

# Eternal Insecurity?

## Part I

Romans 3:1-20

### Introduction

We are experiencing in America, something we could call an “epidemic of doubt”. There are:

- Believers who are doubting their position before God; who are afraid that one day they might make it to heaven to hear God say, “Oops, I never knew you.”
- Believers who have accepted Christ, but are not certain they said the words just right and think perhaps they are not really saved.
- Believers who have asked Christ to save them, but they ask again and again and again and again, hoping that sooner or later, it will stick.
- Believers who believe that salvation is by grace through faith, but think they must do works to keep it, causing them to never be really sure whether they are in or out.

There are a lot of different views out there. In fact, I have been confronted in the last month by two individuals who hold to the last view.

Today, in Romans chapter 3, we are going to discover one of the problems leading people to experience doubt. These people are too busy evaluating their present performance. They have not spent enough time studying scripture such as Romans chapter 3, which deals with, in very forcible terms, our position prior to conversion.

This chapter in Romans lets us know what we were before and, in effect, what we really are now. It is called “total depravity”.

We do not hear enough about this doctrine. We are, in other words, totally hopeless; we are, in and of ourselves, totally useless before God, other than by the grace of God. We do not hear enough about this, but we are going to hear an earful in our study today. Paul will give it to us in detail in Romans chapter 3.

As we approach the study of eternal security, we must start with two principles:

1. Salvation cannot be earned.

2. Salvation cannot be lost.

We spend way too much time trying to figure out the second principle, yet we never come to terms with the first.

Today and in our next discussion, we are going to discover some things from Romans chapter 3 concerning salvation.

### Paul’s Evidence – The Unsaved Are Without Excuse

Now you may remember, from our previous studies of the first two chapters of Romans, that Paul is bringing evidence against several groups of people.

1. First, Paul brings evidence to prove that the heathen are condemned before God.

The heathen have denied the evidence of creation. Though they never had a witness; though they never had a missionary, they had the witness of creation and in their hearts, denied it. They are, Paul writes,

*... without excuse. (Romans 1:20)*

2. Secondly, Paul turns his attorney-like lens toward the moral man.

This is the man who says, “Well, I’m not like the heathen – I’m not all that bad. I’m a good person.”

Paul will, in effect, prove that moral men are also, without excuse. He points out that while pagans are denying creation, moral men are denying their conscience. They are, by the fact that God, through their conscience, condemns them and they deny it, suppressing the truth. So Paul uses the phrase a second time, as he writes that they have,

*... no excuse . . . (Romans 2:1)*

3. Thirdly, Paul turns his focus toward the Jew.

He begins in the latter part of chapter 2 and continues into chapter 3, which we will study today. He tells them that they are also without excuse because they have denied the truth of the scriptures.

So, whether or not they have denied creation, or their conscience, or the truth of the scriptures, all the

world stands guilty. You and I do as well, prior to our salvation.

Paul will now delineate this truth to the Jew. He is not quite finished with the Jew because he anticipates their response to his argument.

Someone mentioned to me recently that they had read that in the past, students studying to become attorneys in law at Yale or Harvard (he could not remember which), had to memorize the first eleven chapters of Romans because they represent such a masterful case.

Paul is like a lawyer who is bringing up the evidence and then crushing the evidence. He brings up one thing after another that he anticipates the accused will say and then, he crushes each one.

## **Paul's Response – To Arguments About Guilt**

In chapter 3 of Romans, Paul anticipates three arguments. He then, with incredible skill that is obviously inspired by the Holy Spirit, will crush all three.

Let us look back at Romans chapter 2, beginning in verse 17, before we begin our study of chapter 3.

You may remember the Jew who says, "I am not a pagan, I am not a moral man, I am a Jew."

The Jews were proud of several things. Note Paul's words in Romans 2:17-19.

*. . . you bear the name "Jew" [son of Abraham], and rely upon [respect] the Law, and boast in God,*

*and know His will and approve the things that are essential, being instructed out of the Law,*

*and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness,*

In other words, "You have it all and you are now teaching the poor pagans in your communities this truth."

They were proud of their position as Pharisee and scribe. They were proud of their position as Jew.

Paul, however, tells them, in the Romans 2:29,

*But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.*

Paul comes to this argument and basically says, "You Jews are doing things to be seen by men. That which is done is to be glorified by men."

He, in effect, then says, "You need to understand that God does not honor the things that men honor. God sees the heart. So you are also guilty."

Now, in Romans chapter 3, Paul anticipates their arguments. I will phrase these, as he has done, in the form of a question.

1. The first argument that Paul anticipates is, "What then, is the advantage of being a Jew?"

Look at Romans 3:1.

***Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the benefit of circumcision?***

In other words, "Paul, if what you're saying is true – that there really is no benefit soteriologically, or according to salvation, of being a son of Abraham; that there is really no benefit in being circumcised, as all the Hebrew boys are – what advantage is there to being a Jew? Who cares?"

Paul anticipates this question, so he gives an answer in Romans 3:2. He says, "There is an advantage; there is a privilege in being a Jew," and he specifies one.

***Great in every respect. First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God.***

In other words, "You have been entrusted with the revelation of God. Don't forget how precious the revelation of God is."

God, in His sovereignty; God, in His design, made it so that the Israelite people, rather than the Philistines or the Amalekites or the Hittites, would receive the privilege of being given the revelation of God.

Paul says, "Don't forget this privilege. You're a Jew and that carries great privilege. Your forefathers were given the revelation of God."

However, this is not where it was to stop. Turn to Deuteronomy 4:5-8. This is where the Jew "dropped the ball".

Now Paul wrote in Romans 3:2, "Remember you . . ."

***. . . were entrusted with the oracles of God.***

The word "entrust" is literally "steward". So Paul is saying, "You have been given the stewardship of the word."

Notice how that is delineated in Deuteronomy 4:5-8. Moses writes,

*See, I have taught you statutes and judgments just as the Lord my God commanded me, that you should do thus in the land where you are entering to possess it.*

*So keep and do them, for that is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples [pagan nations] who will hear all these statutes and say, “Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.”*

*For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as is the Lord our God whenever we call on Him?*

*Or what great nation is there that has statutes and judgments as righteous as this whole law which I am setting before you today?*

The Israelite nation was the steward of the word; the oracles. They were not to just keep it, protect it, keep it a big secret, they were to give it out. In effect, they dropped the ball. They became possessive of it.

Now, in the New Testament time, after the time of Christ, in the first century church, the Jew had drawn a little circle around himself and the oracles of God and said, “I’m in and you’re out. Too bad.”

So, the Jews had forgotten the privilege of being given the oracles of the word.

They fulfilled the responsibility of protecting it, however. Romans 3:2 says the forefathers were entrusted with the oracles of God and one of the most amazing things to me, men and women, is the way the Israelite nation has protected the word. They have done it exclusively to a fault.

The Israelites were so protective of the word that they would write out the text, as they were copying, and would count the consonants. They would get to the end of the line and would write a little number there, giving the number of consonants. Then, whenever it was copied, even decades later, the copier would know how many consonants should be there and would think, “I’d better come up with twenty-nine consonants here.” The Hebrew Bible, in the original, was not given the vowel pointings, just the consonants.

They were so careful and so cautious. In fact, when the Israelites would write the name of God, they would get a brand new pen, or quill, and would wash their hands and would come back and write,

“Jehovah-jireh or El-Shaddai or El-whatever it might be, and then go back to using another pen. They were so protective.

We are receiving the benefits of that protection today. What a privilege we have that goes back to the nation of Israel. In fact, in Jerusalem, in the Temple of the Book, under glass and under protection, there is a display of the Dead Sea Scrolls – the fragments of Old Testament writings that have been discovered in this century. The amazing thing is that the Hebrew characters in copies of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which I have seen, are still the same; are still trustworthy. In fact, when we read our Bibles today, it is almost the same to the letter because they were so protective thousands of years ago. They copied the word in such a way that we have it today.

Paul is saying, “Don’t cast away the fact that you’re a Jew; don’t discard your heritage. It has great privilege. You have been given the oracles of God. God chose to give His revelation to you, so that you could spread it out.”

Now that sounds good, but Paul anticipates another argument that the Jews are going to come back with.

2. The second argument that Paul anticipates is, “Since our nation Israel is now exclusive; since we are violating Deuteronomy 4; since we have violated commandments, does our unbelief now nullify the covenant of God?”

Look at Romans 3:3.

***What then? If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it?***

This is important, ladies and gentlemen, because if God’s covenant with the Israelite nation has been discarded, we have no assurance that He will ever keep His covenant with us. If one day, God said, “Okay, I’ve had enough – I’m going to discard the covenant,” how do we know that one day, He will not say to us, “Okay, I’ve had enough – I’m discarding the covenant of your salvation.”?

This is a very important point that Paul will answer. He says, in Romans 3:4a,

***May it never be! . . .***

This is the strongest Greek negative that can be found in the New Testament. It is a double negative, “me genoito,” that can be translated, “That’s ridiculous!” or “Absolutely not!”

Continue to Romans 3:4b.

*. . . Rather, let God be found true, though every man be found a liar, as it is written, "That You may be justified in Your words, and prevail when You are judged."*

Does God erase the covenant with the Israelite nation? No, absolutely not.

John Calvin wrote these words about Romans 3:4, "This verse is the primary axiom of all Christian philosophy. Everything depends upon God's character and not the performance of man."

In other words, God will not discard His covenant, though the unbelieving nation, in effect, discarded Him.

Turn to Psalm 89, which is a powerful passage in the Old Testament. Let us begin with Psalm 89:28-29 and see how clearly this truth is exposed.

*My lovingkindness I will keep for him forever, and My covenant shall be confirmed to him.*

*So I will establish his descendants forever, and his throne as the days of heaven.*

This is a reference, I believe, to the Davidic covenant.

Note Psalm 89:30-32.

*If his sons forsake My law, and do not walk in My judgments,*

*if they violate My statutes, and do not keep My commandments,*

*then I will visit their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with stripes.*

Understand the similarity between the old covenant and the new covenant in this passage. In other words, God is saying, "If the Israelite nation breaks My commandments; discards My covenant, I will visit them with stripes."

Now, how does that sound familiar to the covenant you and I are in today? What happens when a believer sins? Does God let him go scot-free, tripping along in sin? Absolutely not. In fact, proof that he is in the covenant relationship with Jesus Christ is found in that he is chastised. We, as believers, will have the rod of God placed upon our backs, which is, in effect, proof that we are His. It is the same in the Old Testament covenant as well.

Notice Psalm 89:33-37, however.

*But I will not break off My lovingkindness from him, nor deal falsely in My faithfulness.*

*My covenant I will not violate, nor will I alter the utterance of My lips.*

*Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David.*

*His descendants shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me.*

*It shall be established forever like the moon, and the witness in the sky is faithful.*

In other words, the disobedience of the Jewish nation proves and displays the faithfulness of God. The fact that they sin, literally reveals the grace, as it were, of God. In the same way, when we, as believers, sin, it ultimately displays the grace of a loving God to continue keeping us as His children.

Now Paul anticipates the next thing that we would say, "Well, if, by sin, I can't break the covenant, let's go live it up; let's go have a great time; let's sin!"

3. The third argument that Paul then anticipates is, "If our sin reveals the faithfulness of God, why would God judge us for sinning?"

Note Romans 3:5.

*But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? The God who inflicts wrath is not unrighteous, is He? . . .*

Paul answers and uses the strong negative expression again, in Romans 3:6-7.

*May it never be! For otherwise how will God judge the world? But if through my lie the truth of God abounded to His glory, why am I also still being judged as a sinner?*

In other words, "All we've really done is show how great God is. If our sin reveals God's faithfulness, why would God turn around and spank us for sinning?"

Paul will then say, in Romans 3:8, "Well, what you are really saying is this . . .,"

*And why not say . . . "Let us do evil that good may come?" . . .*

In other words, "Let's just live in licentiousness; let's live in sin – it reveals and demonstrates the grace of God. Let's live it up so we can display to the world how faithful God really is."

This argument is prevalent, especially to attack the position of eternal security. But this text is proof that we are believers not because we do not sin, but because we are believers by position, and, when we sin, it displays the graciousness of God on our behalf.

To live habitually in sin, however, will bring the rod. Do not go out and do something wicked. It would be foolish to do so.

Your wife asks, “What did you do today?”

You answer, “I did something terrible. I killed my boss [or whoever]. But, oh, it feels great to know that God has forgiven me.”

I was sick several months ago. I was plagued with something in my throat that knocked me out of the pulpit for a couple of weeks. I had some medicine prescribed – an antibiotic. I took it and the cure was almost overnight. It was fantastic! Now wouldn't it be stupid for me to go outside in the dead of night, without a scarf or sweater, and say, “Well, that medicine was so wonderful, I want to get sick again just so I can experience the cure.”?

This is what they are, in effect, saying, “In order to understand the graciousness and forgiveness of God, why don't we just go out and sin?”

This is ridiculous. Sin is never positive. Sin is never justified. While sin reveals the grace of God, it never, never honors the name of God.

It is interesting that Paul has received an accusation in Romans 3:8. I skipped this part of the verse, but let us read it.

*And why not say (as we are slanderously reported and as some claim that we say), “Let us do evil . . .”*

It is interesting that when we hold to the position of eternal security – that we can never lose our salvation – one thing the world will say is, “Well then, what you are really teaching is that you can go out and sin all you like.”

Paul received the same accusation. But notice that he never comes back to them and answers that accusation. In fact, all that he says, in the last part of Romans 3:8, is,

*. . . Their condemnation is just.*

In other words, to the person who believes, “I can go out and sin in any way I like and God is going to continually forgive me; I'm going to live in wickedness to prove the grace of God,” Paul says, “Their condemnation is just.”

Paul is basically saying, “They're going to deserve hell and that's all I'm going to say about it.”

This is proof that they really do not belong to Jesus Christ.

Let me share the story of John Newton, who lived in the 1700s. He was quite wicked. As the captain of a slave ship, he was so despised by his crew that one time when he fell overboard, rather than let down a rescue ship and go after him, they took the whaling harpoon and threw it at him. It caught him in the hip and went right through him. They pulled him back on deck like a whale. He would limp for the rest of his life, as a result. However, he would later become a minister and write the lyrics that we still sing today, “Amazing grace! How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me!”

Now it would be foolish for me to gather my children around me before they go to bed at night and say, “Listen, when you grow up, I want you to be just like John Newton. I want you to go out and become a vile, wicked sinner because one day, I want you to experience the wonderful grace of a forgiving God.”

That would be ridiculous. As Paul says, that argument does not even bear responding to. “Someone who believes that,” he says, “their condemnation is just.”

## Paul's Summation – Total Depravity

Now note Paul's summation in Romans 3:9.

*What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin;*

Now, Paul will do something that is called “charaz” – he will string together Old Testament texts. “Charaz,” means, “stringing pearls together”. Paul is going to the Old Testament to bring in evidence before the courtroom of God's character, to prove that the world is guilty. He will string several Old Testament texts together.

Let us take a brief look at this “charaz”. First, Paul spells out the general charge of depravity.

By the way, “total depravity,” means “total sinfulness; total hopelessness”. Paul says,

*. . . nothing good dwells in . . . [our] flesh . . . (Romans 7:18)*

This is what we call total depravity. Paul tells us where we get it from.

Look at Romans 3:10.

*as it is written, “There is none righteous, not even one;”*

Note Romans 3:11a.

*There is none who understands, . . .*

It is implied that this means understanding divine things. Paul writes,

*. . . a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him . . . (I Corinthians 2:14)*

However, we understand these things when taught by the Spirit of God.

Continue to Romans 3:11b.

*. . . there is none who seeks for God;*

Let us ponder this for a moment. Sometimes we hear people say, or perhaps we have said, that they sought for God. I think that is erroneous and we should be careful how we talk, especially in giving our testimonies. It may seem, from our perspective, that we sought for God, but we did not. It is God who seeks us. In fact, the very reason that we came to a point where we accepted Jesus Christ was a result of His grace and His seeking and wooing of us. Jesus Christ said, “I have . . .”

*. . . come to seek and to save [sinners] (Luke 19:10)*

The very fact of sin in the garden caused Adam and Eve to do what? Run and hide. In fact, throughout the course of human history, when left to ourselves, we will run from God.

It is God who seeks us. We are so depraved that we cannot, other than by the grace of God, seek after Him. This is what Paul is saying in this verse – God seeks for us.

Look at Romans 3:12a.

*All have turned aside, together they have become useless; . . .*

The word “useless,” could be translated “rotten fruit”. It is an idiom that talks about either rotten fruit or sour milk. There is only one thing we want to do with rotten fruit or sour milk – throw it out. It is useless – we cannot eat it.

Paul says, “This is mankind – rotten.”

This terminology is not very nice, but I think Paul is making his point. He says, in the last part of Romans 3:12,

*. . . there is none who does good, there is not even one.*

Let us stop again, for a moment, and correct our theology. People do good things, right? So, in this verse, Paul is talking about the motivation of the heart in doing good.

Do you know that apart from Jesus Christ; apart from the motivation of the Holy Spirit, everything that anyone ever does is ultimately, selfish? They are doing it because it makes them feel good; it salves their conscience. They may give millions away to the needy, the homeless, the sick, but they are ultimately doing so because they are motivated by pride. They are thinking in their heart, “This makes me feel good.”

You might ask, “How do you know that?”

Because Paul said,

*. . . there is none who does good, there is not even one.*

Ultimately, motivation is the key. It is only the believer who can be motivated purely to help someone. Only the believer can be motivated to glorify God. Apart from Him, no pure motivation exists.

Now Paul will give the specific conditions of depravity.

In Romans 3:13a, Paul talks about the throat.

*Their throat is an open grave, . . .*

When we go to a doctor, we know that he will look at our throat. Why? Because it reveals what is going on inside – it is kind of a barometer.

One commentator wrote, about 1500 years ago, “The throat emits the noisome exhalations of a putrid heart.”

This is what we should read just before going to bed! How encouraging!

Remember, we are viewing man as *God* sees him, not as we see him.

Then, Paul talks about the tongue, in Romans 3:13b.

*. . . with their tongues they keep deceiving,...*

I like this translation because it is imperfect, which means it is continuous. Over and over and over their tongues are *so* deceptive.

Paul continues, in Romans 3:13c,

*. . . the poison of asps is under their lips;*

The asp is the Egyptian cobra. It is built a little differently than some vipers. Its fangs fold back under the upper jaw and when it rears up to strike and opens its mouth, the fangs drop down. At the end of the fang, right under the jaw, is the sack of venom and when it bites, its fangs press into that sack and the venom flows through the hollow fang into its victim.

Paul says we are like this.

He continues in Romans 3:14, saying,

***whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness;***

Paul is not saying people always go around cursing. He is saying that everyone who does not belong to Jesus Christ has in their mouth and in their mind a curse and bitterness.

Then, Paul goes on to talk about the feet, in Romans 3:15.

***their feet are swift to shed blood,***

He talks about the hands next, in Romans 3:16.

***destruction and misery are in their paths,***

In Romans 3:17, Paul talks about the mind.

***and the path of peace they have not known.***

The word “known” is the key in this verse. They are intellectually depraved – they cannot know peace. They can try; they can meet in the summits, but they cannot not know peace. Peace will be known in the kingdom.

Then, in Romans 3:18, Paul gets to the eyes.

***There is no fear of God before their eyes.***

I read this past week, that in deference to the Soviet Union, the United Nations organization agreed not to acknowledge God in their sessions. However, in a prominent place in the meeting hall is a statue of Zeus, the Greek god. This is an illustration of Romans 3:18,

***There is no fear of God before their eyes.***

They are saying, “We will ignore Him. We will erase the thought of Him. And when we meet at councils of nations, we will not even regard Him. We’ll ignore Him and He’ll go away.”

This is totally depraved.

What is the final verdict of depravity? Look at Romans 3:19.

***Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so***

***that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God;***

First, there is no appeal in this courtroom and, secondly, there is no excuse.

The word “accountable” is a mathematical term that means one day, God is going to look into the books that Revelation talks about specifically. The world says, “I’m going to ignore the fact that one day, God is going to check my books.” They think that by ignoring, it will not happen. However, Paul says, this is the ultimate verdict.

Wouldn’t it be foolish for a man who owes five thousand dollars to another man to write a letter to him, saying, “Dear Sir: I have noticed that according to my ledger, I owe you five thousand dollars. I want you to know, however, that I have decided to turn over a new leaf in my ledger and to ignore the debt. From here on, I’ll pay my dues and debts. Sincerely yours, . . .”

This is what people do who try to earn salvation. Paul is saying, “You can’t earn it.”

Something has to be done with sin. It has to be taken into account, either now or at the time Paul speaks of in this verse – at the judgment.

Continue to Romans 3:20.

***because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.***

One commentator writes these words, “Paul, the masterful lawyer, has done his work. He has brought the whole world before the judgment bar of God and left everyone standing there, trembling in silence. Not a mouth is open.”

## **Conclusion – We Cannot Earn Salvation**

This, ladies and gentlemen, is the exposition of total depravity – the fact that you and I cannot earn salvation. We could never be good enough; we could never be consistent enough to earn it. Paul spells it out in Romans chapter 3,

***. . . there is none who does good, there is not even one.***

There is nothing about us that could merit salvation. By understanding this, we then know that salvation is kept secure, not by our performance – we did not gain it by performance – but by our position in Christ.

In Romans chapter 7, Paul states his total depravity. He says, in Romans 7:19,

*. . . the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want.*

Paul also says, in Romans 7:24b,

*. . . Who will set me free from the body of this death?*

He says, in Romans 7:25-8:1, “I’m totally depraved, but,”

*Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! . . . Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*

We are eternally secure, not by our performance, but by our position.

A man came to my office a couple of weeks ago, who does not attend this church, but sadly, pastors a church. We were discussing several different things and as a result of our discussion, the fact came out that he did not believe in eternal security. Of course, I had my guns loaded for this one, so I thought, “Well, let’s go around a few miles on this thought.”

It was interesting that the moment I said that I believed we are eternally secure regardless of works, do you know what he said? He came back with, “Oh, well are you going to teach your people to go live in sin?”

I thought, “Romans chapter 3 said someone would say that.”

I flipped the Bible open and read that, good naturedly. We are good friends, by the way, and I think we still are.

However, we finally got around to the point and I asked him the question, “Have you ever thought that your definition of salvation hangs in the balance?”

Follow what I am about to say closely. The fact that you can lose your salvation by works, automatically means, conversely, that you gain it by works. In other words, if you cannot lose your salvation by being bad, then you cannot gain salvation by being good. If you lose it by sin, then that means you gained it by not sinning. Are you following me?

Salvation is an eternal covenant, just as the Old Testament Jew had a covenant made by God. In fact, when God made the covenant with Abraham, guess what He did to Abraham? He put him to sleep. He then cut an animal in half, which was the practice of making an Old Testament covenant; a blood covenant

– an animal was to be severed in half and then, both of the parties making the covenant were to walk between the pieces of the animal. In effect, this was saying, “Unless we can put this animal back together again and re-ignite life, this covenant stands.”

So, guess what? God did not even trust Abraham enough to walk through the pieces with Him. He puts him to sleep and walks through alone.

It is the same way with the new covenant. It is, in effect, between Christ the Son and God the Father. We are positionally in Christ when He is crucified, as Galatians chapter 2 teaches, but this is a covenant sealed by the Son and the Father.

Now positionally, by being in Christ, I do not fear sin in terms of losing salvation. I fear sin because it will weaken my testimony, rob me of joy, and bring chastisement, but I do not fear losing salvation. There is no condemnation to those who are positionally in Christ, regardless of performance.

An old theologian wrote these words that I love, “My memory is failing, but there are two things that I never forget: I am a great sinner and Jesus Christ is a great Savior.”

The older you and I get in the Lord, the more aware we are going to become of what? Our sin.

The apostle Paul started out his ministry and said, *. . . I am the least of the apostles . . . (I Corinthians 15:9)*

That is pretty good of Paul. There were only twelve of them, but he put himself at the bottom of the list.

Later in his ministry, Paul would write,

*. . . [I am] the very least of all saints . . . (Ephesians 3:8)*

That is even better.

Paul is developing in his walk and, as he wrote the epistle to his son in the faith at the end of his life, guess what he said?

*[of] sinners . . . I am foremost of all. (I Timothy 1:15)*

So, two things are necessary:

1. First, we must understand total depravity. This is the beginning – coming to a point at which, as totally depraved individuals, we trust the performance of Jesus Christ, totally.
2. Secondly, as we will discover in our next session, we must understand that because we

are in Him, we will never fear being out of  
Him.

Jesus is a great Savior. I hope He is yours.