

God's Righteous and Impartial Judgment Romans 2:1-11

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Now, Christians tend to be loving, kind and generous and they're certainly are not God haters. So, Paul writes Romans 2 where he teaches that good people are sinners, too.

After looking at all the sins that we can get drawn into in Romans 1, we in the church must be careful about getting on our high horse and condemning the world around us.

The one verse in the Bible that we need to fully understand and know is Romans 3:23, *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."*

This verse applies equally to the foulest month murderer as well to the saintliest saint. We must realize that all have offended a most holy God. But it's easy to point out the sins of the evil doers around us.

I can hear the Jews and the pious Gentile believers in Rome cheering Paul and saying "amen" to everything he said in Chapter 1. But here in Romans 2 Paul shift gears and picks out a new target.

In writing chapter 2, Paul uses a style of writing called the diatribe using question and answers to make a point.

In fact, the people Paul was referring to in verses 2-4 were probably representative of the Jews in Rome, and very possibly the pious and morally straight Gentile believer.

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Romans 2:1, *"You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge another, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things."*

In Chapter 1 Paul talked about those who had a natural revelation of God. That's the God we see in nature and the universe around us.

It's even the God we see displayed in our moral conscience. This is something everyone has experienced.

However, here in Chapter 2 Paul's addressing those who not only have natural revelation, but special revelation as well.

To the Jews, God chosen people, special revelation had been given. The believers in Rome had special revelation as well because they've heard the Gospel.

We also have God's special revelation in that we have His word in our hand.

Those that reject God, also reject His son Jesus, who's the subject of God's special revelation. These people are at risk for the greater condemnation.

Now remember, Paul's writing to believers. He wants us to understand that those who judge and condemn those in the world around us will be judged by the same standards.

But wait, you say, I didn't commit all the stuff listed in Chapter 1.

According to the Believer's Bible Commentary: *"The sins of cultured people are essentially the same as those of the heathen. Although a moralist may argue that he has not committed every sin in the book, he should remember the following facts:*

- 1. He is capable of committing them all.*
- 2. By breaking one commandment, he is guilty of all.*

3. He has committed sins of thought which he may never have committed in actual deed, and these are forbidden by the Word. Jesus taught that a lustful look, for instance, is tantamount to adultery.

Paul's pointing out that those in the church are guilty of the same sins of thought, word and deed. Therefore, we're no better than those in Chapter 1 and will face the same judgment.

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Romans 2:2–3, “Now we know that God’s judgment against those who do such things is based on truth. So when you, a mere human being, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God’s judgment?”

God judges according to the truth. Many in the world claim to be moral, but who defines what's moral and what's not? God sets that standards. We don't get to vote on what's moral and what's not.

And herein lies the problem. The world's definition of morality has crept into the church.

Whether it's living together or having sex outside the holy bonds of marriage, or having the world's morality invited into our living rooms via the television.

We, who call ourselves Christians, are no better than the rest of world. *“God’s judgment against those who do such things is based on truth.”*

God knows all truth and God knows the deep recesses of our hearts. So, be carefully when you justify yourself or your actions by saying God knows my heart. You bet He does, and it's a frightful thing.

Listen to what God says about the human heart. Jeremiah 17:9–10, *“The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? “I the Lord search the heart and examine the mind, to reward each person according to their conduct, according to what their deeds deserve.”*

There is absolute truth in the universe. Many places in the Old Testament refer to God as the “God of truth.”

The New Testament also tells us that Jesus is truth. (John 14:6). Is there something we know that God doesn’t? According to Romans 1:20 and Romans 2:1, we’re without excuse.

In word, deed or thought, we’re guilty of doing many of the sins listed in Chapter 1. Just because our names are on the church rolls, that doesn’t exempt us from God’s judgment.

Romans 2:4, *“Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God’s kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?”*

The purpose of God’s kindness, His many blessings, His patience with us is but to lead us into repentance.

2 Peter 3:9, *“The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”*

We, who are Christians, must live a life of repentance. I’m far from where God wants me to be. I miss the mark daily. I find myself repenting and striving to do better each and every day.

But those who think that walking the aisle, praying with the pastor, and getting dunked in the Baptismal pool is all they have do.

That they are set and now they can continue life as before with the assurance of heaven. Let me tell you, they are sadly mistaken.

Walking the aisle, praying, and being baptized are just things we do to indicate an internal change. A changed life is the best indicator of a saved soul.

Considering God's patience, His grace and mercy, we shouldn't be smug in our Christianity. We shouldn't think that we are holier than the rest of the world, rather we should be greatly humbled that God even considered us.

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But for those who think that God owes them. That they've done God a favor, Paul continues in Romans 2:5–6:

“But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. God will repay each person according to what they have done.”

We need to be forever humbled before God, asking daily for His forgiveness in everything in which we fall short.

Because here's God's judgment. He *“will repay each person according to what they have done.”*

When Paul wrote that, he was quoting from numerous places in the Old Testament:

- Proverbs 24:12, *“If you say, But we knew nothing about this, does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who guards your life know it? Will he not repay everyone according to what they have done?”*
- Psalm 62:12, *“And with you, Lord, is unfailing love; and, You reward everyone according to what they have done.”*
- Hosea 12:2, *“The LORD has a charge to bring against Judah; he will punish Jacob^[b] according to his ways and repay him according to his deeds.”*

This holds true in the New Testament as well, because we know all will be held accountable through the different judgments we find in the Bible.

There’s the Great White Throne Judgment at the end of time for the condemned, found in Revelation 20.

Then Matthew 25 describes an even where Jesus will divide the sheep from the goats upon His returns. That in and of itself is a judgment.

Then there’s the Judgment Seat of Christ for the saved, where rewards will be given out found in 2 Corinthians 5:10, *“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.”*

So, all will be judged, and I believe that there will be those who’ll be in heaven by the skin of their teeth.

I also believe there may be a certain amount of regret for not doing what could have been done as Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 3:13–15:

“Their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person’s work. If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames.”

Simply knowing Jesus ought to motivate us to do good works since the Bible tells us that since only God is good, we can’t do any good thing unless He does it through us.

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And we can only do those things continually if we have the Spirit of God.

Romans 2:7, *“To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life.”*

We cannot, as Paul makes very plain in the chapters that follow, do this on our own. Here again, the evidence of a life that is saved is a life that is changed.

Paul tells us in Philippians 2:12–13, *“Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.”*

But for others, Paul writes in Romans 2:8–9, *“But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.”*

There is a great punishment in store for those who know the gospel, above that of natural revelation, yet refuse the truth.

Romans 2:10, *“But glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.”*

Notice it mentions to the Jew first. This is because they have a greater accountability and responsibility before God.

The same applies to those who have God’s special revelation of knowing the Gospel.

We’re called to bring honor and glory to God. But make no mistake, God will judge all. Romans 2:11, *“For God does not show favoritism.”*

God has revealed Himself to all. Therefore, all are accountable; all are without excuse. Yes, God knows the condition of our hearts.

A dangerous prayer we ought to be praying is found in Psalm 139:23–24, *“Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”*

As God reveals the sins, shortcomings, and evils within each of us, we must ask Him for forgiveness.

1 John 1:9, *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”*

When we do this, we’re in the process of sanctification, which means becoming more holy. And God calls us to be holy.

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Conclusion

Just by being here today, God holds us accountable for the Word that we know, for the revelation He has given us.

It's all about trusting Jesus, keeping our eyes on Him and doing His will. What will you do today?

Jesus said in John 5:24, *“Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.”*

Will you trust Jesus today?