

# None, Not Even One

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Preacher: Jonathan Chancey

[ 0 : 00 ] Amen. Well, you can please take your Bibles and open them up this morning to the book of Psalms. The book of Psalms. If you did not bring a Bible with you, that's okay.

We have Bibles there in the seat back in front of you, and you're going to need one this morning. We're going to be flipping to several different places, because as I mentioned, I was not here last week, and so I'm preaching two Psalms this morning. I'm making up for lost time.

We're going to do Psalm 14 and also Psalm 53, and we'll see the reason why, Lord willing, as we begin. But we're going to stand in honor of the reading of God's Word as I read Psalm chapter 14 this morning.

Let's stand in honor of the reading of God's Word. To the choir master of David, the fool says in his heart, There is no God.

They are corrupt. They do abominable deeds. There is none who does good. The Lord looks down from heaven on the children of man to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God.

[ 1 : 15 ] They have all turned aside. Together they have become corrupt. There is none who does good. Not even one. Have they no knowledge?

All the evildoers who eat up my people as they eat bread and do not call upon the Lord. There they are in great terror. For God is with the generation of the righteous.

You would shame the plans of the poor, but the Lord is his refuge. Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion. When the Lord restores the fortunes of his people, let Jacob rejoice.

Let Israel be glad. This is God's holy word. Let's pray once more. Lord, we thank you for your word. Father, it is good.

It is true. It is pure. And it is necessary for us even when it hurts. So we pray, Father, would you teach us this morning through your word.

[ 2 : 13 ] We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated. Well, several years ago I was playing basketball outside.

And I did what I had done a thousand times before. I shifted my weight onto one leg. And I went to jump off of that leg. But instead of going up into the air, my leg gave out on me.

And I went down to the ground. And I lay there for a minute, but eventually got up. And I hobbled my way to the car. And I drove home. And I cleaned myself up. And I tried to convince myself that things were not as bad as it seemed.

Maybe it's just a sprain. Maybe it'll get better. Well, a week or two went by. And it still didn't get better. The pain had gotten a little bit better. But it still didn't feel quite right.

And I had to be careful how I moved, how I shifted. Because if I shifted just the wrong way, the pain would come back. And my leg would give out. But even still, I'm stubborn.

[ 3 : 14 ] So I refused. And I continued to try and convince myself I'm fine. Things will get better. Things will improve. It's not that bad.

Well, eventually a couple of months went by. And Amanda, like a good wife does, gave me an ultimatum. She said, if it's not better, by X day, you are going to go to the doctor.

And you're going to get this thing looked at. So the day came. Still, it was not any better. And so reluctantly, I went to the doctor. And he began to assess the damage.

He began to shift my leg back and forth. He took my leg and my knee and shifted it all around. And then he scheduled an X-ray, which I knew was a waste of time. Because I knew there were no bones broken.

But that's the next step in the process. So we did an X-ray. And when we confirmed there were, in fact, no bones broken, we scheduled the MRI. Which was to get a good look at what is going on inside of me.

[ 4 : 17 ] So we did the MRI. And eventually, once the doctor got his hands on the results, he called me back into the office to confirm what I had hoped was not the case.

Things were worse than I thought. And they were worse than I had tried to pretend that they were. I had torn my ACL in my good knee. And now, now that I knew the truth of what was wrong with me, what was going on inside of me, now I would have to decide how we would go about fixing the problem.

Let me tell you something. I did not enjoy that conversation. Nobody enjoys conversations like this. Nobody wants to hear what is wrong with us.

Nobody wants to hear that things are worse than you thought. Or worse than maybe you're pretending that they are. But sometimes, you come across a passage in God's Word that functions like a truthful doctor.

It tells us exactly what is going on with us. That's exactly what Psalm 14 does. Psalm chapter 14 is like an honest doctor with no bedside manner.

[ 5 : 31 ] It is direct. It is uncomfortable. It is honest. It is a straightforward diagnosis of a sickness, a condition that's going on not just in some people here and there, but in all people, in every single one of us.

And what's the condition? The condition is that we are sinners. That we have, all of us, rebelled against a holy God. We have denied Him.

We have rejected Him. We have become corrupt. We are sick. Nobody wants to have this conversation. Because we think that we're better off than we are.

We try and convince ourselves that it's not so bad. But then passages like this come along and they show us the obvious truth of the situation. This is our diagnosis.

And we see it in three parts this morning. Three parts. Here we see the foolishness, the lawlessness, and the pervasiveness of rejecting God.

[ 6 : 35 ] This will be our outline this morning. If you're taking notes, we're going to see the foolishness, the lawlessness, and the pervasiveness of rejecting God. And here's the payoff.

If you can stick with me through the bad news, okay? And if you can stick with me through the uncomfortable bad news of our diagnosis, I promise you we will get to some good news of how we can fix it at the end.

Okay? The first, rejection of God is foolishness. Rejection of God is foolishness. Look there to verse 1.

He says, The fool says in his heart, There is no God. David says, Atheism is foolishness.

And that's a fairly bold claim, isn't it? Because what it means is that many of our higher elites, academic professors and scholars, scientists, politicians, those who we might think would be the smartest and most elite among us, actually, David says, if they deny God, actually they are fools.

[ 7 : 42 ] Richard Dawkins, Niels Bohr, Alfred Nobel, Sigmund Freud, Carl Rogers, Stephen Hawking, some of the brightest, most intelligent, most influential minds in human history, according to David, have been fools.

Why? Because although they study his creation, and although they live within his creation every day, although they have studied it, and in many ways understand it at a far deeper level than you and I probably ever will, they completely miss the message.

Psalm 19 tells us that creation has a message. Creation speaks a message. Psalm 19 says, The heavens declare the what?

The glory of God. The skies above proclaim his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech. Night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words go to the end of the world. In other words, everyone has heard the voice of creation.

[ 8 : 55 ] Every single person who lives underneath the sky has enough evidence available to them day in and day out to know for a fact that there is a God who made the world and everything in it.

If you live in creation, you have evidence of the existence and the glory and the creative power of God. So then the question becomes, well then, why don't all people acknowledge him?

Why is it that so many people deny this God? If the evidence is so readily available, why do so many brilliant people deny him? Romans chapter 1 speaks to that question.

Romans chapter 1. I want you to flip there with me, because we're going to come back to Romans here in just a minute. I want you to keep a finger there. We're going to come back there again in just

a minute. But Romans chapter 1, starting in verse 18, Paul says, The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

Did you hear that? It is not that they don't know the truth. The heavens itself declares it. That's what Psalm 19 told us. But by their unrighteousness, they suppress the truth.

[10:14] They know that there's a God. And Paul says they know that there's a God. This is a shocking common knowledge that exists within every person on the planet. Paul says there's not a single person on the planet, Christian, atheist, or otherwise, who doesn't know deep down in their hearts that there is a God.

They know it, but they suppress it. It would be ignorance to not know the truth, but it's foolishness to know the truth and to suppress it.

Listen to this, verse 19 of Romans 1. He says, The fool says in his heart, There is no God.

Atheism is foolishness. But I want you to look and notice back in Psalm 14 where the fool says this. Where does the fool say that there is no God?

It's not with his lips, is it? In Psalm 14, he's not saying this out loud with his lips. Where does he say it? It's in his heart. The fool says in his heart there is no God.

[11:41] This type of atheism goes deeper than just verbal atheism. This is a denying, a suppressing of the truth of God within your own heart.

It's not just verbal atheism. It's as the English Puritan, Stephen Sharnock, would call it. He called it a practical atheism. Do you realize you can claim all the right things with your lips?

You can acknowledge that there is a God with your lips and yet deny him in your heart. Do you realize this? You cannot be a verbal atheist, but you may be a practical atheist if you know there's a God and yet suppress the truth of his existence within your own heart.

What could possibly cause someone to do something so foolish? What could possibly cause someone to suppress the truth of the existence of God and pretend like he doesn't even exist?

The answer is our condition. It's sin. It's foolishness. Sin does not behave rationally.

[12:46] It is a sickness. Our sin, what it does is it turns us away from God and his glory and drives us instead to ourself.

And not only we don't want what God wants, we want what we want. We don't want God's fame. We want our fame. And it's so much easier to pursue the passions of our flesh if we can convince ourselves that there is no God, that we're not accountable to anyone.

This is foolishness, David says. The fool says in his heart there is no God and they are without excuse. Not only this, but second. Second, we see the result of this rejection.

Second, this rejection of God produces lawlessness. Verse 1 says they are corrupt.

They do abominable deeds. There is none who does good. In verse 4, David, he just throws up his hands. He says, have they no knowledge?

[13:54] All the evildoers who eat up my people as they eat bread and do not call upon the Lord, don't they know better? Why do they do the things that they do? David can't wrap his mind around all the wicked behavior that he sees.

But look again and ask yourself, what is at the root of their wicked behavior? Why are they corrupt? Why do they do abominable deeds?

It's because they have rejected the Lord. Rejection of God is at the root, is at the foundation of all lawlessness.

All wickedness at the very foundation has at its root a rejection of God. Again, Stephen Sharnock, he says, all sin is founded in a secret atheism.

Atheism is the spirit of every sin. Church, we have to remember this. When we look around at our culture, and we look around at our friends, when we look around at our family members who aren't believers, and when we just toss up our hands and we say, well, why are they acting this way?

[15:08] Don't they know better? Why are they doing the things that they do? We have to remember that external actions are just the symptoms, but the sickness is actually a rejection of God.

David says, this denial of God has produced in them all sorts of corruption. They actively do abominable deeds, and at the same time, they do not do what is good.

They actively pursue evil, and they resist doing good. This rejection of God has flipped everything upside down, and again, that's what sin does, isn't it?

Sin is a foolish rejection of God that twists and distorts our desires and our ambitions, so that we hate what is good, and we love what is evil.

So that we resist what is good, and we pursue what is abominable. So that we reject God and His glory, and we worship instead all sorts of false gods of our own making.

[16:16] And this is, again, exactly what Paul tells us in Romans chapter 1. Hopefully you still have your finger there. Romans 1. And we'll pick right up where we left off. Paul says, Those who reject God are without excuse for, verse 21.

Listen to this. For although they knew God, that is in a general, intellectual way, they knew He was there. Although they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks to Him.

But they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man, and birds, and animals, and creeping things.

Therefore, God gave them up in the lust of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves. Why? Verse 25. Because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever.

Amen. Listen to this. Verse 26. Their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature. And the men likewise gave up natural relations with women, and were consumed with passion for one another.

[17:41] Men committing shameless acts with men, and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error. Verse 29. They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice.

They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless.

Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them, but give approval to those who practice them.

Does this sound familiar to anybody else? Romans chapter 1 reads like America's obituary. How in the world could something written almost 2,000 years ago in a different country, in a different place, in a different time sound so familiar and so true to our culture right here and right now?

I'll tell you. It rings true to us because this same sickness that existed in David's day, that existed in Paul's day, exists right here and right now in our day.

[18:59] What is it? It's the sickness of sinful rejection of God. Do you see the root issue here? At the root, at the foundation of every sinful behavior is denial and rejection of the glory of God.

This rejection is the root cause of all sexual perversion. We deny God and we pursue the desires of our own flesh. It's the foundation of all greed and theft.

We deny God and we worship money. It's the foundation of all covetousness. We deny the worth of God and we deny the satisfaction that can be found in Him alone so we crave more.

We crave satisfaction in some earthly good, some bigger home, a better job, a nicer car, a dream vacation, whatever it may be. It's the foundation of rebelliousness in children.

We deny the structures of order and authority God has given us and we all want to be God of our own world. Denial of God is the foundation of every evil pursuit.

[20:10] Are we in agreement? That's good. Because it's third point. Before we point our finger out at everybody else and shake our head at the sin in our culture and in our world and the sin of our neighbor, we have to realize point number three, rejection of God is pervasive.

It's pervasive. In other words, it's not just a them problem. It's a us problem. It's not just an out there issue where other people are sinning and we are not.

This is an us problem. Look there to verse two. Verse two shifts to the Lord's perspective on all of this. Look what he says. It says, The Lord, he looks down from heaven on the children of man to see if there are any who understand.

If there are any who seek after God. And verse three gives us the answer. They have all turned aside. Together they have become corrupt. There is none who does good.

Not even one. One. Let me tell you how we tend to read this. Our natural inclination is to read this and say, Yeah, I agree.

[21:25] It is terrible out there. Right? All those sinners out there. Why can't they get it all together? But look what it says again. It says, There is none who does good.

None understand. No one seeks after God. Not even one. Not even me. Not even you. This is a universal issue.

You and I and everyone else are all guilty of making the same foolish exchange. We are guilty of rejecting God.

It's our very nature to do so. All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned everyone to his own way. And that is exactly Paul's point in Romans chapter 3.

Flip there back with me again one last time. I've had us looking at Romans because Paul has been building up to this point. Paul quotes Psalm 14 in Romans chapter 3.

[ 22 : 30 ] He spends all of chapter 1 illustrating the sinfulness of the nations, the Gentiles who have rejected God and who have followed their own passions, who have chased after idols.

And he says, hey, we all agree that the judgment of God rightly falls on people who does stuff like that, right? We all agree that that's wrong and I just imagine all the Jews nodding their head.

Yep, I get it. Yes, of course. How could they do that? They've rejected God. The judgment of God rightly falls on them. They deserve to be punished. And then Paul turns the tables on them.

And he says, therefore, you have no excuses, oh man. Every one of you who judges, for in passing judgment on another, you condemn yourself because you, the judge, practice the very same things as it is written, chapter 3, verse 10, as it is written, none is righteous, no, not one.

No one understands. No one seeks for God. All have turned aside. Together, they have become worthless. No one does good, not even one.

[ 23 : 45 ] In other words, church, this is our problem. This problem is universal. So he asks, well what then?

Are we Jews any better off? I mean, surely we Jews are better off, right? Romans 3, verse 9, no, not at all. You fill in the blank however you like.

Whatever you think makes you superior to anybody else, you fill it in right there. What then? Are we Americans any better off? Any better off than the Iraqis or the Russians?

Are we any better off? No, not at all. What about us Republicans? Are we better off, right? Surely, than the Democrats, right? No, not at all.

Democrats, we're better off, right? We're better than the Republicans. Not at all. Why not? Because you, me, and everybody else all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, every one of us.

[ 24 : 48 ] Our sin nature is the great equalizer. we have to understand this, church.

A rejection of God is a universal condition which ought to lead to a complete demolition of any streak of pride in our hearts.

We are all in the same boat here. We can't read this and place ourselves in any group that we think is outside of this natural condition.

We are not exempt. We gotta wipe our hearts clean of any idea of superiority to anyone else. Why? We all share this same natural condition.

Jew and Gentile alike, Republican and Democrat alike, black, white, Hispanic, American citizen, illegal, alien, rich, poor, Auburn, Clemson, USC, University of Georgia.

[ 25 : 49 ] All of us are in this same broad category of sinners. That college too, whichever one you just mentioned right there. I didn't hear what it was, but you're included.

We have all turned aside. Together, we have become corrupt. This is all of our problem. We have to start thinking in biblical terms.

Understanding the world and everything in it, everyone else in it, and ourselves as well in biblical terms. This is hard. It's hard to shake off all the other things that try to determine our identity and our worth and to put us in buckets and categories.

The Bible teaches us there are only two types of people. Only two types of people in the world. It's not us and them, whatever your definition of us might be.

It is those who have been forgiven of their sin and those who remain in it. those who have been forgiven of our rejection of God and those who continue still to reject Him.

[ 27 : 00 ] Those who have been forgiven of our natural rebellion against the Lord and those who continue to rebel. understanding these two categories of people is absolutely crucial to understanding the Psalms and understanding what's going on here in Psalm chapter 14.

We've seen it over and over and over and over and over again throughout the book of Psalms.

There are only two types of people. You remember what they are? It's the righteous and the wicked.

Look back there with me to Psalm 14. And once you're there, put a finger there and flip over to Psalm 53. This is why I wanted to preach two Psalms this morning.

Psalm 14 and Psalm 53. I want you to make your way to Psalm 53 and I want you to tell me if this sounds familiar at all to you. Psalm 53. Psalm 53 goes like this.

The fool says in his heart there is no God. They are corrupt doing abominable iniquity. There is none who does good.

[ 28 : 11 ] God looks down from heaven on the children of man to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. They have all fallen away and together they have become corrupt. There is none who does good, not even one.

Have those who work evil no knowledge, who eat up my people as they eat bread and do not call upon God. Stop there. Does that sound familiar to you yet? These two Psalms are almost identical. Why are we repeating the same thing? Why is David going back and saying the same thing in Psalm 14 and Psalm 53? That's the question. And the answer is found in the one verse that's different.

Psalm 53 and Psalm 14 verse 5. There's only one verse that's completely different. Verse 5 of Psalm 53 says, There they are in great terror where there is no terror.

For God scatters the bones of him who encamps against you. You put them to shame for God has rejected them. But Psalm 14 verse 5, you flip back there, it says, There they are in great terror for God is with the generation of the righteous.

[ 29 : 26 ] You would shame the plans of the poor, but the Lord is his refuge. Do you see the difference? Stay with me here. Do you see it? Psalm 53 is God's response of judgment on the wicked.

He says, You have rejected me, I have rejected you. That's what our sins deserve. We are at odds with a holy God and justice demands that our sins be dealt with.

Psalm 53 is God's response to the wicked. But look at the focus in Psalm 14. Psalm 14 says, You have rejected me, all have turned aside, and I will be your refuge.

You are guilty, you are in the all here who have become corrupt, and yet I will shield you from what your sins deserve. You have denied me, I will call you righteous even though you're guilty.

Two types of people. You see it? Again, Psalm 53 says, All have sinned, the wicked will be judged.

Psalm 14 says, All have sinned, and God is with the righteous.

[ 30 : 32 ] How in the world do we understand this? The answer is found only in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Listen to this. The difference between these two people, the righteous and the wicked, is not whether or not you are guilty. We are all guilty.

The answer is whether or not you are in Christ. Listen to this. The gospel is the bad news that all of us are guilty of rebelling against God, but it is the unthinkable good news that God pardons guilty sinners by punishing His own Son in our place.

The gospel is the bad news that yes, we are guilty, every one of us, but it's the good news that Jesus Christ came for the guilty. It's the bad news that we're sinners, we are sick, we share this condition, we have all done abominable deeds, we have rejected God, we have become corrupt, but the good news is that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am the foremost.

The bad news, this psalm describes all of our fallen sinful nature, but the good news of the gospel, Christ Jesus came to give us a new nature.

[ 32 : 02 ] The bad news is that our sins deserve death, but the good news is Christ Jesus died for us, and more than that, rose from the grave and defeated death so that any sinner who turns from their sin and puts their faith in Christ can be made righteous and live forever in the sight of God.

That's the gospel and it's our only hope. That is the cure for our condition. You know, our natural response to a text like this, to Psalm 14 or Psalm 53 is either to point the finger out at other people or to pretend like it's not so bad.

And if you felt that tendency this morning to say, I'm not that bad. That doesn't describe me. Or if you read through this and you thought of somebody else and not of yourself, you've missed it.

But if you hear this and you are pricked to the heart and you know that you're sick and you know that you've sinned against the Lord, I have good news for you.

Jesus says, those who are well have no need of a physician but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous those who think they're doing alright, but I've come to call sinners.

[ 33 : 23 ] God's word has shown us this morning that we are broken. Now, you can choose to pretend that it's better than it is and you can try to deny it as long as you can.

You can walk with a limp or you can cast yourself totally, helplessly, completely, confidently into the arms of Jesus, the great physician who came to take your sin away.

And to give you his righteousness. Here's the point, church. This is the thought that I want to leave you with as we leave this place.

Our sinful condition is far worse than we could possibly think. But the grace of God towards us in Christ is far greater than we could possibly imagine.

So what's our response then as we close? Two-fold. Two-fold. Pray for salvation and rejoice in what God has done.

[ 34 : 28 ] This is how David closes this psalm. Psalm 14, verse 7. He says, Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion. When the Lord restores the fortunes of His people, let Jacob rejoice.

Let Israel be glad. Pray for salvation. if you have experienced the saving grace of God. Pray, pray, pray, and pray some more that the Lord would extend that same saving grace to others around you. How do we expect to see the Lord reach this community of all and all? We desire to see the Lord save many in this community, don't we? The way He's going to do it is through your prayers and through faithful evangelism.

Pray that the Lord would save, forgive, and convert even the most unlikely, most rebellious sinner you know. And pray for salvation and pray for the coming day when the Lord will return and bring final and total salvation for all of His people.

Not only this, if you have received the grace of God, rejoice in what God has done. rejoice and be glad.

[ 35 : 46 ] Christians of all people ought to be full of joy and gladness. We of all people ought to be rejoicing.

Why? Because we have received an eternal inheritance that none of us deserve. We've been healed by the grace of God through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Let's pray. Lord, Father, we confess we have sinned and fallen short of your glory. There's not a person in this room who can claim that we've lived perfectly as you desire.

Father, we praise you that you sent Christ to live in our place as we should have lived, to die in our place as we deserve to die, and to rise from the grave that we might have certain hope of eternal life through faith in him alone.

God, we pray if there are any here who do not know you, Lord, would you give them the gift of salvation this morning? God, we pray for salvation, and we pray that we would rejoice in what you've done.

[ 36 : 56 ] We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Do just let you ■■■■■ song Jesus' name