

Romans 3:9-20

This Is Heavy

Scripture: Romans 3:9-20

Memory Verse: Romans 3:10 *“As it is written: There is none righteous, no, not one.”*

Lesson Focus: No passage of Scripture paints a more accurate and yet more sobering picture of the state of mankind without Jesus Christ. We want every kid to appropriately understand how bad their sin actually is and how powerless they are to save themselves. Our prayer is that the kids will be made uncomfortable by the BAD NEWS of their sin and guilt so that they will be primed to receive the GOOD NEWS of the gospel.

Activities and Crafts: Jesus Forgives My Sin Coloring Picture, Word Search of different terms from lesson, New Bring it Home Sheet for 3rd – 5th.
Craft for 1st & 2nd: Make Your Own Scale

Starter Activity: Weight-Guessing Contest

Consider getting the lesson started by playing a guessing game with the kids. You will need to bring in a scale from home and you will have the kids guess the weight of various objects using the scale. (**Note:** the scale is also an important illustration tool for the lesson) You can bring items from home, use stuff in the classroom, or pull stuff from the resource room for the game. The wackier the items the better! Make it fun! * Break the kids off into at least two teams and have several items ready that you will weigh on the scale. Here are a few ideas:

- 1) Have each team guess the weight and give a point to the team that is the closest.
- 2) Have each team guess the weight and give a point to the team that guesses the closest without going over (“Price-is-Right” style).
- 3) Bring in pairs of items and have each team guess which one weighs more than the other and give a point to a team if they get it right.
- 4) Invite a couple of kids to stand on the scale and have each team guess their weight! (And if you are really brave, have a leader stand on the scale!)

After finishing the game, transition into the lesson by talking about some “heavy” items that kids are familiar with:

Q: What are some “heavy” things that you might have to carry with you?

A: Backpack with books, skiing gear *, sled up the hill with a friend in it, etc.

Well, in our Bible lesson today, we are going to see that there is something else that every single one of us carries AND it is HEAVIER than any of those things we just talked about. Let’s see what this is!

Bible Study:

Romans 3:9a: Paul asks “are **we** better than **they**?” Paul uses a question to wrap up the points that we have covered the last several weeks. We need to quickly review what we have learned the last few lessons to understand this question. (**Teachers:** Consider writing this Q on the white board highlighting the **we** and **they** and then have the kids help you identify who is who as you review.)

A few weeks ago we learned about the “unchurchy” people who “suppress” or reject God in their sin (**Romans 1:18-21**). These are the “they” in Paul’s question. But then a couple of weeks ago, Paul turned the tables on the “churchy” people * who “snub” God by trusting in themselves (**Romans 2:1-6**). These are the “we” in Paul’s question. We even saw some of this “us vs. them” between the two brothers in the Prodigal Son story last week. * (**Teachers:** We will have the inflatable cross and water bowls * we have used before available again and consider using them to illustrate the “suppressing” and “snubbing”). So let’s ask Paul’s question again slightly differently and see if we have learned our lesson:

Q: *Are we who go to church better than they who don’t go to church?*

Romans 3:9b: The Bible says ABSOLUTELY NOT! For all, both Jews and Greeks, both “churchy” and “unchurchy”, are under what? SIN! (**Teachers:** Consider drawing and attaching a large weight to the “we” and “they” and label it sin.) * Remember at the beginning we mentioned there is something very HEAVY that we all carry? This is it! Before we go any further, let’s make sure you all understand what sin is! *

Q: What is sin? A: Anything we think, say, or do that disobeys God. *

Q: What are some examples? * A: Lying, stealing, hating, disobeying our parents, saying hurtful things to others. When we do things like this we are doing exactly what God hates! (**Teachers:** Consider bringing in a bucket that you can put on the scale. As you progress through the lesson, add blocks or rocks to help the kids grasp just how HEAVY our sin is!) *

Remember we live in God’s world! He made us and He made the rules. And by the way, His rules are good and for our good! *

As sinners, one thing that we are really good at is making excuses for ourselves. We might tell ourselves “we aren’t THAT bad”. * That is certainly the message we hear from Disney movies, TikTok, and pop music (i.e. believe in yourself, be your own hero, etc.). While the Bible does say that we are special and made in God’s image it also says, “NOT SO FAST”. In fact, it even tells us that we are WORSE than we think! For the next section of our text is a collection * of verses from all over the Bible that make this point.

Romans 3:10-18: Whoa! This is HEAVY! This describes each and every one of us without Jesus! **Teachers:** Consider reading this whole section out loud straight through to give the kids this ugly picture of our sin. Then come back and teach through some of the sections individually.

Romans 3:10: We sometimes think that we are pretty good on our own. But what does the Bible say? There is NONE righteous! *

Romans 3:11-12: Again, there is NONE who truly seek after God!

Q: If you have NONE of something, how many do you have? ZERO! ZERO humans always want to go God's way. ALL are born with an inclination to go their own way. *

Romans 3:13-14: The focus now shifts to how we sin with our mouths.

Q: What are some ways that we sin with our words? A: Telling lies. Saying mean things to others. "Cuss" words. Even bragging about ourselves! *

Romans 3:15-17: We also sin with our hands and feet.

Q: What are some ways that we sin with our hands and feet? A: Going somewhere we aren't allowed to go. Picking a fight with someone else (**Teachers:** Consider dropping new "sins" into the bucket as you talk through this so that it gets heavier and heavier).

Romans 3:18: Instead of honoring God as rightful King of the universe and following Him, we make ourselves King or Queen of our own YOU-niverse! * In summary, we all have a heart problem (**Jeremiah 17:9**)! We are rotten at our core and cannot fix ourselves.

Romans 3:19-20: All of the world is guilty before God and every mouth silenced!

Q: Do you know what it means to be guilty? A: It means to be at fault and deserving of punishment. And the Bible is very clear that the punishment for sinners is hell. You know what I call this? BAD NEWS!! This is the worst of news and some of you might be very uncomfortable and shocked by what you have heard so far.

Believe it or not, that's exactly what God wants! He wants you to be uncomfortable with your sin. Because He knows that it is not until you are made **uncomfortable** by the weight of your sin and guilt that you will be made **comfortable** by the GOOD NEWS of the gospel! * The GOOD NEWS of the gospel does not pretend sin isn't there or skirt around it. Rather the GOOD NEWS is that God, in His love, deals with our sin, makes a way for us to be forgiven of our sin, and sets us free from our sin! **Our sin is great, but God's love is greater!!**

Key Point: At the beginning of this book the gospel was described as the "*power of God for salvation to everyone who believes*". (**Romans 1:16**) It is only by the power of our great and wonderful God that this HEAVY burden of sin can be lifted off of us. And this is exactly what happens when we trust in Jesus! God then takes our sin and puts it on the shoulders of Jesus to bear! * (**Teachers:** Consider having another bucket labeled "Jesus" ready and lift the sin bucket off of the scale and pour it out into the Jesus bucket) *

Do you know the song, "Amazing Grace"? The song continues, "*how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me.*" God wants His amazing grace to be sweet to you! The more you understand how wretched, bad, and HEAVY your sin really is, the sweeter God's grace will be to you and the more you will share it with others!

BRING IT HOME

Read Jeremiah 17:9.
The world tells us to trust in ourselves. What does the Bible say about that?

Parent Signature:

Parent Challenge:
What is sin?

Read Isaiah 53:6.
How does this verse describe us? And what does God do about it?

