



## UNDERSTANDING GOD'S JUDGEMENT

Romans 2:1-16

Context is always important when studying the Bible. In order to understand Romans 2, we must see it in context of Paul's overall purpose in writing to the church in Rome. The primary theme of Romans is the revelation of God's righteousness in His plan for salvation, the gospel.

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "But the righteous man shall live by faith." *Romans 1:16-17*

"Paul showed how human beings lack God's righteousness because of our sin (1-3), receive God's righteousness when God justifies us by faith (4-5), demonstrate God's righteousness by being transformed from rebels to followers (6-8), confirm His righteousness when God saves the Jews (9-11), and apply His righteousness in practical ways throughout our lives (12-16)." *Chuck Swindoll*

In chapter 1, Paul concludes his indictment against the gross and flagrant sins of the openly ungodly. He now turns his attention to "respectable" sinners. In Chapter 2, Paul exposes the hypocrisy of the human heart, then reveals the certainty and impartiality of God's judgment. **Every person is guilty before God and will face judgment. Your only hope is the good news/gospel of Jesus Christ!**

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness. *Romans 1:18 (NASB95)*

### 1. GOD'S JUDGMENT IS CERTAIN! (Everyone is without excuse)

Romans 2:1 = "judge" – same word used in Matthew 7:1

Jesus nor Paul are saying we should be undiscerning (1 Corinthians. 5:3,5; Luke 12:57). In warning us not to judge, Jesus and Paul cautioned against the sin of hypocrisy (see Matthew 7:3-5).

#### a. False comparison (vs. 1-2)

"What we are often doing is seeing our faults in others and judging them vicariously. That way we experience the pleasure of self-righteousness without the pain of penitence." *John Stott*



**b. False assumption (v. 3) – “God will not judge me”**

“do you think/suppose” – logizomai – to evaluate, estimate, calculate.

**c. False interpretation (v. 4) – Don’t mistake God’s patience with permissiveness!**

- “Think lightly” – look upon with contempt
- “Goodness” – kindness, 2X in v. 4
- “forbearance” – calling a truce, relief, pause
- “patience” – longsuffering – suffer long with people, macrothumeo

God has incredible ability to store up anger before it spills out in judgment.

**d. False expectation (v. 5) – God will judge every man**

- “stubbornness” or “hardness” – sleroteta – arteriosclerosis – hardening of the arteries (Matthew 13:15, 19:8; Mark 3:5, 6:52, 8:17-21, 10:5)
- “unrepentant” – ametanoetos – characterized by a refusal to abandon any pagan or self righteous disposition

Paul is not contradicting himself (Romans 2:5-11). (See Habakkuk 2:4). Paul is clarifying that each person will be judged by his or her deeds, not saved by them. Every person’s deeds will be found wanting. Anyone daring to presume that his or her deeds are sufficiently good for eternal life, or that God who sees all, will overlook sin, has chosen a bleak future.

Luke 18:9-14

- 1st man – Romans 1
- 2nd man – Romans 2

## **2. GOD’S JUDGMENT IS IMPARTIAL! (verses 6-11)**

“for there is no partiality with God” (Romans 2:11)

“Paul introduced the issue of repayment according to works to show the Jews that God is impartial, there will be no special favoritism for them.” *Tom Schreiner*



(Verses 7-16) does not teach salvation by works.

“This is one of the most difficult sections in Romans. On the surface it seems to teach that salvation is by works; that eternal life can be earned by patient continuing in well doing. Such an idea, however, is foreign to the whole tenor of Scripture. To resolve the difficulty, we must bear in mind that this passage has to do with God’s basis of judgment. In the Bible judgment is according to our works; salvation is by faith. Seeking for glory, honor, incorruption and eternal life in well-doing is the outcome of faith, the evidence – not the ground – of salvation. At this point in the epistle, Paul is not discussing how a person is saved and receives eternal life. That comes later. Here he is showing that Jew and Gentile are on the same ground before God in the matter of sin.” *John Philips, Exploring Romans, p. 42*

### **3. GOD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS IS THE STANDARD FOR JUDGMENT! (verses 12-16)**

By any standard, the law of Moses or the Gentiles own conscience, each person will be found guilty. The judgment of God will fall on every person because the standard of righteousness is perfection.