

**Not Ashamed
(Week 6)
Romans 2:1-16
“Surely I’ll Be Ok”**

Introduction

“Therefore, everyone of you who judges is without excuse. For when you judge another, you condemn yourself, since you, the judge, do the same things.”

Romans 2:1

If you have ever thought about becoming a judge and sitting on the bench here in the United States, here’s a bit of helpful insight: You cannot be a judge in this country if you have ever been convicted of a felony. Pretty good rule don’t you think? I mean, where would we be as a society, if we allowed convicted criminals to make rulings upon our system of laws? The results would be chaotic. To judge, one must not only be fair and impartial, but he must be one, who is able to live within the parameters of the law. Otherwise, the system would fall apart.

If this is true for our country, which is subject to the laws of a government established by imperfect men, then how much the more will it be for the kingdom of heaven? For the sentences that are to be handed out there are for eternity and are a matter of life and death, heaven or hell. How much more important is it, that the One Who judges matters of such significance be supremely qualified to do so? So you see, there is only One Who is qualified to judge the deeds of mankind, and that is God. For in truth, the rest of us are simply convicted felons. Or as Paul will soon make clear in the next chapter:

“For ALL have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

Romans 3:23

In the second chapter of *Romans*, just after Paul presents his case for the depravity of mankind, he goes on to warn those who may have deluded themselves into thinking that the wrath of God doesn’t apply to them. When judged by God’s perfect and holy standards, no one is deserving of salvation. All of us are sinners. To the one who thinks that it is by his own power that he keeps himself from falling, he is sadly mistaken. There are many in this world who compare themselves to others in order to lift themselves up, but unfortunately, “others” are not the standard. Christ is. And compared to Him, we all fall short of “the glory of God”. So, for us to presume to judge others is absurdity and will only bring wrath down upon ourselves. Let’s face it, if we were all completely honest about it, we all deserve the wrath of God. Were it not for the grace found in the cross of Jesus Christ, we would be hopeless.

There are many who do not truly understand what “judging” really is. Judging is NOT the ability to recognize the wrong from the right. For according to The Word of God, we all have been given this ability. So, it is not judging to call out sin for what it is. This is simply recognition of truth. We have all heard someone, who has been caught up in a particular sin, reply by saying, “Stop judging me!” But they are mistaken. It is not judging to call out a sin. It IS judging to condemn a sinner. We are called to warn sinners of their trespass. Only God can decide when it is time to write them off. The Great Commission of the Church is to plead with them to repent of their sin, before it is too late. Jesus’ mission was to save sinners, but in order to save them, they must turn from their sins and follow Him.

“For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him. Anyone who believes in Him is not condemned, but anyone who does not believe is already condemned, because he has not believed in the Name of the One and only Son of God.”

John 3:17-18

So you see, there is a day of judgment coming for all of us. And, there is only one Judge, Who is worthy to sit upon the Throne of Judgment.

1. He alone will judge all men,
2. He will judge all men according to their deeds, and
3. He will judge all men fairly and impartially.

God will judge all men.

“We know that God’s judgment of those who do such things is based on the truth. Do you really think — anyone of you who judges those who do such things yet do the same — that you will escape God’s judgment? Or do you despise the riches of His kindness, restraint, and patience, not recognizing that God’s kindness is intended to lead you to repentance? Because of your hardened unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath, when God’s righteous judgment is revealed.”

Romans 2:2-5

Because we are all guilty of sin, only God is qualified to judge mankind. Fortunately, the sinless Son of God came to live perfectly in our stead, or all men would be past hope. Because of His holy nature, there is a day coming, a final judgment day, when The LORD will judge all mankind. Except for those found to be in Christ, none will be able to stand in this day of reckoning, when God brings into the light all the wickedness of men.

The only hope for any of us is repentance and putting our faith in The LORD Jesus. Paul is speaking here to those who feel that they are morally upright in and of their own strength. For in the previous chapter, he has listed all the things that depraved man is known for:

“They are filled with all unrighteousness, evil, greed, and wickedness. They are full of envy, murder, quarrels, deceit, and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, arrogant, proud, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, senseless, untrustworthy, unloving, and unmerciful.”

Romans 1:29-31.

When we examine this list, we are so quick to see these flaws in others, but we fail to recognize those same sins in our own lives. When we do this, we are the worst of hypocrites, for if we judge ourselves as harshly as we judge others, we would recognize that we deserve the same punishment as everyone else. Sadly, we tend to over-emphasize the sins of those around us, all the while excusing our own shortcomings. We think that God overlooks our faults, because, after all, we aren’t “really” all that bad. We think that our sins don’t define us, because we are “a good person at heart”. Just this week, I saw a professional football player lose his temper and swing a helmet at another players head. Of course, he will be suspended from playing, that goes without saying, but it was after the game that he made an interesting statement. Although he acknowledged that he was wrong in trying to crush another man’s skull with a football helmet, he went on to say, “But that conduct that everyone saw, that’s not me. I want everyone to know that.” ...Well... of course it was him. We all saw that on camera. It was unmistakably, undeniably... HIM. He may not normally act in such a way, but the evil was there all along, inside of him, or it would have never manifested itself as it did.

Folks, it is time that all of us stopped to take a good look at ourselves in the mirror. We are sinners, no excuses. We need to be forgiven and changed. We need a Savior to come to our rescue. Otherwise, we will get exactly what we deserve. The wrath of a just and holy God. What do you think would happen if all of us in the Church were to remember the fact that we are sinners saved by God’s grace, and then just went out there to rescue more sinners? What if our focus was on reaching, rather than condemning? I think, if we were to do this, we might find ourselves in the very center of God’s will wouldn’t you agree?

Paul reminds us that God’s judgment will come right on time, and not a moment too soon. We may think that others get away with sin, but they do not, and neither do we. When those who consider themselves morally upright sin, and do not repent, they think they have gotten away with something, but God is simply being patient. He doesn’t enjoy punishing the unrepentant, but rather, He gives them space to repent. When we keep on sinning as a result, Paul says that we are “despising the riches of God’s kindness, patience, and restraint”. The word that he uses for “despise” actually means; *to look down on something as if it had no value*. A perfect example would be if I dropped a penny and decided that it was not worth the effort to bend down and pick it up. It has value, but I have determined that its

value is not worth the effort. I have taken for granted that I have enough money to get by without the penny. This is exactly what we do when we keep sinning and making excuses for our sin, believing that we do not need to repent and seek forgiveness. We are despising God's patience and taking the riches of His grace for granted. We must never forget that Judgement is coming, and The Judge is standing at the door (**James 5:9**).

God will judge all men according to their deeds.

"He will repay each one according to his works: eternal life to those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor, and immortality; but wrath and anger to those who are self-seeking and disobey the truth while obeying unrighteousness."
Romans 2:6-8

Some have unfortunately mistaken this passage to say that we are saved based on our deeds. NOTHING could be further from the truth, however. Paul is not speaking of salvation here, but of judgment. The best way to understand this is to always remember that we will be JUDGED based upon our deeds, but we can only be SAVED by the grace of God! All the deeds of mankind will be judged. Everything that we have done, both out in the open, as well as, sin secret will be judged in the light of Christ's perfection. Make no mistake... no life will be able withstand that kind of magnification. We shall all be exposed for what we are, sinners in need of God's amazing grace.

When Paul refers to those who "by persistence in doing good, seek glory, honor, and immortality...", he is speaking of the redeemed. For it is only those who possess the Holy Spirit of God that will live in such a way as to strive to bring Him glory and honor. Living to please God does not come naturally. It only comes supernaturally, to those who are in Christ Jesus. It is the redeemed who shall inherit eternal life, because they have believed, and their lives have borne out that belief and proved it genuine.

On the other hand, those who have rejected the grace of God will live self-centered lives that are meaningless in regard to eternity. The simple truth is that lost people act like lost people. They need to be shown the truth of the gospel, while there is still time. God will judge all mankind. He will judge them according to their deeds, and only those who are found in Christ have the hope of eternal life. It is the fool, who has convinced himself that his good deeds outweigh the bad and thinks he will be able to stand on his own merits upon the day of his judgment.

"All of us have become like something unclean, and all our righteous acts are like a polluted garment; all of us wither like a leaf, and our iniquities carry us away like the wind."
Isaiah 64:6

God will judge all men fairly and without partiality

"There will be affliction and distress for every human being who does evil, first to the Jew, and also to the Greek; but glory, honor, and peace for everyone who does what is good, first to the Jew, and also to the Greek. For there is no favoritism with God. All who sin without the Law will also perish without the Law, and all who sin under the Law will be judged by the law. For the hearers of the Law are not righteous before God. But the doers of the law will be justified. So when the Gentiles, who do not by nature have the Law, do what the Law demands, they are a law unto themselves even though they do not have the Law. They show that the work of the Law is written on their hearts. Their consciences confirm this. Their competing thoughts either accuse or even excuse them on the day when God judges what people have kept secret, according to my gospel through Christ Jesus."
Romans 2:9-16

Have you ever noticed the statue of “Lady Justice” at your local courthouse. She always wears a blindfold, and in her hand, she holds a pair of scales. The scales represent the striving for “fairness” under the law in which every defendant is judged equally by the law’s standard no matter who they are. While the governments of men fall short of this standard of equality, God does not. The scales of heaven are perfectly balanced, and the Judge of all the earth will apply His standards fairly.

The Jews who have the Law will be judged by the way they have lived by it. No matter how hard they may try, everyone has fallen short. The Gentiles who did not have the Law of Moses will be equally without excuse upon the final day of judgment, for God has implanted the very nature of the law within them. It is called a conscience, and everyone is born with one. We instinctively know right from wrong, and yet, we still go against the natural law within us. Therefore, no one who stands condemned by God upon their day of judgment will be able to say that they were unfairly judged. Deep down, all men know of their guilt.

Another important feature found in our “Lady Justice” statue is that she wears a blindfold. Meaning that she cannot see who she is judging. This is a reference to impartiality under the law. While we fall far short of this standard, our heavenly Judge does not. Paul tells us that He will judge with no favoritism (partiality). The Greek word that Paul uses here literally means “*not seeing a face*”. It is a word that simply means that true justice is blind for it recognizes no familiar face when it judges. In short, God applies His standards of judgment equally and does not play favorites.

In Paul’s day, many who were Jews thought that they were superior to their Gentile counterparts, and while those “evil Gentiles” were an offense to God, they believed themselves to indeed be His favorites. In fact, many Jewish teachers actually believed that Abraham himself sat outside the gates of hell to prevent any Jew, no matter how wicked he was, from entering. This is the perfect example of self-righteousness. God, however, does not play favorites. All will be judged equally by their deeds in life, whether Jew or Gentile.

Many in our society today believe that because they go to church, or sing praise songs, or have tried to live a good life, that God loves them more than those “pagans” all around them. It would be wise for us all to remember, God doesn’t love any of us more than the people around us. We are NOT His favorites. The only hope that we have of salvation is to place our faith in His Son and put on His righteousness. God will not “cut you a break”, because of your family tree. He won’t let you off the hook just because your grandmother was a pillar of the community, and several of your church pews have been dedicated in her honor.

I remember when I was a kid, it seemed that everything in my church had a tiny gold memorial plaque stuck to it, with words such as , “This pew is dedicated as a memorial of sister ‘so and so’”. What that means is someone gave money in that person’s name to purchase the pew, or whatever object it was that the plaque was affixed thereto. In short, many people think that they can “grease the skids” as it were into the gates of heaven. The gospel truth of it is, only by Christ can we enter in! There is no sacrifice that we can give that is acceptable. Jesus IS the sacrifice.

Everywhere that He went, Christ would ask the question, “Who do you say that I Am?” It is a question that all of us must answer personally, if we are to receive salvation. The word “*salvation*” in the *New Testament* simply means “*deliverance from judgment*”. For you see, God’s judgment is coming soon. It has only been delayed this long, so that sinners will not despise the riches of his kindness, restraint, and patience, and come to repentance. But be sure, one day all men will be judged by their deeds, and the only hope for any of us is to repent of our sins and turn to Christ and be saved (delivered) from this coming judgment. This judgment will be by God alone, it will be based upon our deeds, and it will be without favoritism. So the only questions that remain are these: Will you place your faith in your own good deeds and be judged according to them, or will you be delivered (saved) by placing your faith in Christ alone? Would you rather be judged by your own deeds, or by His? The choice is yours. I pray that your decision will truly be wise. Choose life, choose Jesus.

And let all of those eternally clothed in the righteousness of Christ say... TRUTH!!!