

WHO IS GUILTY?
Romans 1-3
By Raymond White

We should take a serious look at the list of guilty people. Until we do that, we might be inclined to think that some people who are really bad are guilty, but most people are actually pretty good so they're not guilty. The Bible is not nearly so optimistic, there are not so many "good" people as you might think.

***Romans 1:16** For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

The question is who needs salvation? If you're not guilty, you don't need acquittal. You don't need salvation unless there is something to be saved from. So, here's the list of people who need salvation.

[1] THE UNGODLY

***Romans 1:18** For The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men... **:29** Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, **:30** Backbiters, haters, of God, ... (etc.)*

No surprise there. The ungodly are guilty, and there's a long list of them. So that's the place to start.

Anyone else?

[2] JEWS

***Romans 2:1** Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. **:12** ...as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law*

What is in view here is the Jews. The point being, "Ah, but we have the law. Therefore we are innocent." Paul says, "Not so. It's not having the law that makes you innocent, it's living it, and you don't live it."

Anyone else?

[3] GENTILES

***Romans 2:12** For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law... **:14** For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: **:15** Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another.*

Now we see that the gentiles are also condemned. How so? Here's Paul's logic. The gentiles may reason, "Well, the Jews are condemned because they have the law and don't live it. But we don't have the law so we're innocent by ignorance and can't be condemned by a law that we don't have." Paul says, "Not so. Sometimes you do live the law for conscience sake. And when you live it you give proof that you really do know it. You can't escape the law because it's in your hearts. Therefore, when you don't live the law, you're without excuse and you're guilty." Anyone else?

[4] NONE RIGHTEOUS

***Romans 3:9** What then? Are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; **:10** As it is written, They is none righteous, no, not one (**Psalms 14:1**) **:20** Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. **:23** For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God (**Ecclesiastes 7:20**).*

Well that pretty well covers the ground. Bad people are guilty, the Jews are guilty, the gentiles are guilty, and you and I are guilty. Does that leave anyone out? Nope. Before God, the whole world is guilty.

[5] ESCAPE

Well then, how can any of us escape condemnation? There is only one way, and that is:

***Romans 3:24** Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*

***Romans 8:1** For there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit.*