

SUNDAY - September 13, 2026

UNASHAMED - Romans 3:1-18 - Under Sin

SERMON SUMMARY:

Romans 3:1–18 teaches that Scripture is a powerful diagnostic tool and spiritual guardrail, but merely possessing or knowing the Bible cannot save us from sin. God can redeem evil, as seen in Joseph's story, but that never excuses wrongdoing or means God needs sin to accomplish His purposes. Evil remains evil, even when God brings something good from it.

Paul describes humanity's universal brokenness through corrupted desires, harmful words, destructive actions, and a lack of reverence for God. When we lose our fear and awe of God, lesser fears—money, approval, safety, and reputation—begin controlling us. True faith means trusting God's character, as the disciples needed to do during the storm. Like Psalm 23's table in the presence of enemies, reverent trust in God brings peace and keeps fear from driving us into sin.

SCRIPTURE:

Romans 3:1-18, Psalm 5, 10, 14, 23, 36, 140, Isaiah 59, Mark 4:35-41

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. According to Romans 3:10-12, what is the universal condition of humanity and what is the root cause of this condition?
2. What specific areas of human life—temperament, speech, and actions—does Paul describe as being corrupted in verses 13-17?
3. What two objections about sin does Paul raise and rebut in verses 5-8?
4. What is the ultimate diagnosis for humanity's sinful condition given in verse 18?
5. Scripture is described as a powerful diagnostic tool but not a magic potion. What is the difference between simply knowing what the Bible says and having it actually transform a person's life?
6. The argument is made that good results do not justify bad actions. Why is it a dangerous line of thinking to believe that our sin can be excused because God might bring something good from it?
7. If the "fear of God" is the remedy for a life of sin, what does it mean to have a reverential fear of God? How is this different from being simply afraid of Him?
8. In the story from Mark 4, the disciples' fear in the storm revealed a wrong belief about Jesus' character. What does this story teach us about the direct link between what we fear and what we believe about God?
9. Scripture diagnoses our sin but doesn't automatically heal it. Is there a specific area where you know what the Bible says but have been slow to obey it? What would practical obedience look like this week?
10. We can sometimes trust in the Bible as a good luck charm rather than for transformation. Have you ever been tempted to treat God's Word superstitiously (e.g., carrying it for protection without reading it, using it for "Bible roulette")? What is a more faithful way to approach Scripture?
11. The root of sinful behavior is a lack of fear of God, which allows other fears to become our functional gods. What is one fear (e.g., of financial lack, rejection, failure) that has an outsized influence on your choices? How would a right view of God's power and care put that fear in its proper place?
12. Faith is accurately thinking about who God is. When a "storm" hits your life, what specific truth about God's character (e.g., His faithfulness, power, love) is most difficult for you to believe? How can you remind yourself of that truth this week?

13. We can be tempted to justify a sinful action because we think it will lead to a good outcome. Is there a relationship or situation where you are compromising what is right for a perceived greater good? What would it look like to trust God with the outcome instead?
14. The fear of man often leads us to sin for approval. Who are you most tempted to sin for? What would it look like to fear God more than that person's opinion?