**The Grip of Evil**

*Romans 3:9*

**Passage Background and Context Information**

In Romans 1, Paul indicted humanity by writing that you and I are without excuse for refusing to give God the glory and thanksgiving he deserves and that we have exchanged what we know about him for a lie.  In the first part of Romans 2, Paul indicts the hypocrite. We all have a moral standard but don’t practice what we preach. In the last part of Romans 2, Paul indicts the Hebrews. They know God’s righteous requirements because they receive God’s written law, yet they still fail to do those requirements. In Romans 3, Paul comes full circle. He portrays the world as on trial before God in the heavenly courtroom. Paul now gives his closing argument on the charge.

***(1 min)***

**Bible Verse**

###### Romans 3:9 (CSB)

9What then? Are we any better off? Not at all! For we have already charged that both Jews and Gentiles are all under sin,

**1. \_\_\_ all are in the grip of \_\_\_\_\_.**

* **Luke 7:8** For I too am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under my command. I say to this one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.”
* **Genesis 4:7** If you do what is right, won’t you be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it.”
* **James Dunn: “…man experiences (consciously or unconsciously) a power which works in him to bind him wholly to his mortality and corruptibility, to render impotent any knowledge of God or concern to do God’s will, to provoke his merely animal appetites in forgetfulness that he is a creature of God—and that power Paul calls ‘sin.’” Romans 1-8, Volume 38A (Word Biblical Commentary) (pp. 148-149). Zondervan Academic.**

**Doctrine**

* That we exist in a state in which every part of our being has been corrupted theologians call **“\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.”**
* **Fourth-century theologian Augustine saw in the Scriptures**four states of man in relation to sin:
  + Before the \_\_\_\_ (the first sin), we were able to sin and able not to sin.
  + After the \_\_\_\_ (the first sin), we are not able to not sin.
  + After Christian \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, we are able not to sin.
  + After Christian \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, we are unable to sin.
    - James R. Edwards: “In Paul’s thinking sin carries two paradoxical and unresolved tensions: people sin willingly, but inevitably. Sin is freely chosen (otherwise it would not be sin), but there is a “gravitational pull” to sin, a tyranny or domination against which humanity is powerless to contend. Humanity, in other words, is not free not to sin. Sin is thus not an occasional slip or mistake, but a personal collaboration with a suprapersonal power (Eph. 2:2) which overshadows and tragically infects the world.” James R. Edwards, Romans, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 90.
* **A prominent Baptist, E. Y. Mullins: “All men are not equally sinful, of course, and no man is as bad as he can be. But all man’s faculties and powers are affected by the operation of sin in his nature, and all are equally incapable of saving themselves.”**
* **\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_** is the universal grace of God that enables civil justice in society in spite of human depravity.
* **J.I. Packer:** “The phrase total depravity is commonly used to make explicit the implications of original sin. It signifies a corruption of our moral and spiritual nature that is total not in degree (for no one is as bad as he or she might be) but in extent…We cannot earn God’s favor, no matter what we do; unless grace saves us, we are lost.” J.I. Packer, “Original Sin,” Concise Theology: A Guide to Historic Christian Beliefs (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale)

**Pray**

I want to model a brief prayer that you can pray after me. Will you pray with me?

“Jesus, I confess I am a sinner. I deserve Your judgment of death and hell. But I believe You love me, came down for me, lived a perfect life, and shed Your blood and died on the cross for my sins. I also believe that God raised You from the dead for the forgiveness of my sins, to change me, and grant me everlasting life. Please forgive me, change my heart, and give me eternal life. I believe You are my Forgiver and God. I give my life to love, obey, and make much of You! In Jesus’ name, amen.”

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“We desire to approach you, as our kind and merciful Father in Jesus Christ; humbly asking you to wash away our sins in his most precious blood, and to give us a sufficient measure of your grace and Holy Spirit to enable us against them. You did create man, O Lord, after your own blessed image; but we have destroyed ourselves, and come short of your glory: the crown is fallen from our heads, and woe unto us, for we are sinners both by nature and by practice; justly might you swear in your wrath that we shall not enter into your rest. Yet suffer us, and enable us to plead in faith your gracious promise, that whoever trusts in the Savior you have provided, and comes unto you by him, shall never perish, nor fall into condemnation, but have everlasting life for his sake. Lord, we would believe; O help our unbelief!” – Augustus Toplady, who wrote the hymn Rock of Ages, prayer found in ESV Prayer Bible  
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