

# REASONS FOR CONDEMNATION | ROMANS 3:1-20 | PASTOR MARK BOFILL 09/08/2024

I. Man is Condemned in His Rationale (v.1-8) | II. Man is Condemned for His Actions (v.9-18) | III. Man is Condemned by the Law (v. 19,20)

**INTRO:** *There was a man who adopted what he thought was a monkey. The monkey was cute and playful and great entertainment. As the years progressed the monkey kept getting bigger and bigger until it became a vicious gorilla. The man finally had to put it in a cage and keep the cage locked. He had to be more and more careful when he was feeding it. Finally, one day, he turned his back on the gorilla for a moment and the gorilla pounced on him and killed him. – Sin is that way! It starts small and seemingly harmless, but it grows and grows and finally consumes us! – Yet, some of us think that our sins are not really that big of deal... and God will grade your sin on a curve... NOT SO! / In today's sermon, the Apostle Paul wipes out any supposed defense of man as he presents... \**

**I. Man is Condemned in His Rationale (1-8)** – In the preceding verses, we learned how Paul indicted the “**unrighteous,**” the “**self-righteous,**” and the “**Jew,**” for various reasons. From a Jewish perspective, **he now presents a hypothetical dialog,** which exposes man's objections to God's judgment, Paul explains that 'such reasoning condemns mankind,' rather than defends them.

## A. Paul's First Set of Questions (1-2) – READ

1. **Questions:** “*What advantage is it to be a Jew?*” (1a) and “*What profit is there in circumcision?*” (1b) – These questions stem out of the previous verses (2:17-29). The questions imply that 'if the Jews were God's chosen people and have been given the special covenant of circumcision with God, then what benefit is there to being a Jew if God is still going to judge them?'

2. **Reply:** “*Much in every way!*” (2a) – Paul knew that God's character was in question, so Paul reaffirms that God's Covenant has an abiding value. – *God entrusted the Hebrews with the His teachings!* (Deut. 4:1,2; 6:1,2) – This is a great responsibility! **The Word entrusted to them contained the very Words of life, that if they were carefully followed, they would prosper.** [Unfortunately, they followed the letter of the Law rather than the Spirit of it – Talmud /Mishna]

**P/A** – **Anyone who receives the Word of God receives a blessing!** Paul's point was that responding to the Word in one's heart is more important than just possessing it.

## B. Paul's Second Question (3-4) – READ

1. **Question:** The Jews question was this, “*Paul, how can you possibly say that we Jews have so completely failed in our privileged position and still insist that we are an advantaged people? If we have failed to keep His Word, then God's Word is powerless, and He is unfaithful!*”

2. **Reply:** **Certainly not!** – To expose their twisted rationale, Paul quoted David's repentant words after his sin with Bathsheba (Ps 51:4), **affirming God's justice** and **giving proof** that God remains faithful and true no matter how individuals sin! Thus, their objection to Paul's teaching was illogical.

**P/A** – **Paul saw that God's promises were in question,** so Paul reaffirmed that God is faithful to His promises. **God is always true,** regardless of man's shortcomings. **When men claim that God is unfaithful to His promises, it only proves them liars and God as true.** (Ps 62:9) “*Surely men of low degree are a vapor, men of high degree are a lie; if they are weighed on the scales, they are altogether lighter than vapor.*”

### C. Paul's Third Set of Questions (5-6) – *Addresses God's Righteous Judgment* – READ

1. **Question:** Their rationale concluded that, *"If when they do wrong, shows that God is right, then isn't it wrong for God to punish us?"* – God is accused here of using the Jews to His advantage, showing His righteousness by their failure. **Therefore, He must be unjust and cannot be fair.**
2. **Reply:** Notice first that Paul clarifies he is speaking as an **'unlearned illogical man would speak'** (*I speak as a man*), and again replies with an emphatic, **"No Way!"** – *"then how [can] God judge the world?"* – *Paul's point is that if God condoned sin, then He would not have a just basis for judgment.*

**P/A** – Paul saw that **God's credibility** was in question here, so **Paul reaffirms God's justice as a judge. He IS Just!** – (Job 34:17-19) *"Should one who hates justice govern? Will you condemn Him who is most just? 18 Is it fitting to say to a king, 'you are worthless,' and to nobles, 'you are wicked'? 19 Yet, He is not partial to princes, nor does He regard the rich more than the poor; for they are all the work of His hands."*

### D. Paul's Fourth Set of Questions (7-8) – *I'll read this in the NLT: "But," someone might still argue, "how can God condemn me as a sinner if my dishonesty highlights his truthfulness and brings him more glory?" And some people even slander us by claiming that we say, "The more we sin, the better it is!" Those who say such things deserve to be condemned. (Rom 3:7-8 NLT)*

1. **Question:** In other words, *"When I lie, it really gives Him glory, because my lie shows God's truth."*
2. **Reply:** This is **so absurd** that Paul does not even answer with a **"Certainly not!"** He knew that their reasoning was irrational, so he concludes with a statement... **"Their condemnation is just!"**
  - Sadly, the apostle's teaching of **redemption by grace alone by faith** had been twisted by those who opposed him, claiming it not only gave permission to sin but also encouraged it. – Evil never promotes the glory of God! For no good results can justify the encouragement of evil!

**Closing Thoughts:** *It's a funny thing, when mankind thinks that they can outwit God?* It is *a foolish thing that man tries to lessen God's character* to make to make himself seem good. – Man tries to con his way into heaven. – And so, **Man's Rationale Condemns Them!** *What rationale do you hold on to?*

## II. **Man is Condemned for His Actions (9-18)** – In this section, Paul uses seven passages from the Old Testament. He uses one from Ecclesiastes, five from Psalms, and one from Isaiah to **unveil the Total Depravity and Unrighteousness of man, in their actions** (*From God's perspective*).

### A. **Man's Character (9-12)** – READ

1. **None are Righteous (10)** – **Not one!** (Eccl 7:20) *"For there is not a just man on earth who does good, and does not sin."*
2. **None Understand/Seek God (11)** – b/c they don't understand God's way, they don't seek Him.
3. **None Practice Goodness (12)** – These are quotes from (Ps 14:1-3) – *i.e., The Fool's Heart...*
  - a. *They all turn aside (12a)* – Instead of turning to God because of His kindness (2:4) they turn from God
  - b. *They are unprofitable (12b)* – Lit. **Rotten fruit!** – All men have a purpose for which they were created. However, because man has chosen to turn from God, rather than to God, they are declared unprofitable. *Therefore, God has given them up (1:26).*

c. *They need to repent* – When David was found out for his sin with Bathsheba, **He acknowledged His sin before God (Ps 51:4), Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight-- That You may be found just when You speak, And blameless when You judge.**

## B. Man's Communication (13-14) – READ A quote from (Ps 5:9; 140:3; 10:7)

1. ***Their Throats* (13a)** – Man's throats are compared to the stench of an open grave
2. ***Their Tongues* (13b)** – Sinful men use their tongue for lying, rather than for blessing others.
3. ***Their Lips* (14a)** – Hidden behind their lips are poisonous fangs, ready to bite any who offend.
4. ***Their Mouths* (14b)** – The cursing and bitterness are indicative of a simple four-letter word: HATE!
  - The communication of hatred is really a **problem with the heart**, (Matt 15:18-19) *“But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. 19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, and blasphemies.”*

## C. Man's Crookedness (15-17) – READ

1. ***Their Feet* (15)** – The mention of man's feet are linked to murderous practices; *“they are swift to shed blood.”* This is obvious today by simply watching television. **Man is obsessed with others being harmed, (i.e., “Murder Mysteries”) rather than offering Help and doing good.**
2. ***Their Ways* (16)** – It is in the heart of man to be destructors of everything that is in their paths. Paul also mentions their misery. Because men have a condition of misery within their hearts, they want to make everybody else miserable!
3. ***Their Path* (17)** – Men do not know how to live at peace with one another, and because they do not choose the paths that God has set before them, they cannot know peace. *[e.g., when we go to church, we get blessed with the Word and good fellowship; Don't wait for six strong men to take you to church!]*

D. **Man's Cause (18)** – *“There is no fear of God before their eyes,”* from (Ps 36:1). When man fails to recognize God for who is, **he begins to remove himself from God's light and descends deeper and deeper into darkness**. When this happens, the real spiritual condition of man is revealed to all.

1. **Biblical Fear consists of two things:** Awe of God's greatness and glory (Prov 9:10), and Dread of the results of violating God's holy nature (Prov 1:7)
2. **If you fear God in the world, you will be without fear in the world to come; but if you have no fear of God in this world, you will be full of fear in the world to come; (Heb 10:31) *“it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”* *[No fear, or KNOW fear, it's your choice]***

**Closing Points:** Paul's repetition hammers the point home, **twice** we are told that '**ALL**' have gone their own way, **four times** that '**NO-ONE**' is righteous, and **twice** we are told that '**NOT EVEN ONE**' is an exception – This reveals that the whole of man's inner being is **Controlled By Sin**; his mind : *“there are none who understand,”* his heart: *“there are none who seek,”* and his will: *“there are none that do good.”*

## III. Man is Condemned by the Law (19-20) – READ

A. **The Law SPEAKS to Those Under It (19a)** – Every unredeemed human is responsible to God since everyone has the Law written in their hearts (2:15), **ALL are accountable to God.**

**B. The Law STOPS Every Mouth (19b)** – This image is of a courtroom, where the defendant, who has the chance to represent himself, is rendered mute by the volume of overwhelming evidence against him.

**C. The Law STAMPS all guilty (19c)** – All he can do is wait for the pronouncement and execution of judgment. *[No plea bargains either! – the law will stand, so we can't put a question mark where God put a period].*

**D. The Law DOES NOT JUSTIFY Deeds (20a) – (Gal 3:10-11)** *“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.”* – **To live by the law means to uphold it in its totality!**

**E. The Law is the KNOWLEDGE of Sin (20b)** – Like a bright search lamp that shines its light on all darkness, **the Law exposes ALL violators of it**. – However, the very scriptures that can condemn us, also offer hope and a way out, **(Gal 3:22)** *“But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that **the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.**”*

**Closing Thoughts:** These are the **REASONS FOR CONDEMNATION!** – Paul had made it clear that *God can only redeem us when we decide to confess our sins and remain mute before Him*. As long as we stand up for ourselves, we condemn ourselves and are unable to receive His divine grace!

### Closing Song/Altar Call

**What does your case look like? *Do you have proper legal representation?*** If you don't, all you have to do is **ASK** and the best defense lawyer will be provided for you... JESUS CHRIST!

All you have to do is **Confess that you are a guilty sinner** and **Believe in Him...** *(He can get set you free!)*

- **(John 3:15)** *“that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.”*
- **(John 12:25)** *“He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.”*

*To be Almost saved is to be totally lost!*