



BEULAH FIRST BAPTIST

Rev. Felix L. Cole, Senior Pastor

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Focus: Rooted – A Study Through Romans

Week 4: "In the Courtroom with Paul" – The Case For Grace

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Introduction: In Romans 3, Paul gathers everything he has said about sin and religious confidence and brings humanity into the courtroom. Having shown that the world is broken (Romans 1) and that religious people are not exempt (Romans 2), Paul now presents the case that all people stand guilty before God. This passage prepares us for grace by first establishing guilt, reminding us that righteousness cannot be achieved through law, knowledge, or religious identity.

Key Scriptures

- **Romans 3:1–9** – The accusation: all are under sin
- **Romans 3:10–12** – The character of the accused
- **Romans 3:13–14** – The conversation of the accused
- **Romans 3:15–18** – The conduct of the accused
- **Romans 3:19–20** – The verdict and the purpose of the law

1. The Accusation – (Romans 3:1–9): Paul anticipates objections from religious people who assume spiritual advantage protects them from judgment. He affirms God's faithfulness but delivers a clear charge: all people, both Jews and Gentiles, are under the power of sin. This accusation removes comparison and places everyone on equal footing before God.

Truths to See

- Religious advantage does not equal righteousness
- God's faithfulness is not canceled by human failure
- Being close to truth does not remove accountability

Biblical Examples

- Israel trusting covenant identity without obedience – Jeremiah 7
- Paul's former confidence in religious credentials – Philippians 3:4–9

2. The Evidence: Character of the Accused – (Romans 3:10–12): Paul calls Scripture to the stand, quoting heavily from the Psalms to establish humanity's condition. He declares that no one is righteous and no one seeks God, showing that sin is not merely behavioral but foundational.

Truths to See

- Sin is a condition, not just actions
- Righteousness does not originate in humanity
- Left to ourselves, we drift from God

Biblical Examples

- Adam and Eve hiding from God – Genesis 3:8
- The deceitful human heart – Jeremiah 17:9

3. The Evidence: Conversation of the Accused – (Romans 3:13–14): Paul continues quoting the Psalms to show that corrupted speech reveals corrupted hearts. Words become evidence, exposing what lies beneath the surface of religious appearance.

Truths to See

- Words reveal the condition of the heart
- Speech exposes inner brokenness
- Sin affects what we say as much as what we do

Biblical Examples

- “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks” – Matthew 12:34
- Isaiah’s unclean lips before God – Isaiah 6:5

4. The Evidence: Conduct of the Accused – (Romans 3:15–18): Paul points to patterns of violence, broken relationships, and lack of peace. This evidence shows a consistent trajectory of life apart from God, rooted in the absence of reverence for Him.

Truths to See

- Sin affects direction, not just decisions
- Broken conduct flows from broken hearts
- The fear of God is absent apart from grace

Biblical Example

- Cain’s unchecked sin – Genesis 4
- Moral chaos in Israel – Judges 21:25

5. The Verdict – (Romans 3:19–20): Paul delivers the final conclusion: every mouth is silenced and the whole world is held accountable to God. The law cannot justify; it exposes sin and removes excuses. Grace becomes necessary, not optional.

Truths to See

- The law reveals sin but cannot save
- No one can boast before God
- Accountability prepares the way for grace

Biblical Examples

- The law exposing guilt – Exodus 20
- Isaiah undone before God’s holiness – Isaiah 6

6. What the Courtroom Reveals

- Sin is universal, not selective
- Knowledge increases responsibility
- The law diagnoses but cannot heal
- Grace only makes sense once guilt is acknowledged

Before grace can be celebrated, the case must be closed.