

# Romans: All Guilty

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[ 0 : 00 ]     Good morning. The scripture reading comes from Paul's letter to the Romans, chapter 3. Please follow along in your bulletins. Then what advantage has the Jew, or what is the benefit of circumcision, great in every respect?

First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God. But what then? If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it?

May it never be. Rather, let God be found true, though every man be found a liar. As it is written, that you may be justified in your words, and prevail when you are judged.

But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? The God who inflicts wrath is not unrighteous, is he?

I am speaking in human terms. May it never be. For otherwise, how will God judge the world? But if through my lie, the truth of God abounded to his glory, why am I also still being judged as a sinner?

[ 1 : 21 ]     And why not say, as we are slanderously reported, and some claim that we say, let us do evil, so that good may come. Their condemnation is just.

What then? Are we better than they? Not at all. For we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin.

As it is written, there is none righteous, not even one. There is none who understands. There is none who seeks for God.

All have turned aside. Together they have become useless. There is none who does good. There is not even one. Their throat is an open grave.

With their tongues they keep deceiving. The poison of asps is under their lips, whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood.

[ 2 : 21 ]     Destruction and misery are in their paths. And the path of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes.

Now we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law. So that every mouth may be closed, and all the world may become accountable to God.

Because by the works of the law, no flesh will be justified in his sight. For through the law comes the knowledge of sin.

This is God's word to us. Through the law comes the knowledge of sin. If you're joining us for the first time, we're going through the book of Romans.

And you've come at a very, very interesting passage today. As I'm sure you could already guess, as you've heard read out, and going, what the heck have I gotten myself into today?

[ 3 : 20 ]     We wanted to, as a family, when we started the church, we wanted the church to be a place where we could ask questions. And sometimes I just say, hey, what's the question on the passage? And people ask. And we haven't done that for a while.

We've gotten a blank or a new SMS card. So I don't know what the heck, who's writing in the questions. And so they're coming in slowly. My one hope is that as you write them, please try to be as uncomplicated as possible.

Some people have really done a masterful job of weaving ideas and thoughts. And it's taken me a long time trying to figure out what is the question they're asking.

So if you just say, this is my question, that would be, I'm getting old. That would be very, very helpful for me, please. And so we wanted to take one today, and hopefully we'll continue.

And so one of the questions that came in, it was actually part of a couple other questions, is just the idea of what about those who've never heard of Christ? I think that that is a huge question often.

[ 4 : 21 ] Usually behind it, there's a lot of motives. I think we don't ever know what exactly the person's heart motive is. For me, it was as I thought about my grandparents and my great-grandparents.

As far as I know, my grandmother was the first one to come into the family of Christ or God. And so I always wonder about them. And so there's a couple thoughts you want to think about as we deal with these issues.

If it's a personal question, then people often are really wondering, and they're struggling, and they're hurting. And we want to be sensitive to that. And you don't want to be unsensitive. And you want to speak truth and grace into their life.

We know this. We know that every person we're going to see today has a debt of sin. Everybody has a debt of sin. So maybe one of the questions you want to ask the people, or you want to ask yourself, is how is that sin debt being paid?

Who's going to pay for that sin debt in their life? How is that going to be taken care of? Romans, as we looked at last week, Romans 1, 18 through 25, basically says that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth, because that which is known about God is evident within them, for God made it evident to them.

[ 5 : 35 ] And so as we read in the passage, what we see in God's word is that all people have a revelation that there is a God.

We call that natural revelation. And so there's no one who can say, I've never, didn't know that. I didn't, that's impossible. I mean, that's what God's word says, right? So we're going to be teaching what God's word says.

One caveat to that is, is don't go into your work tomorrow and say, God's word says this. You need to be doing that. Because if they're not believers, this is God's word.

It's written to the family of God. It's a covenant contract to us. It's not going to mean anything to them. The best thing you can do for the people in your work or in your family is to live a life that is consistent to what God's word says.

Don't be saying God's word says this if you're not living the way that God wants us to live. Because they're going to listen to your words and they're going to look at your life and they're going to go, wow, that doesn't make any sense to me whatsoever.

[ 6 : 37 ] Francis Schaeffer said it another way. And I really appreciate Francis Schaeffer. If you don't, if you know anything about theology, in the 60s and 70s, Christianity was getting toasted, destroyed, beat up. And there was one man who stood up and spoke theologically, philosophically, and well to the issues of the day in the 60s where there was massive turmoil.

And he had this young man come into him one time and the man was incredibly, incredibly angry. And he felt like how presumptuous is it for God to judge him, a person who's never heard the gospel before?

How can God, when he gets to heaven, if there is a God, how can God judge him? Now, there's a lot of assumptions here, right? Because I would say everybody in this church sanctuary has heard the gospel.

So we're all accountable. So none of us can say, well, I didn't know. We're not going to be able to get to heaven and say, I never heard that. But this guy was saying, hey, how can God be just and good and then condemn me of that?

And what Schaeffer did, it was really interesting. He broke out Romans 2, 1 through 3, and he said this to the young man. He said, therefore, you are without excuse, every man of you who passes judgment.

[ 7 : 47 ] For then that you judge another, you condemn yourself. For you who judge practice the same thing. And we know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice such things.

And Schaeffer said to the young man, you know, you're right. Maybe it is unjust for God to judge you on the gospel. And then he went over to the guy, and he imagined that he unhooked a microphone from around his neck.

And the guy was looking at him. He goes, what are you doing? And he goes, this is a tape recorder. And God put this tape recorder around your neck the moment you were born. And it only records things that you judge other people by.

Whenever you say they should never have done that, I would never have done that, I wouldn't do that, that's the stupidest thing I ever heard, how can they do that and not be true, that's inconsistent. It only judges those things.

And he said to the young man, on the final day when you meet God, God's going to take that tape recorder, as it says here in Romans 2, and he's going to turn it on. And you're going to be judged by how you judge everybody else.

[ 8 : 51 ] And he said the man got really quiet. Because he knew that if he was held to the same standard that he held everybody else to, that he was guilty.

And so we're going to say that God makes himself known to all people. And that as we respond to the truth, he continues to bring more truth into our life.

That all men are accountable before God. We see it in creation. We see it in the world. And that none of us, when we get before God, we're not going to be able to say, you know, I didn't know. I've never heard.

Does that make sense? So that's what God's word says. So keep bringing in your questions. You're free to ask any question.

We're kind of compiling them as people come in. I don't know, again, who wrote them. But we want to see, as a family, what are some of the things we're talking about. We're in Romans 3.

[ 9 : 47 ] So far, I don't know if you feel the same way I feel, but I have just felt like, I feel like I've been beat up. I've had people come to me this week and go, wow, I just feel like I'm getting the crap kicked out of me.

Can we say crap in church? I feel like I'm getting the crap kicked out of me as I hear God's word spoken. And I realize I'm just being convicted over and over of my sinfulness. And I'm convicted of my hypocrisy.

I've been convicted of my lack of grace in other people's lives. I've been convicted of that I forgot what it was like before I was not a Christian. And I just assume everybody thinks the same way. And God's word is continually being convicted of me.

And I just feel like I'm going down into this pit. I looked at him and said, well, just hang in there because today we hit the bottom of the pit. So today we're in the bottom of the pit.

We're in the hardest passage, I think, for a pastor to preach. I mean, I've been told that if you want your church to grow, if you want to be popular, if you want to be sexy, you don't teach this passage in your congregation.

[ 10 : 50 ] Because this is not a popular or sexy verse. But it is God's word. And so we're going to continue on in looking through this. In chapter 1, what Paul is doing is he's basically, the only way I can think of this is Paul's like a doctor.

And he's basically looking at us and he's triaging us. And he's trying to figure out, because I love medicine, I study medicine. He's trying to triage us and trying to figure out what is actually the problem with us.

You know, in an accident, sometimes people who come out and they look really bad. A part of them looks really bad. But as a doctor, you realize that that's not the thing that's going to kill them. Something that's going to kill them is probably something internally that you don't see that initially.

And so you have to triage and figure out what's going on. And so all these passages, Paul is, he's a doctor and he's triaging the human race. Or he's a lawyer. He's building up this lawsuit.

And he's basically, he uses a lot of legal terms. He's trying to figure out where we are and what's going on. In chapter 1, verse 3, Paul, he's been talking to those people, or chapter 1, verse 18, he's talking to those people who say, I don't really care.

[ 11 : 59 ] I don't really care if there's a God. I do my thing, you do your thing. And if we just do our things, then everything is okay. And Paul's examined their life and he's showed them the problem in their lives.

The things that they're going to be inconsistent to. In chapter 2, verses 1, Paul starts to talk to the moral person. He talks about how good they are and how their morals are great and they're righteous and they're in their own righteousness.

And he warns them. He says, if you live by your righteousness, if you live by your goodness, if you live by your morals, you're going to fail. You're going to fall apart.

You're not going to be able to do that. You're going to have this standard. And yet, you're going to look at everybody else and you're going to say, they didn't do it. Shame on them. And the tape recorder is recording everything that you say. And one day, God's going to turn that tape recorder on and you're going to be judged by your words.

And how you judge everybody else. And Paul warns the moral person. He warns us. And last week, we looked at the religious person and we talked about people who are religious.

[ 13 : 02 ] And we said that religious people rely on stuff that is inward, right? There are things that they have known about them. They're, well, I can study the Bible. I'm really good at quiet times. I have these gifts. These things are true of me, my heritage, my family.

And he says, be careful of relying on inward things. Because almost always, as we rely on them, what happens is it turns to hypocrisy. And we become prideful and become selfish and we become self-centered.

And don't do that. And then he said that sometimes religious people rely on outward things. Ceremonies and rituals. And he talked about circumcision. And I realized there was a lot of confusion about circumcision.

People ask questions. And so we put a slide up for you today. Do we have that slide up here? Okay. So this is it right here. So this is David's Michelangelo. Okay. So the question is circumcised or uncircumcised.

Okay. So you can Google that later on. We're not going to, we're not going to unlift the boxes. But there was a lot of confusion in that. And so, okay, you can take that down now. It makes me kind of envious or jealous.

[ 14 : 05 ] I don't know. Okay. So that was, there was some confusion on circumcision. And what we said is all these rituals, all these things on the outside, if they don't represent our heart, they're worthless.

And so we become baptized because we've had an interchange of our heart. We take communion because we've had an interchange of our heart. Maybe we wear a red ribbon to celebrate the sermon we did on what Christ has done for us.

But sometimes we forget this. We forget what this means. And we just wear it. It becomes the issue of pride. And it no longer reflects an inward reality. And he says, be careful because in this covenant, God has had strict rules.

And if we break the covenant, we get separated. We get torn away. And we talked about circumcision. And we basically said it's a ripping. It's a tearing. It's a blood. It's a reminder of God's relationship with us.

And Colossians 2 says that basically on the cross, Christ was torn away. He was ripped apart from God. He was circumcised. It was bloody. It was terrible. For who?

[ 15 : 11 ] For you and I. And so we come to God now because of what Christ has done. And all along, we see these words of patience, grace, patience, grace.

And God is continually just talking to us about how much he loves us and how much he wants us to be in the family. And then we get to the part today. And today is just one of these incredibly hard, I think, it's, man.

And he's, so he's at the bottom in chapter three. And he's been gathering all this diagnosis and all these people. He's been gathering all these law facts and CIsing and bringing all the facts together.

And he's brought all these things together. And now he's finalizing his case. He's making his diagnosis for you and for me.

And it's really important to know what the problem is, right? Because if you don't know what the right problem is, then you're not going to have the right treatment. If you don't know what the real issue is, you're not going to treat what's going to hurt the person, what's going to kill the person.

[ 16 : 13 ] And so in the passage today, I just want to really briefly look at three things that Paul talks about in this process of looking at our hearts. Of looking at the cases put before us. We want to look at the idea of what our problem is.

And he's going to talk about that right up front in verse 9. We're going to look at the idea of what are the symptoms of our problem. What are some of the things that come about as we go into this issue of this problem? And then we want to look at the cure.

What is the cure? So you got that in your mind? What's the problem? What are some symptoms? And what's the cure? And hang in there. I think that this probably could be one of the most significant passages for most of the people in our church.

Because if we don't get this passage down, if we don't start to change with this passage in our heart, if we don't start to chew on this passage, we're not going to understand the gospel.

We're not going to understand grace. And so look at verse 9 and see what he says there. What then? Are we better than they? Not at all. We have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin.

[ 17 : 18 ] So he's taken all of mankind, the moral person, the heathen, the religious person, Tobin. He's put us all in this one little package.

And he says, our problem is sin. And you see what he says there? He doesn't say something like, the problem is that Tobin sins. He doesn't say the problem is that we are sinners.

I mean, I think most people can handle that, right? You talk to people at work or even in my life on this journey when people are talking to me about God. And when they said, do you sin? I was like, yeah, I'll admit that.

I'm a sinner. I sin. I'm not as bad as everybody else, but I do sin. But here what Paul says is our problem is that we're under sin.

The word is a very unusual and powerful word. It's the first time he's ever used it in Romans. But he's going to use it 50 times between now and chapter 8.

[ 18 : 19 ] It's this idea. It's this military term. It means that sin has us under authority. That sin is controlling all of us completely.

But there's not a part of us, before we know God, there's not a part of us that isn't controlled by sin. Now try telling that to your boss tomorrow.

When he gets angry and he yells and he gets frustrated. You know, you say, well, you know, your problem is, dude, your sin just has this stranglehold on you. And you're just controlled and everything you do is sinful. I mean, you probably shouldn't do that.

But Paul says that to us. So what he's saying here is he's saying, now listen to me. He's saying good people. He's saying bad people. He's saying religious people.

He's saying non-religious people. He's saying Republicans. He's saying your saintly gray-haired grandmother who makes these amazing, incredible cookies. And yes, he's even saying kiwis.

[ 19 : 19 ] Everybody is under sin's complete control. Everybody. I didn't say Australians because I give Australians a hard time. I'll say kiwis this time. And there's two of them, and I know they're going to cry.

But I love them, and so we'll talk about it later. But he's saying that all of us are under sin's complete control.

I mean, it says that we are actually captives to sin. It says that we live in the domain of sin. It says that we're enslaved to sin. And remember, we said that sin is not conforming to the law of God.

Sin is disobedience to God's law. Sin is the standard that God has put forward. Sin is self-centeredness. Sin is self-righteousness. Sin is self-righteousness.

Sin is self-righteousness. It says that it's our heart, what's in our heart. And Paul says here in verse 9, the problem is, Tobin, is that your life is completely in control. Your whole world, your words, your thoughts, your actions, everything you do is dominated, is controlled, is in the domain of sin.

[ 20 : 27 ] And you're in trouble. I mean, to be under sin means to be guilty before God. There's a great, I know I'm going to get in trouble with this, there's a great scene in The Godfather.

You ever see the scene with Al Pacino and he's there and he's christening his son? And he's in this Catholic church and it's beautiful and his son's getting christened. And the priest is looking at him and said, do you so-and-so, do you confess your sins?

Yes, I do. But in the other scenes, he's having all his people who are in competition getting killed. They're getting shot and they're getting strangled and they're getting stabbed. Do you renounce Satan? Yes, I do.

Do you give up all your sins? Yes, I do. And he's wiping out everybody. I mean, it's an incredibly powerful scene. And you look at this guy and he has no guilt. He has no shame.

He has no doubt about what he's doing. And in the same way, he's saying he's renouncing these things. And what Paul says, it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter if you feel shameful. It doesn't matter if you feel guilt.

[ 21 : 26 ] What Paul says is that you have guilt. And the passage says that we are far, far away from God.

Now, I know I'm going to repeat things over and over and over because that's the only way I understand. And that's the way I think we need to understand. But what Paul is saying is this is a massive, massive problem in our life.

And the question is, how do we see people? When you walk down the street, what does your worldview say?

Do you look at people and say, well, man is basically good? I mean, there's a little tweaking we can do there. I mean, a little more re-education. A little more classes. Maybe not as selfish with his resources.

But man is basically good. Or do we say, you know, man is so, so good. He's like 51% good. It's like my student told me about Mao. Mao, he's 51% good, so 51% is good.

[ 22 : 27 ] He's pretty good. Or do we say, you know, man is not too good. There's some problems there. You know, before World War I, everybody thought that mankind was going to get better and better.

And the world was going to get better and better. And technology was going to get better and better. And everybody had this worldview. Oxford, Cambridge, U.S., every university had this view. And all of a sudden, World War I hit. And it was terrible.

And the theologians and the writers, and they all just, they just gave up that view. Because they saw the carnage and the death and the fighting and the trenches and the gas and the machine guns and the bombs. And cities being bombed.

And they go, man, man is not getting better and better. We're getting worse. Our theology said it's getting better and better. But man is not.

We're just learning how to kill more people quicker. But we're not being kinder. We're not being gentler. God looks at us.

[ 23 : 34 ] God looks at us. And he sees that we are dead. That we're spiritually unable. That we are unrighteous. That we are unrighteous.

And we talked about that means legally and relationally before God. We're dead. It's heavy stuff. Verses 10 through 17 talks about these symptoms of being dead.

It talks about what it means to be dead. Paul's going to use incredibly strong words. He's going to say all. None. And all means Tobin and everybody and you.

None. It means none of us do these things. He uses incredibly powerful words. In theology we call this terminology. I mean when we look at it. We call this terminology total depravity.

And I know maybe you've never heard that. Maybe you've heard it and you said that's terrible sounding. I'm not going to think about it. But he's basically saying that we are totally depraved. That mankind is totally depraved.

[ 24 : 34 ] That the world is not full of good people. And the world is not full of bad people. But the world is full of dead people. And lost people.

And we're all under sin's bondage. And total depravity doesn't mean that you're as bad as you can be. Total depravity doesn't mean you're as wicked as you can be. That you're doing all the things that you should be doing.

It doesn't mean that you're as bad as that. But what it means is that there's not a part of us. There's not a part of us. That's not tainted.

By sin. Our emotions. Our minds. Our wills. There's nothing before us. Total depravity says that is righteous before God.

Before I got up here I asked Rachel what her favorite color was. Rachel said purple. So it's like this. If sin was a color. Sin was purple.

[ 25 : 36 ] And wherever there was sin there was purple. Now we're not all Barney purple. Barney's the dinosaur that walks around and freaks the parents out. But the kids love it right. But we're not all Barney purple.

But what the passage says is that every part of us. Every part of mankind. Our thoughts. Our minds. Our actions. Everything that we do. All of our goodness.

All of our righteousness. Apart from Christ. Everything. Has a shade of purple. There's no one who's going to say I'm not that purple.

Or I'm not as purple as other people. But on the outside no matter how good you look. You are purple. You're tinted by purple. Maybe it's a light purple.

See look at that. I'm just a little light purple there. That person's really really dark purple right there. Or look at my heart. My heart is really not that purplish. I've slipped, slapped, and slopped. I put my hat on.

[ 26 : 32 ] I put my suntan lotion on. I'm protecting myself from sin. I'm not going around sinful things. I'm trying to keep a white beautiful complexion. I don't want to be purple. But Paul says.

The Bible says. No matter how much you slip, slap, and slop. I know I'm saying that wrong. But you Aussies know what I'm talking about. I'm not talking about drinking a beer. Putting the suntan lotion on.

No matter how we do that. We're going to be purple. And the problem is. I think is this. I think our problem is.

Is that our standard of goodness. And our standard of righteousness. Is different than God's. That our standard of goodness.

And our standard of righteousness. Is different from God's. And what Paul is saying. Is that even our greatest moments. Even the most unselfish thing you do. Even the most.

[ 27 : 31 ] Your greatest achievement. Graduating from whatever university. Doing this. Your first patient. Whatever. Even the greatest thing that you do. Is purple. Or a shade of purple.

And none of it brings us closer. To God. And I think the problem is. That we think. That we can accumulate. These good deeds. We think that if we. Build up these good deeds.

That if we get enough of the good deeds. Then it takes away our purpleness. Come on guys. You know what I'm talking about. Don't you? I used to date Christina. And we were dating. And every Friday.

I go down to Austin. To see her from Dallas. And. And I stopped by the rose shop. And I started thinking to myself. Well how bad were we this week? Did we communicate well?

Was it a good thing? Was it not a good thing? Well maybe I should get a dozen roses. Well today. This week. We did a really good job. And we communicated well. There was no conflict. No fighting. I called her every time.

[ 28 : 30 ] She wanted me to talk to her. Which was a lot. But that's okay. Because we were starving students. And we had no money. But I only need one. I only need a lot of roses. After today.

I know. But I only need one rose. Okay. I stole the roses. There was this garden.

At the seminary. And it had a sign on it. It said don't take the roses. But my last class.

Was Friday at five. And I'd go out. And I'd look at the rose garden. And I'd see these roses blooming. And I realized that by Sunday or Monday. They're going to be dead.

And no one's going to enjoy them. So I figured. Why don't I let my future wife. Enjoy them. I feel so much better now.



- [ 29 : 27 ] But I took the roses. I took as many roses. As I thought I needed. To build up my goodness. Do you understand what I'm saying? And Paul says.
- That's how we act. This is how we live. We try to build up our good works. Or our righteousness. Or we do good things. Because we want to erase. Our purpleness. But God says.
- He looks at those things differently. Okay. My kids. When they were younger. Had a problem with money.
- And we would go home. To the states. And I would give them allowance. I'd give them like \$20. And the first question they would ask me is.
- Wow. Is this Texas money good in the rest of America? And I would go. Yes. Texas money is good everywhere. You can use Texas money anywhere. Because it works everywhere.
- [ 30 : 24 ] My kids. My kids. Could not comprehend the idea. That there was one currency. That fit all. They thought that. Well. Maybe it works here. But it doesn't work here. It's part of living internationally.
- And so they wondered. Does this work? Is it different? Let's suppose I have a kid.
- Who will remain unnamed. And one day. They come to me. And they say.
- Dad. I have a million dollars. I have a million dollars. And I want to open a bank account. And I'm like. I start getting really nervous. I'm like. What?
- How did you get a million dollars? I earned it. Really? You earned a million dollars. Yes. I earned a million dollars. And I'd like to open a bank account. And I said. Okay. Can I see.
- [ 31 : 17 ] The million dollars. And this person. Pulled out. This money. And they said.
- I think this is like. Two million dollars. Can I use this. To open a bank account. And I. First thing I did. Is I kind of laughed. Right. But then I.
- I spent the next couple minutes. Hypothetically. Trying to explain. To my kids. That this money. Only works. In games.
- But it doesn't work. In real life. Now what I should have done. What I wanted to do. As I think about. Now. I should have took him down. To the bank. And I should have. Had him walk in.
- And I said. Hey. My. My kid. Wants to. My kid. Wants to open a bank account. They have two million dollars. You can see what the people's face.
- [ 32 : 14 ] Would be like. Right. Two million dollars. Okay. Sit down here. And then. They pull out this money. And they go. Here it is. Now. What do you think the bank teller.
- Is going to say. I mean. At HSBC. They might take it. Because they need money. But every other bank. Is going to go. I'm sorry Elaine.
- Wherever you are. But every other bank. Is going to go. This isn't real money. This isn't work in life. But you know. The Bible says.
- That that's true. For our good works. In our righteousness. That we take these good works. And we take our righteousness.
- And they're. They're. Coupled. In purple. And we bring them to God. And we try to. Cash them in. To God. And Romans says.
- [ 33 : 13 ] It doesn't work. No matter how much. We accumulate. Of purple goods. Good works. That we can't use it on God. Because God's kingdom. God's kingdom.
- Needs. Salvation. Good works. And God's kingdom. Needs. Salvation. Righteousness. And Paul says.

No matter how much. We try to. Cash in. Everything we do. It's purple. Do you understand.

What Paul is saying. To us. Does that. Does that make any sense. To you. Look at. Look at verse 11. He talks about. Our minds. And our understanding. What does he say. There's none who understand.

There's. There's no one. There's no one who understands. Verse 11. None. None understand. The Greek actually says. That our minds. Have the inability. To understand.

[ 34 : 09 ] God. That we can't understand God. We compare our understanding. With other people. We compare our IQs. With other people. But the passage says. That. Sin. Our purpleness.

It blinds us. And we can't. Even. Seek God. Our self-centeredness. Pushes us. Away from God. The Greek says.

You can't even. Do that. You don't even have the power. To do that. You know. That happens. I mean.

In my life. And in our lives. Or sometimes. We come to church. You don't know. Why people come to church. Sometimes people come to church. Because they want to figure out. What church is all about. Sometimes people want to come to church.

Because they're. They're wanting to see. What's going on. And they learn what to do. And what not to do. But they. They want to. They want to. Get things. From God. But there comes a point.

[ 35 : 05 ] When people are on that journey. That they realize. At the end of that journey. There's God. And they're going to have to do. Something with him. And that's about the time.

People leave church. Because they realize. Church isn't about. Just getting stuff. But church is about. Worshiping.

God. But Paul says. We can't see that. Because our purpleness. Blinds us. Verse 11. Paul again. He says. There's no one who seeks.

There's no one who understands. No one who seeks God. God. I mean. I know there's somebody in here. And they're yelling out. That's not true. I mean. I just read a book last week. That talked about.

The search for God. Throughout the ages. I know in our heart. We're going to say. And I'm going to say. That's not true. I. I seek God. I'm searching for God. I want God. But Paul says.

[ 36 : 01 ] We don't. Not on our own. The passage in Romans. Is going to go on. And say. You know. We're seeking answers.

We're seeking meaning. We're seeking health. We're seeking a job. We're seeking stuff. We're seeking a spouse. That's why we're looking for God. But the passage says.

To seek God. God means to find him. Truthfully. To worship him in spirit. In truth. To desire him. To enjoy him. Not for what he's going to give us.

But for who he is. If you're a parent. You feel that every day. Don't you? I'm going to walk outside of here.

And I'm going to be walking to lunch with my wife. And one of my kids is going to go up. And say. Dad. I'm so glad I found you. In my heart. What I want to hear them say is.

[ 36 : 58 ] I just want to be with you. I just want to spend time with you. I just want to talk. Because we don't spend time together. But at the end of.

Dad. I'm so glad I found you. What's the next sentence? Come on. I need some money.

And Paul says. That's how most of us seek God. God. We come to church. Or we come to community group.

Because we need. And we want. And I think if we're honest. In our blueness. What we really want is religion. Don't we? We want a list of do's or don'ts. We want. We don't really want to seek God.

For who he is. But we want to seek God. For what he can give us. We want to seek a God. That we can turn in. Our purple good deeds. And he's going to go. Wow. That's great. You're really good. Come on in.

[ 37 : 56 ] Because everything is good. And Paul says. Sometimes if we're really honest. Even after we come to Christ. I mean. Sometimes if we're really honest. Even after we come to Christ.

We're going to read this later in Romans. That still our selfishness. And our self-centeredness. Come in. And we search for things. We search for stuff. And our motives. Are purple. Verse 12.

All have turned aside. Together they have become. Useless. The word there actually means. They become spoiled milk. That they're useless for nothing. There's nothing they can do.

There's nothing good in them. There's nothing good about them. Verse 13 and 14. Their throat is an open grave. Their tongues keep deceiving. The poison of asses under their lips. Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.

Their feet are swift to shed blood. Destruction and misery are in their path. In the path of peace. They have not known. Paul is saying that everything about us.

[ 38 : 56 ] Our words. I mean it's a really powerful passage here. He says that when a person who doesn't know God. When they speak. Their words. Their breath. Sounds like a grave. Smells like a grave.

Why? Why? Because we're purple. He says we use our words to hurt other people. We use our words to elevate ourselves.

And not to lift other people up. And finally in verses 15 and 17. Paul talks about our relationships. Their feet are swift to shed blood.

Destruction and journey and misery are on their paths. The path of peace they have not known. And whenever you see that word their feet. What it's talking about is a person's lifestyle. It's talking about where their life is heading.

The destination of their life. What they want their life to do. And Paul says that a person whose life is purple. Controlled by sin. He says their passage.

[ 39 : 54 ] Their life is always going to be destructive. They're always going to hurt people. They're never going to lift up people. They're always going to rush towards violence.

Their lives. Are purple. I mean it's intense isn't it? I mean just studying this. I was like oh.

But Paul wants us to see what our lives are like without God. He wants to see the purpleness in us. He wants to show us. He wants to take us on this incredibly intense journey.

Paul wants us to see what we look like to God. Did you know that? Paul wants us to see that we're coming to God and saying here's some money.

Let me cash this in. I need some help. Here are the good deeds I've done. And Paul says that before we knew Christ. All of those things are purple.

[ 40 : 59 ] There's no righteousness in them that our life is controlled by sin and we have no hope on our journey. We're getting down into the depth.

I mean finally in 18 and 20 what Paul has done is he's taken us on this journey for three chapters. He's taken us into the operating room. He's taken us into the courtroom.

And we're standing in the courtroom. And chapter 1, chapter 2, chapter 3 have been read off. And we're sitting there and we're listening to a holy, just, and righteous God.

And all of us are sitting there. And every word that we hear, we know that there's punishment. We know that we have a liability. Everything that's being said to us, we just know that yes, and we're in trouble.

And Paul says that when we're in this position, if we understand our purpleness, the only thing we can do is keep our mouth shut. Because we know that we can't say anything to a holy God.

[ 42 : 19 ] There's nothing that we can show God of our good works. There's nothing that we can do so that God goes, wow, you're so awesome. These chapters over and over, Paul has brought the law.

He's put it up against our life. And no matter how well we've tried to get out of it, no matter how well we've tried to step over it, no matter how well we've tried to not ignore it and not look at it, what he said when we come to this point is that we're purple.

Do you see our problem? Do you see it? I mean, if you're like me, for a long time I heard messages like this.

I go, yeah, yeah, but you know, but I'm not really that purple. I'm whatever you call it, lavender or violet. I'm not really purple purple. And Paul says, yeah, if you say that, then you're not ready for the rest of Romans.

If you say, yeah, but I'm not really that bad, then God has work to do on you. You need to look at your own heart. You need to look at your own life.

[ 43 : 43 ] You need to look at your own awesomeness. You need to look at how incredible you are. And the Bible says that God will deal with those things. But if we come to the passage and we see our purpleness, and we see point after point after point laid out, and our response is, I can't say anything.

I mean, if we get there at the end of the message, what we realize is what our real problem is. We have a heart problem.

We have a sin problem. And if we understand our problem, then we can get the right type of help. You're sitting in here today, and you're trying to figure out what your problem is.

How you define that and how you determine that will determine what kind of God and what kind of Savior you want. If your problem is just a little, you're going to get a little God.

If your problem is 50%, then you're going to get a 50% God and 50% Savior. But what Paul is trying to say to us through the whole book of Romans is that our problem is we're at the bottom.

[ 44 : 57 ] We need God. We need a Savior who can come in here. Two minutes. Listen to me. Please. If we don't see ourselves like this passage says, if we don't see ourselves like what Paul says, if we don't understand how sin has surrounded us and engulfed us and we're in its dominion and we're in lockage bondage to it, if we don't see our slavery, if we don't see our selfishness, if we don't see our sinfulness, if we don't see our blueness, Romans says we're never going to see God.

We're never going to understand grace. We're never going to understand mercy. We're never going to understand love.

If we don't see how purple we are, we're going to walk out those doors and we're not going to look at other people as if they're purple and they're dead and they're dying and we're going to talk to them about the most amazing thing in our life.

We're just going to say, oh, they're okay. Maybe someday they'll hear. What Paul wants us to see at the very end of these three chapters, before we move on next week, because next week we're crawling out of the pit.

Next week Jesus comes on. Well, Jesus is always in. He's always here. But next week it's not so intense. But what Paul is saying is if we don't see that at the end of this chapter, we're not ready for grace and we're not ready for God and we're not ready for the gospel.

[ 46 : 44 ] And we're never going to appreciate what God has done for our lives because you know what's going to happen in this? In the middle of this courtroom, there's this huge scene or there's this operating room.

In the middle of the courtroom, in the middle of the operating room, God's going to do something amazing. He's going to send his son. The son's going to step in.

He's going to take away our purpleness. He's going to bring us back to the Father. But until we understand how purple we are, until we see that everybody is in the same boat, we all have the same needs, until we understand the depth of Romans 1, 2, and 3, we're never going to see God as he really is.

And we're going to never have our purpleness taken away. Do you understand what I'm trying to say?

Go into 1, 2, and 3, look for a while, realize what God has done. Don't walk away and go, yeah, yeah, yeah. Because that should be something that we're reminded of every day.

[ 48 : 00 ] That's the gospel. Father, thank you for this day. Thank you for your goodness in our life. Thank you for your mercy.

Thank you for incredibly hard passages like Romans 3. We see the story of Paul. We see our purpleness. Purpleness. And we realize that for a long, long time, we have been coming to you.

For a long, long, long time, we've been coming to you, and we've been trying to pay you with money and currency and good deeds and righteousness that you don't take.

Because the only good deeds you take are from your son. Because he's the only one that lived perfectly. He has no purple on him.

And the only righteousness you accept is from your son. Because he's the only truly righteous one. So, Lord, we come before you, and we just thank you that we realize that Paul is talking to every one of us.

[ 49 : 11 ] And that we need to deal with these things in our life, even as we've come to you, we tend to forget, and we tend to slip back, and we tend to become purple in our actions and our words and our thoughts.

Father, we need you. We need your mercy. We need your grace. I pray that every one of us in here would not walk away from here and just go, yeah, whatever.

But you would open their eyes to how lost we are. And as we see that diagnosis, we would realize that we don't need someone to redistribute wealth.

We don't need someone who can feed the poor. We don't need someone who can educate and literate and make people smarter so they treat each other nicely. Romans 1, 2, and 3 says that we need God.

And we need a Savior who can come in and change us and to cover the purpleness with His life.

[ 50 : 18 ] Help us never to forget that. Help us to be a church that sees people as purple and we speak truth and life wherever we go. Father, we love you.

We pray these things in your Son, Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.