

Excuses. We've all used explanations with varying degrees of validity to try to change the consequences of our actions. But sometimes they can't change a thing.

Romans 1:19-20 affirms that because of God's revelation of Himself, no one will be able to stand before Him and say, "I never heard anything about You." In the presence of God, people are "without excuse."

If that seems harsh and unfeeling, consider these New Testament passages: "We know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God" (Romans 3:19). "The Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe" (Galatians 3:22). "He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:2).

We are all prisoners of sin, but we can find release through Christ. We are without excuse, but not without God's provision of salvation. Without excuse, but not without forgiveness we can receive. Without excuse, but not without God's love. --DM

#### REFLECTION

- If I were God, what excuses would I accept for not responding to His love expressed through Christ?
- What has hindered me from acknowledging Christ as my Savior and Lord?
- How do today's Bible passages reveal the justice and compassion of God?

**God offers forgiveness but accepts no excuses.**

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## Central Mountains Baptist Church

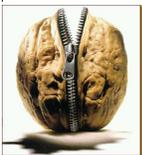
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### Without Excuse

Last May 23, a steady stream of travellers arrived at Robert Mueller Airport in Austin, Texas, only to learn that it had ceased operations the night before. A woman who arrived only 7 minutes before her flight to Atlanta said, "No one at the airline mentioned anything about a new airport." One family bearing kids and suitcases rushed into the terminal, where they were told they would probably miss their flight from the new airport, 7 miles to the south.

Some travellers were from out of state, some from out of town, and some may have been out to lunch, but all had the same excuse: "I never heard anything about a new airport."





# Romans: Truth in a Nutshell

(unzipped for you)

## The Sad Truth

*(Romans 3:9) Well then, are we Jews better than others? No, not at all, for we have already shown that all people, whether Jews or Gentiles, are under the power of sin. [paraphrase]*



In Romans 3:9-20 Paul gives three examples of the way sin has effected us. He confirms the sad diagnosis by his three examples:

### 1. The H \_\_\_\_\_, 3:9-12, 18, 1:21-23

*(Psalms 14:3) "... There is none who does good, No, not one."*

*(Psalms 14:1-3) "The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, They have done abominable works, There is none who does good. {2} The LORD looks down from heaven upon the children of men, To see if there are any who understand, who seek God. {3} They have all turned aside, They have together become corrupt; There is none who does good, No, not one."*

*(Ecclesiastes 3:11) "... Also He has put eternity in their hearts, ..."*

*(John 12:32) ""And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.""*



*(Psalms 36:1) "An oracle within my heart concerning the transgression of the wicked: There is no fear of God before his eyes."*

*(Matthew 15:19) ""For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies."*

*(Mark 2:16-17) "And when the scribes and Pharisees saw Him eating with the tax collectors and sinners, they said to His disciples, "How is it that He eats and drinks with tax collectors and sinners?" {17} When Jesus heard it, He said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.""*

### 2. The T \_\_\_\_\_, 3:13-14

*(James 1:26) "If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless."*

*(James 3:6-8) "And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. {7} For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. {8} But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly*



*evil, full of deadly poison."*

### 3. The F \_\_\_\_\_, 3:15-17, 19-20, 15:19, 6:6, 2:14-15

*(Matthew 5:21-22) ""You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' {22} "But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. ..."*

*(Isaiah 59:1-4) "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear.*

*{2} But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear. {3} For your hands are defiled with blood, And your fingers with iniquity; Your lips have spoken lies, Your tongue has muttered perversity. {4} No one calls for justice, Nor does any plead for truth. They trust in empty words and speak lies; They conceive evil and bring forth iniquity."*

*(Isaiah 59:7-8) "Their feet run to evil, And they make haste to shed innocent blood; Their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; Wasting and destruction are in their paths. {8} The way of peace they have not known, And there is no justice in their ways; They have made themselves crooked paths; Whoever takes that way shall not know peace."*

*(Matthew 5:9) "Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God."*

*(Psalms 1) "Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; {2} But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. {3} He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper. {4} The ungodly are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind drives away. {5} Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. {6} For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the ungodly shall perish."*

*(Galatians 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."*

*(Galatians 3:24) "Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith."*

