

The Book of Romans

Chapter Two - *The Sin of Self-Righteousness*

I. Lesson Introduction - The Greatest Book in the New Testament!

- A. This one Book in your Bible condenses down into 16 chapters the greatest themes of all humanity - the themes of sin, judgment, justification, sanctification, victory, eternal security, and service!
- B. In Chapter 1, the apostle Paul has described the condition of the human heart in very vivid terms - as depraved (To be ruined utterly in character or quality: stained, corrupted, perverted, debased)!
- C. And we clearly saw that it was not a “pretty” picture of our condition. But the thing to understand is, that this is exactly how GOD sees the human HEART, not his or her outward appearance!
- D. But Paul is NOT finished! God has something more to say because there are so many people who look at the list and find some way of excusing THEMSELVES, and looking down at OTHERS - “civilised” vs “heathen” and the lower classes

II. Focus Verse : Romans 2:4

III. The Sin of Self-Righteousness (2:1)

A. The Misunderstanding About Morality (1) - Outward Goodness

1. _____. Morality is people living right one with another. People desperately need this today. People don't live clean lives (filthy conversations, nudity on TV and in newspapers and at work). People need to live up to right standards!
2. _____. Morality is important when it comes to dealing with humanity. But when dealing with GOD, our own righteousness can never attain to God's standard (Rom 3:23). **All of us are sinners**, and fall short.
3. Anyone who attempts to approach God with their _____, and morality, is overlooking the fact that Jesus Christ came to die for the sins of the WHOLE world - including the sins of GOOD people (Isa 64:6)
4. A person's own morality, own goodness, own righteousness is no substitute for the sinlessness of Jesus Christ!

B. The Misunderstanding About Paganism/Heathenism (2:1)

1. Not all heathen live in grass huts! Character traits of “heathen”:
 - a. _____ - TV, the covers of the majority of Magazines, notice the higher and higher skirts!
 - b. _____ - adultery, fornication, divorces
 - c. _____ - they make “gods” out of people and things (Rock music stars, bank accounts)
 - d. _____ - male and female!
2. So don't try and fool yourself! Don't try and excuse yourself by thinking that you are different than all those “heathen” out in the jungle who do all those wicked things listed in 1:18-32! WE ALL have committed sins out of that list! We ALL break God's Laws!

C. Self-Righteousness Contrasted With God's Righteousness (Luke 18:9-14)

1. A Parable - A lesson from Jesus Christ
2. The Religious man - Having Self-righteousness
3. The Sinful man - Asking for God's righteousness
4. The result - Justification. Why? Right attitude about himself, about God, and didn't worry about other people's sins!

- D. **The Problem** is *NOT* the fact that these people in Romans 2 were judging others, but more importantly, that they had set themselves up ABOVE others, and were thinking that they weren't sinners, or at least weren't THAT BAD! God says, THOU art without excuse! In other words, YOU ARE IN TROUBLE WITH GOD TOO!

- E. This all leads us to the fact that, so far in Romans, we have studied:

1. The Power of God in Chapter One
 2. The Wrath of God in Chapter One
 3. The Depravity of Man in Chapter Two
- We now turn to...

IV. The _____ of God (2:2-16) - Dealing with a lot of 'negatives' first. The 'positive' stuff will come later.

A. The Qualifications of the Judgment of God (2-11) - How Is It Qualified to Judge You?

1. _____ (2) - God has all the facts; no guesswork!
 - a. Man will lie to get ahead; People are not interested in truth - that takes too much work to find out! People just want peace and quite! EX of in the home! God is quite different though!
 - b. Rom 3:4 - God is always TRUE or else He cannot be God (Tit 1:2) As in trustworthy, accurate, without variation (James 1:17)
 - c. Makes for fear - there is nothing hid from God (Ec 12:14; Mk 4:22). The judgment is against evil - like a Doctor's drugs are against sickness!
 - d. Makes for confidence ("we are sure...") - you can trust a God like that! He wont turn on the one who is doing right!
2. _____ (3)
 - a. Rom 3:23; 6:23 are directed at ALL people
 - b. Heb 9:27 includes EVERYBODY
 - c. Watch out for those who set themselves up as "better" than others, and think that "others" deserve punishment, but not them!
 - d. The important thing is to "turn yourself in" so to speak, accepting that you are guilty, and then cling to Christ as the payment for your sins! ONLY then is the judgment of God diverted - away from you, and onto Christ!
3. _____ (4)
 - a. People who are self-righteous really despise God!
 - b. They despise not God's judgments, but rather His goodness, forbearance, and long-suffering toward them! They just don't like the fact that God is not impressed with their "religion" and "good works"
 - c. God knows full well that people live and think the way they do because of ignorance "not knowing." So He waits so that He can get the information to them so that they can make a valid decision!
 - d. God's goal is NOT to judge a sinner, but that the sinner would come to repentance and be saved from hell (2Pet 3:9; Ezek 33:11)
4. _____ (5-9)
 - a. God's decisions are based upon righteousness, and whether you meet its demands (Rom 3:23) - if you can't, you reap the consequences - unless you seek a substitute who DID meet the demands for you - Jesus Christ!
 - b. God is against hard, impenitent, stubborn, rebellious hearts
 - c. Notice that it is the hard heart that treasures up the wrath, not the wicked *deeds* alone!
 - d. The "day of wrath" refers to the last judgment of Rev 20:11-15 (2Pet 3:7,1-13)
 - e. Without a Saviour, **every** person will get what they deserve (2:6)!
 - f. God's judgment will honour the right heart attitude (2:7):
 - 1) Patient continuance in well doing
 - 2) Seeking for God's glory, and honour
 - 3) Seeking for immortality (knowing they are lost)
 - 4) They reap ETERNAL LIFE! This is God's pattern for all humanity: even the heathen in darkest Africa!
 - g. God's judgment will condemn the wrong heart attitude (2:8)
 - 1) Contentious
 - 2) Not obeying the truth - rebellious (1:21-22)

- 3) Choosing rather to obey unrighteousness and do evil
- 4) These reap indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish (hell-fire; 1:23,24)
5. _____ (9-11)
 - a. Jew or Gentile, both are dealt with the same
 - b. There is no respect of persons with God - NOBODY can buy-off God, bribe Him, sway Him, or cheat Him! He is a RIGHTEOUS JUDGE!

Gen 18:25 Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

B. The Basis of the Judgment of God (2:12-16) - _____

1. Judgment is coming. It is sure, it will be according to truth, it has not come yet because God is patient and long-suffering, it is righteous, and it is impartial!
2. God has to have a basis upon which He can judge the entire human race impartially (2:11). That basis is the same basis that all societies judge themselves by - whether it be a national constitution document, or a city ordinance book - the basis is referred to as LAW! God has his Law, and it resides in two forms:
 - a. The Law of God Written In the Conscience (2:15a)
 - b. The Law of God Written In the Bible
3. _____. The person that does not have the written laws of God still sins, and will still perish! Or else, all humanity should be striving for IGNORANCE!
4. Going by what you DO POSSESS is important (2:13,14), no matter which "law" that you have.
 - a. The Gentiles/heathen may not have the written law, but they know inherently ("by nature", 14) what the Law says, and they subject themselves to their own law - all societies do this for self-preservation - it agrees with God's Law
 - b. The Principle - God will judge every person by the standard that he or she has, not by what they do not possess. God expects every person to act upon the information that they have from the heart
 - c. If people would just follow their conscience honestly, it would prove that they would follow God's word, and God would get the Scriptures to them
 - d. The Bible is not a Charm or amulet, but something to OBEY!
5. People will be judged by one of two things:
 - a. By their conscience which plainly tells every person what is right and wrong in general terms - it is not a perfect guide, but sufficient for God to see if you will at least follow it!
 - b. By the written word of God which also plainly tells people what is right and wrong in specific terms
6. Notice that it is the ' _____ ' that is of interest to God, not 'head'
7. The importance of the written Law (Ps 19:1-7)
 - a. God is declared, but not defined
 - b. All people know about God (they all worship something) - but by nature do not know Him personally
 - c. It is the Law that is perfect, and alone is capable of converting the soul - to be saved, every soul MUST have access to the Bible
 - d. That is why people go to the farthest reaches of this planet - to take the good news of Christ to every sinner world wide so to find those souls looking for the thing that will not just answer their questions, but will save their souls!

C. The Focus of the Judgment of God (2:16-29) - The Destruction of a Religious Man's Confidence (which is: _____)!

1. The Religious Man's _____ (2:16-20)
 - a. Is only concerned with the outside (Cf Mt 23:25,26)
 - b. Is unaware that God is more interested in the heart - the secret things (John 3:18-21)
 - c. Is wrapped-up in:
 - 1) His birth - here, he is a Jew

- 2) His “relics” - the “holy” Bible, the Law
 - 3) His knowledge - about God, and about His will
 - 4) His refined tastes in religion - approves and appreciates “excellent” things
 - 5) His vocation - Considers himself a “teacher” - a professional - thinks that he is “really good”
2. The Religious Man’s _____ (2:21-27) - Will face God’s Judgment
- a. *He has No Foundation* - a profession, but no Possession
 - 1) Trying to teach, and yet never learned himself. The Law teaches loud and clear that we are sinners in need of a Saviour from sin - and yet he doesn’t know that (John 3:9-12)
 - 2) Always excusing himself - having a double-standard:
 - a) Stealing, Adultery, Idolatry
 - b. *He has no testimony* - the Gentiles who know nothing about God are at least HONEST about themselves, and are not hypocritical. And it embarrasses God (Heb 11:16). Only proves that ALL people are religious - the question is, “Which is God’s way?”
 - c. His biggest problem is that *he trusts in outward rituals and ceremonies* - his circumcision
- D. The Religious Man’s _____ (2:28,29) - He MUST Escape the Judgment!
1. Not in outward flesh actions and activities (Eph 2:8,9; Phil 3:8,9). The flesh profiteth nothing (John 6:63)
 2. But rather in the circumcision of the heart, in the spirit - allowing Christ to CUT your heart free from sin, and the flesh so that it can serve God freely!
 3. Seek ONLY the praise of God and not man

V. Study Questions

A.