



Empowering People to Change the World

All of Us Are Guilty

Steve Holt

© Steve Holt | TheRoad.org

Road Declaration

God, Sex, and Science Conference...next weekend. Friday night and Saturday morning

All of us are Guilty

In Chapter 1 and 2 we observe this downward spiral of sin in an individual's life and even in culture. We observed that God gives us over to what we want.

God says, "Have it your way."

Romans 1:28 Leading eventually to a debased mind.

- A mind warped and out of touch with God.
- A depraved mind in which there are no more conventions or constraints.
 - This is what we see in mass or serial killers...even in the time of Noah we see that God destroyed the earth because of *violence* covering the earth.
 - This is what we see in some of the radically unscientific conclusions coming out of our universities. A recent conference on nutrition put on by the White House affirming that cereals like Lucky Charms and Frosted Mini-Wheats are more nutritious than eggs and steak! Have they lost their minds?

God has revealed Himself to man through:

- Creation: His signature is written upon nature.
- Conscience: if you have judged others, you reveal that you have a moral standard within your heart.
- Because we always break the very standards that we criticize in others.
- Paul's point: you can't get into heaven; you can't have a relationship with the Living God through your own righteousness.
- We are all going to stand before God's judgment seat! A day is coming when we have an appointed time to meet our God.

Romans 2:4

- And yet God has shown us His mercy, His Trinitarian love:
 - Goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering.

- Give all people the opportunity to repent and come to Him.

Today, we are at Chapter 2:11.

You are as important to God as anyone else in the world!

- God loves you supremely:
 - As Paul said to the Athenians: "...for in Him we live and move and have our being..."
 - I may be more conscious of the presence of God than you, but not any closer.
 - God doesn't hear my prayers any more than he hears your prayers!
 - I don't have any special *in* with God...you are as important to God as anyone!!
 - Man elevates other men, but God calls us to a special calling on each of our lives.
 - You are valuable, important, and blessed by God.
 - You can be as close to God as you want!

Verse 12

The Greater the Light, the Greater the Responsibility.

- If you have been privileged enough to have had the Word of God, you will be judged by the law.
- And you will be judged on a higher level because you had the law...the Bible.

Verse 13

- It isn't just those who are instructed in God's Word, but those who are doers of the Word.

We are Saved by Faith Alone, but not Faith that is Alone.

- It is not just those who hear God's Word but those who really act upon it... for that is the evidence that they have heard it.

- Salvation means a changed life! Because of the *implanted word*.
- James 1:21-25

“Therefore, lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.”
- First century mirrors were not like today, but rather metallic, made of bronze, silver, or gold for the wealthy—the metals were beaten flat and polished to a high gloss and the image they reflected was adequate but not perfect.
- The point is that the image we had when we first got saved, the changes that were happening, can be so easily forgotten as we go back to our old ways.
- We must intentionally and regularly look into God’s Word and grow into maturity as we do God’s Word.
- Familiarity breeds contempt...we can become so familiar with the Bible because we know so much.
- The Pharisee’s had the first five books of Moses memorized! But it’s not those who are instructed, but those who actually live it out that are justified.
- The key to growth: Do what you hear! Do what you study.
- I don’t lack for knowing, I lack for doing! In my marriage...I don’t need to read another book on marriage, I need to do what I know!
- Inspiration must lead to examination, which leads to application.
- We are justified before God by living God’s Word.

Verses 4-15

- Even the people on some deserted islands have a law written on their heart.
- They have a conscience of right and wrong, and they cannot even live up to that moral law within.
- All these tribes have their own laws that even they cannot uphold.
- Even before you were a believer, your conscience bothered you about certain things: either accusing or excusing.
 - People know it is wrong to kill someone.
 - People know that they shouldn't steal from others.
 - They know!! Every one of us has heard in our spirits "That is wrong!"
 - We are all guilty!! If you break any slight part of the law, you are guilty!! Not in degrees...once guilty, always guilty.

Verse 16

- This is the Great White Throne.
- Can you imagine trying to stand before Almighty God and lie your way out of it? When He knows the secrets of our heart! "Oh God, that's not what I was thinking?" God: "Gabriel, project on the screen what was happening back then."
- Revelation 20:11-15

"Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.
- Is your name written in the Book of Life? It is either in there or not.

- You have an appointment with God! You didn't set up this appointment, God has.
- God even knows our thoughts.
- God knew the thoughts of the priests in Ezekiel's time.
- Ezekiel 8:12

“Then He said to me, ‘Son of man, have you seen what the elders of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the room of his idols? For they say, “The LORD does not see us, the LORD has forsaken the land.” ’”

- Am I glad you don't know all my thoughts? Absolutely.
- But don't look at me so funny, you know your own secret thoughts! No one will be righteous.
- But praise be to the Lord, that we are forgiven!
- Now he goes after the self-righteous Jew.

Verses 17-19

- The Jew was proud that they were the recipients of the law.
- The Jewish person and the law—there hasn't been a blood sacrifice since 70 AD and Leviticus says “...without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sin...”
- For the Jew, there is no forgiveness of sin without the Messiah Jesus.
- They can't keep the law! The Ten Commandments, especially “Thou shall not covet.” Paul said he knew that he broke that commandment.
- All the other laws, okay, but “Thou shall not covet” and now we moved from actions to our thoughts! Our thoughts slay us.
- Jesus said it was not the act of adultery, but just the thoughts of it.

The Heart of the Problem is the Problem of the Heart.

- If you have any doubts about this, just look at children:
 - “No” before they can say anything else!

- “Mine.”
- They embarrass you in public places.
- They whack each other and you never taught them how to do that.
- They lie and steal...
- “You were born in sin and conceived in iniquity.”
- The heart of the problem is the problem of the heart.

Verses 20-21

- Teaching God’s Word carries with it an awesome responsibility.
- As your Teacher and Pastor, I have a greater responsibility before God to teach His Word rightly. I am under a greater judgment.
 - Someone comes up to me and says, “that message was just for me” and I want to say, “No, that message was just for me!” I am constantly seeing my own failures as I prepare and deliver messages to you.

Verses 22-24

- Are you saying that adultery is wrong, but you look lustfully at a woman? Jesus said that that was adultery in the heart.
- We look at these people or nations that worship idols and we say, “that’s ridiculous,” but do we have idols in our heart? An idol is anything that we love more than God.
- Is God the chief love of your life? Jesus said, “love the Lord your God with all your heart.”
- Jesus said to the self-righteous Pharisees, “You choke at a gnat and swallow a camel” because a religious Jew would choke on a gnat if it went down their throat because they didn’t know if that gnat had been on a Gentile and so that blood might be on them now...but you swallow a camel.
- In other words, you focus on the outward but forget the inward character of love, compassion, and grace.

- In the Talmud, man-made laws created from the Mosaic Law:
 - A Jewish woman couldn't look in a mirror on the Sabbath because she might find a white hair and pluck it out and that was considered harvesting on the Sabbath.
 - A Jewish man could spit on a rock, but not the dirt because it might roll off, make a furrow, and that was considered plowing.
- They had turned the law into such a ridiculous thing...because the Jews were teaching the people that they could somehow keep the law, and the point of the law was to show man that he can't keep the law.
- The law is just a thermometer, but it doesn't take the fever away.
- The law is a mirror, and it just shows you that you have dirt on your face, but it doesn't clean the dirt off.
- So, you're making your boast in the law?

Verses 25-26

- Circumcision was a sign of a covenant, of separation.
- So, if you get circumcised but don't keep the law, then what good is it?
- It is not an issue of a ceremony but an issue of the heart.
- It is not about religion—outward show...it's a relationship of the heart—
inward transformation of the Holy Spirit.
- Deuteronomy 10 and 30, Jeremiah 4 and 6 all say that circumcision was of the heart.
- Baptism is the same thing today...if you go through the ceremony but your life is not changed and you still go after the flesh, the baptism means nothing! It is meaningless! But if you haven't been baptized but you in your heart go after God, you will be saved even without baptism—there will be many in hell who have been baptized and there will be many in heaven who have not been baptized.
- To the Jew: you are using circumcision to justify yourself but your heart is not changed.

Verses 27-29

- Important to know: In Chapters 9-11 he will affirm that God is not done with the Jews yet.
- Because many believe that these verses mean that God is done with the ethnic Jews...I don't believe that.
- This is a challenge to the Jews, who are ethnic Jews.

The main point: Ritual without reality (or heart) is unrighteousness!

- Many of us grow up with religious rituals, and without the reality of a personal relationship, it doesn't make us any more righteous.
- It is the very thing that people use to blaspheme the Jews and now, Christianity: *they just use the outward as a big show...they are not righteous!*
- Even the world sees a phoney!
- But now he says the opposite...
- Reality (heart) without ritual is righteousness!
- The reality is the attitude of the heart by the Spirit.
- Human beings look at ritual: the outward.
- God looks at the inward reality: the motivations of the heart.