

Message #8**Romans 2:1-16**

The first thing that catches your eye when you come to **verse 1** is that the pronoun changes from “they” (1:25, 28, 32) to “you” (**2:1**).

Now some have suggested based on **verse 17** that Paul is developing an argument against moralist Jews who were looking at pagan Gentiles and making judgments against them. However, the pronoun “everyone” in **verse 1** seems to include any who make judgments regardless of ethnicity. A moralist can exist in the Jewish world and he may also exist in the Gentile world.

The point is there are some people who are quick to point out the sin in other people, but are totally oblivious to their own sin problem and oblivious to the fact that in their own life they have done the same thing. There are some religious people who will applaud when God pours out His wrath on the godless crowd, but doesn’t realize that he too is heading to judgment.

All people need the righteousness that comes from Jesus Christ because all people are sinners. However, some see themselves as not being so bad a sinner like “those other people” and Paul says you too are heading to the wrath of God.

PEOPLE WHO JUDGE OTHERS FOR THEIR SIN HAVE NO EXCUSE FOR NOT SEEING THEIR OWN SIN BECAUSE THEY HAVE DONE THE SAME KINDS OF THINGS IN THEIR OWN LIVES AND THEY TOO NEED TO BELIEVE ON JESUS CHRIST AND BE SAVED.

You may be a very religious person and you are real proud of the fact that you haven’t done what you would describe as real bad things in your life. Paul’s letter to the Romans proves two things: First, when God assesses any person’s life, we have all done bad things. Second, we all need the righteousness of God found in Jesus Christ to be saved because we are all sinners.

No matter how good you think you are or how good other people think you are, **apart from faith in Jesus Christ you are guilty and condemned before God for your own sins.** What Paul will prove is that all have sinned and all have fallen short of the righteousness of God and all deserve the wrath of God.

In this section there are two reasons Paul develops as to why a moralist judge is guilty and condemned before God:

REASON #1 – The moralist is guilty and condemned because the moralist does not judge himself honestly or accurately. **2:1**

Verse 1 begins with the strongest inferential conjunction “therefore” in the Greek language. This connects us to the previous context.

Some suggest it is connected to the entire preceding context, meaning every human has knowledge of God and knowledge of the fact that God is just in abandoning people and no man is without excuse.

Some suggest it is connected to 1:32 meaning in view of the fact that men are aware of the pending judgment of God, and are also aware of their own depravity and sin, they are without excuse for rejecting Jesus Christ. Both things are true.

In this sentence of **2:1** or verse, Paul uses a series of “present tense” verbs and participles to stress a very important point. **The moralist continually and habitually passes judgment on others and continually and habitually overlooks the fact that he has continually and habitually been guilty of doing the same kinds of things.**

In other words, the moralist habitually judges others for the wicked things they think, say and do and yet the things he continually points out in others continually matches his own life and conduct and what he has thought, said or done.

Verse 1 is filled with legal terms used in a courtroom.

1. Paul says the moralist is “without excuse” which is a legal forensic term. What this term means is there is no legal defense that he may give that will stand up in court.
2. The term “judge” refers to a forensic decision or judgment.
3. The term “condemn” is one that refers to legally pronouncing a sentence of condemnation of one who is judged guilty.

Paul’s point is that the moralist who judges others should be able to honestly, legally judge himself guilty of sinning and of needing to believe in Jesus Christ to be saved. If he can see the sin in others, he certainly should be able to see the sin he has committed in his own life.

Well let’s put this to the test in view of some of the things listed in chapter 1.

- 1) If you have ever given yourself over to that which is lustful (1:24), you are guilty.
- 2) If you have ever had any sexual experience outside the marriage bed, you are guilty.
- 3) If you have ever had any same sex immoral experience (1:26-27), you are guilty.
- 4) If you have ever been greedy, you are guilty. 1:29
- 5) If you have ever been envious or jealous of someone else, you are guilty. 1:29
- 6) If you have ever gossiped about someone, you are guilty. 1:29
- 7) If you have ever bragged or boasted about yourself, you are guilty. 1:30
- 8) If you have ever disobeyed your parents, you are guilty. 1:30
- 9) If you ever took something that did not belong to you, you are guilty. 1:29
- 10) If you ever did something that did not honor God and His word, you are guilty. 1:30

Isn't it true that we have all sinned? Isn't it true that you can build your own case against yourself? Charles Haddon Spurgeon said, "He who doubts total depravity had better study himself."

There is nothing so damning as dishonesty when it comes to God and our own sin. The moralist can spot it and see it in others, but not admit it in himself and apart from seeing himself honestly, he is heading to the same condemnation as the heathen.

REASON #2 – The moralist is guilty and condemned because God will judge the moralist honestly and accurately. **2:2-16**

We learn a great deal about the judgment and assessment of God in these verses. It will be thorough. It will be legal. It will be personal. It will be individual. It will be impartial. It will be factual. It will be final. Every individual needs to know this about the coming judgment of God.

Fact #1 - God's condemnatory judgment against sinners is right. **2:2**

Paul says, "we know" that God's judgment is a right and true judgment. God does not judge based on appearances. He sees the heart and He sees the hypocrisy in the heart and life. When God judges, it is a right judgment and it is aimed at those who habitually practice sinful things.

Fact #2 - God's condemnatory judgment against sinners is inescapable. **2:3**

Paul says don't think for one second that you will escape your own indictment. You know you have done some of the things in the previous list and you know that some of them are regular things you practice in your own life. So let's not kid ourselves about this point. No one will escape the judgment of God because of their own calculation of themselves. They will be judged based on God's calculation.

Fact #3 - God's condemnatory judgment against sinners comes after giving time for repentance. **2:4**

Here is where a moralist makes a fatal miscalculation. He thinks because life is basically good and that nothing real bad is happening, he is getting away with his sin. What the moralist does not realize is that the only reason God has not judged yet is because of the riches of His grace. The only reason God is kind and tolerant and patient is because He is giving people time to repent.

He is giving people time to change their minds and thinking about their own sinfulness and need of Jesus Christ.

Fact #4 - God's condemnatory judgment against sinners is given to sinners who have stubborn and unrepentant hearts. **2:5**

Paul says what you don't realize is that you are storing up wrath against yourself. The moralist has convinced himself that he is right with God because nothing bad is happening. God says you need to know that you are the target of the righteous judgment of God and you are storing up wrath against yourself because you refuse to come to terms with your own stubborn and unrepentant heart that doesn't even admit the fact that you need to be saved from your own horrible sins.

People who refuse to admit their own sins and turn to Jesus Christ are stubborn, unrepentant fools who are heading to experience the wrath of God which they are storing up every day. Our sin account is like a savings bank account. Every little sin puts more in the account. Every little lust or gossip or greed or outburst of anger or selfish act goes into that account and it is getting larger and larger.

The problem for the moralist is that he does not see it about himself.

Fact #5 - God's condemnatory judgment against sinners will be based on each person's work. **2:6-10**

Verse 6 starts with the thesis that God will "render" to every person according to their works. The word "render" is one that means to give back or make a return. God will return a judgment savings account as to what is due based on works.

Now we need to keep in mind the words of Isaiah who said, "...our righteous deeds are like filthy rags or a filthy garment" (Is. 64:6).

There is a breakdown of two types of people who will stand before God:

(Type #1) - The person who sought for glory, honor and eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ. **2:7, 10, 16**

To the one who humbles himself and believes on Jesus Christ, there will be glory, honor and peace (**v. 10**).

(Type #2) - The person who selfishly refused to believe on Jesus Christ but relied on their own ambitions and works. **2:8-9**

To the one who relies upon their own ambitious works there will be wrath, indignation, tribulation and distress on every "soul." What is at stake in the matter of salvation is the matter of your own soul.

The truth is all are sinners and all are guilty. But the one who humbles himself to the grace gospel found in Jesus Christ will have glory and honor. The one who relies on his own works will have disgrace, shame and wrath.

Fact #6 - God's condemnatory judgment will not be based on any partiality. **2:11**

There will be no partiality or favoritism shown before God. It won't matter who the person was, what they did, what they accomplished. It won't matter how much fame they had or how much money they made. God will judge every person in view of His righteous standards and all will be shown to be guilty and condemned.

No one is going to get before God and manipulate His judgment. One may be able to manipulate or sway people, but it won't work with God. It doesn't matter what the ethnicity or gender.

Fact #7 - God's condemnatory judgment against sinners will condemn all. **2:12**

It will condemn those who sinned without the law and it will condemn those who had the law. The fact is all have sinned and all know they have sinned. Doesn't matter if one is a Jew or Gentile. Religious or non-religious. Moral or immoral. All are sinners and all are guilty.

Fact #8 - God's condemnatory judgment against sinners will be based on secret heart and conscience matters as it relates to the Law and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. **2:13-16**

The clear issue at stake here is how to be justified before God (**v. 13**). How is it that one can get before God and have God declare that person righteous when we all know we have sinned and aren't righteous?

Furthermore, we know that no sinful, finite human being has ever kept the Law of God. No one will ever be made right in the sight of God by trying to keep the O.T. law (Gal. 2:16, 21).

So what does Paul mean in **verse 13** when he says that the doers of the law will be just before God? Since Paul says no one may be justified by the Law and since Paul says the Law was nailed to the cross of Jesus Christ (Col. 2:14), what exactly did he mean?

To be a hearer of the law in this context means to hear the law that condemns us all. To be a doer of the law means to realize this point and to accept the Gospel and believe in Jesus Christ (**v. 16**).

To be just before God, one must be declared righteous by God via judicial decree and He will only declare one righteous who believes in Jesus Christ.

The law is the judge. To be righteous before God via law, one would have had to keep every single commandment ever given and not have broken even one commandment.

There has only been one Person who ever did that and He died and shed His blood so we could believe on Him and be saved.

Well what about people who don't have the law of God? How could they be guilty? Paul says they have a principle God has programmed into them. They have an instinct and a conscience that either judges and accuses the guilt of others or excuse and defends the guilt of others.

If one studies the written law of God, he is without excuse for not seeing his own guilt. If one does not study the written law of God, he is without excuse for not seeing his own guilt.

According to **verse 16**, there is a day of judgment coming based on the gospel of Jesus Christ. All judgment will go through Him.

Verse 16 makes it clear that judgment will be based on secret things. Those secret sins that people thought no one saw or knew.

Take an honest look at yourself and see yourself for what you truly are. We are all sinners and we all need a Savior and that Savior is Jesus Christ. Believe on Him and be saved or proudly rely on yourself and you are already condemned.