The Solid Rock on Which We Stand: "The Guilt of the World Before God"

Romans 3:9-20

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The Big Idea:

Everyone stands guilty before God and cannot justify themselves, so they are silenced and driven to seek salvation in Jesus rather than in themselves or their good works. (Romans 3:9-20)

<u>Why the World is Guilty Before God</u>

1. All of mankind is universally sinful. (Romans 3:9)

2. All of mankind is totally depraved. (Romans 3:10-18)

a. Mankind's character is totally depraved. (Romans 3:10-12)

b. Mankind's conversation is totally depraved. (Romans 3:13-14)

c. Mankind's conduct is totally depraved. (Romans 3:15-18)

3. All of mankind is justly condemned. (Romans 3:19-20)

<u>Conclusion</u>

While this section of Romans 1:18–3:20 can seem bleak and hopeless, we must not forget why Paul wrote it. It's only when we recognize how utterly sinful we are as fallen people in the eyes of all-holy God, with no excuse for our sin and depravity, that the grace of God, found in the virgin birth, sinless life, substitutionary death, and resurrection of Jesus, becomes the most loving and gracious gift ever given to another individual.

November 1, 2026

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Romans 3:9-20 (study guide)

Read Romans 3:9-20

1. What is Paul's main verdict in Romans 3:9-20, and how does he support it?
How does Paul move from "all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin" to "every mouth may be stopped," and what does that tell you about the scope of human guilt before God?

2. In Romans 3:10-18, what do the three categories of depravity reveal about the whole person?
Notice how Paul describes **character** ("None is righteous"), **conversation** ("Their throat is an open grave"), and **conduct** ("Their feet are swift to shed blood"). Why does Paul move from the inward life to speech to outward action? What does this teach about total depravity as a corruption of the whole person?

3. What does Paul mean when he says mankind is "under sin" in Romans 3:9?
The passage says all are "under sin," and the study notes describe this as a military picture of authority and mastery. How does that image deepen the meaning of human bondage to sin?

4. Why does Paul quote the Old Testament so heavily in Romans 3:10-18?
Paul strings together multiple Old Testament texts to prove his point. Why is this important? What does it show about the unity of Scripture and the consistency of God's witness across both Testaments? How does this use of Scripture demonstrate that the law exposes sin rather than just describing bad behavior?

5. What is the purpose of the law according to Romans 3:19-20, and how should that shape our response?
Read verses 19-20 closely. According to Paul, why did God give the law if no one can be justified by it? What does it mean that "every mouth may be stopped"? How should this passage move a sinner from self-defense to repentance, and how should it move a believer to gratitude for Christ's saving work?