 5:5-10  
Romans 3:13b ... Psalm 140:1-4  
Romans 3:14 ... Psalm 10:4-7  
Romans 3:15-17 ... Isaiah 59:4-10  
Romans 3:18 ... Psalm 36:1-4

## Discussion

- As you read this week's passage, discuss how these verses reveal that the whole man's inner being is controlled by sin (mind, heart, and will). Notice the various parts of the body that Paul describes. What impact does this have on the way you think about sin?
- Discuss the truth of this statement and how it relates to Romans 1-3.  
*We are not sinners because we sin, but rather we sin because we are sinners.*
- Suppose someone said, "Since no one will be 'declared righteous' by obeying God's law, why bother to pay any attention to it at all?" How would you respond?
- Discuss your reaction to this quote by Martin Luther ...

*"The principal point ... of the law ... is to make men not better but worse, this is to say, it sheweth unto them their sin, that by the knowledge thereof they may be humbled, terrified, bruised and broken, and by this means be driven to seek grace, and so come to that blessed Seed (Christ)."*

- Summarize in your own words the point that Paul is making in 3:19-20.

Optional: While every man, woman, and child conceived by a human father has a dark side that he or she never shows to anybody, nothing can be hidden from God. Humanity may sing our praises, but our Maker and Judge sees all. Look up these verses ... (1 Samuel 16:7; 1 Kings 8:39; Psalm 139:3; Jeremiah 17:10; Luke 16:15; Hebrews 4:12-13)

### **Prayer**

*"In conclusion, how should we respond to Paul's devastating exposure of universal sin and guilt? We should not try to evade it by changing the subject and talking instead of the need for self-esteem, or by blaming our behavior on our genes, nurturing, education or society. It is an essential part of our dignity as human beings that however much we have been affected by negative influences, we are not their helpless victims, but rather responsible for our conduct. Our first response to Paul's indictment, then, should be to make it as certain as we possibly can that we have ourselves accepted this divine diagnosis of our human condition as true, and that we have fled from the just judgment of God on our sin to the only refuge there is, namely Jesus Christ, who died for our sins. For we have no merit to plead and no excuse to make. We too stand before God speechless and condemned. Only then shall we be ready to hear the great "But now" of verse 21, as Paul begins to explain how God has intervened through Christ and his cross for our salvation." - John Stott*

Use this time to praise God for being holy, righteous, just, jealous and thank Him for His love, grace, mercy, and forgiveness.