

Humanity – Our Need For A Saviour

Emma King | Romans 3:9-23

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When I first seen that this was the passage for today, I must admit, my heart did sink a little. But the more I prayed and thought about it, the more I thought that this passage is one of the most honest passages in the Bible.

Paul is straight to the point and tells us exactly how it is.

He writes:

*“There is no one righteous, not even one;
there is no one who understands;
there is no one who seeks God...” (Romans 3:10-11)*

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23)

That is a bold statement. It leaves no exceptions, and it covers every one of us.

And here’s why:

Because sin is not just about bad choices we make; it is about the human condition. Sadly, we are born into it. It is in our nature.

Paul explains later in Romans 5 that this problem goes all the way back to Adam.

“Sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned.” (Romans 5:12)

Adam, the first man, disobeyed God—and with him, the whole human race fell. His sin was not just his own, it affected us all. Like a poisoned well, everything that flows from it is tainted.

This is what we call **original sin**. Who would of thought that one bite of an apple would cause so much of a problem? This is hard to hear, **(especially on a day like today)** but from Adam, we inherit a sinful nature. We are not born neutral; we are born turned inward, inclined to go our own way rather than God’s.

We have a tendency to think we can do it on our own. That is why Paul can say in Romans 3:23 that *“all have sinned.”* Because sin is not just what we do, it is who we are apart from Christ. We stumble because our steps are already crooked.

Paul paints a devastating picture in this passage...

- The words we speak are corrupted: *“Their throats are open graves... their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.” (3:13)*
- The actions we take are destructive: *“Their feet are swift to shed blood.” (3:15)*
- Our hearts are estranged: *“There is no fear of God before their eyes.” (3:18)*

This is the reality of humanity under Adam. The law of God cannot fix it—it can only reveal it. It shows us what we are doing.

Verse 20 says: *“Through the law we become conscious of our sin.”* It’s like a mirror showing us our dirt. Useful, but powerless to clean us. On our own, we are condemned. On our own, we cannot stand.

But then, Paul turns a corner. And this is where hope suddenly makes an appearance - and we can all breathe again!

Verse 21 begins: *“But now...”*

“BUT NOW”

These two words are like the cup of tea in the morning that sets you up for the day... you know everything is going to be ok...

“But now, apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been made known... This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.” (Romans 3:21-22)

What Adam broke, Jesus restores. Where Adam brought sin, Jesus brings righteousness. Where Adam’s disobedience condemned the many, Jesus’ obedience redeems the many.

Verse 24 sums it up: *“All are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.”*

- **Justified:** We are declared righteous, given a new standing before God.
- **Freely:** not earned, not deserved, not achieved—but a pure gift from Jesus.
- **By grace:** With God’s initiative, not ours.
- **Through redemption:** Jesus paying the price, carrying the burden we could not.

If Adam’s sin left us guilty, Jesus’ cross leaves us forgiven. If Adam’s fall left us weak, Jesus’ resurrection lifts us up. What this is saying is that we cannot do this alone. If we go out there on our own, trying to figure it out in our own strength, we will mess us, we will fail. But with Jesus everything will be ok. That’s the hope we have! Jesus is our hope.

The poem *“Footprints in the Sand”* captures this truth in simple words. A person looks back at their life and sees two sets of footprints: theirs and the Lord’s. But in the hardest times, only one set remains. They ask, “Lord, why did you leave me?” And the Lord answers: “My child, I did not leave you. During your times of trial, when you see only one set of footprints—it was then that I carried you.”

That is the gospel.

- Adam's sin left us fallen.
- Our own sins leave us weary.
- But Christ does not leave us to crawl in the sand. He carries us. He bore our sins in his body on the cross (1 Peter 2:24). He carries us still, day by day, by grace.

The gospel is not "God helps those who help themselves."

It is "God saves those who cannot save themselves."

I could not save myself...

If I hadn't of walked through those church doors to have Milly baptised 16 years ago, I'm sure would of still been walking in Adam's sin and guilt. But through Jesus' I was set free to live my life and bring up my own family in the light and not in the darkness that I once lived in.

So what does this mean for us?

- **Our identity is secure.**

We are no longer “in Adam” but “in Christ.”

What Adam lost, Jesus restores.

- **Our salvation is certain.**

It rests not on our footprints, but on his.

Our righteousness is not our own—it is Jesus', given to us.

- **Our hope is unshakable.**

Life may bring trials, temptation, or weakness,

but the gospel tells us: in Jesus, we are carried all the way home.

We do not live trying to earn God's approval. We live in response to the grace already given.

So as I come to close, this passage tells the truth: *all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*. And Romans 5 tells us why: because in Adam, all have fallen.

But that is not the end.

- For in Jesus, grace abounds.
- In Jesus, many are made righteous.
- In Jesus, when we see only one set of footprints, we know the truth: it was never us holding on to God, but God carrying us.

That is the gospel.

That is our hope. And that is our joy:

Jesus has carried us, Jesus carries us still, and Jesus will carry us home.

Freya and Her Family

So today, as we gather for Freya's baptism, we see this gospel truth made visible. For Freya cannot earn God's love, and she doesn't need to. From the very beginning of her life, the Lord promises to carry her. To Adam and Ellie... remember that baptism is not simply a moment just for today and for a lovely photo, but a reminder, a sign that Christ's grace will be with Freya, Grace and all of you, every step of her journey. There will be times of joy when two sets of footprints are easy to see. And there may be times of trial, when only one set appears. But in both, the promise holds true: Jesus will never let her go. So today we entrust Freya into the arms of the One who carries us out of sin and death, who carried the cross for us, and who promises to carry her—always.

Amen