

Romans 2:1-11

Romans 2:1 - *Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.*

Chapter 1 concludes with a list of behaviors that are explicitly condemned, yet the list is so general that everyone can find themselves in it, and those who do such things, it says, are worthy of *death*. 1:32 actually says that sinful humanity *knows* that they which commit such things are worthy of death, and not only do the same but have pleasure in them that do them.

Therefore, chapter 2 verse 1 concludes, thou (singular) art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest. This verse speaks to the individual, and places not only the condemnation of God upon them, but their own condemnation. Because, as 1:32 states, they know that those who do such things are worthy of death, and yet they themselves do them too.

If you point a finger at someone, you have three pointing back at you. And if we condemn ourselves, how much more are we condemned by God?

In this chapter we see the principle of judgment. In chapter 1 we saw the principle of righteousness, demonstrating God's righteousness in His wrath against sin, and we saw man's unrighteousness; we also spoke briefly of the righteousness of God displayed in the gospel, which will be discussed in later chapters.

In chapter two, we first see that man's judgment is hypocritical; we condemn others for things we ourselves do, thereby condemning ourselves.

Romans 2:2-3 - *But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.*

And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?

God's judgment however is according to truth against *all* sin. And if we, in our imperfect judgment, condemn ourselves, how much more by the judgment of God?

God says in Exodus 34:7,

...Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.

Moses quotes this back to the Lord when the Lord is tempted to destroy the entire nation and start over with Moses alone:

The Lord is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.

(Numbers 14:18)

We see in these passages that God will by no means clear the guilty—which begs the question how then can God forgive iniquity? This will be answered in the book of Romans.

He will by no means clear the guilty because His judgment is perfect. There must be payment, there must be retribution for the wrongs committed.

How shall we escape, the author of Hebrews writes to the Hebrew remnant, if we neglect so great salvation? (Heb. 2:3)

When they shall say, “peace and safety,” Paul writes, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. (1 Thess. 5:3)

Romans 2:4 - *Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?*

The *riches* of His goodness; in the ages to come He's going to show the *exceeding riches* of His grace in His kindness toward us *through* Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:7).

God, in His very nature, is infinitely rich in His many attributes, and has predestinated us unto the adoption of sons according to His good pleasure, *to the praise of the glory of His grace*. His demonstration of grace toward us brings Him glory, and is worthy of praise.

Ephesians 1:4-6

...According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

This is what God is *freely* offering man, and yet man largely despises God. They despise the riches of His goodness. God had every right to completely destroy man at any point since the fall of Adam, and yet He didn't. God had a plan to reveal Who He was and the riches of His goodness from before the foundation of the world, and all of that goodness is *in* and *through* Jesus Christ.

Jesus says in Matthew 5:44-45,

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

God exhorts His children to be as He is, abundantly gracious, selfless, contrary to the flesh and to the world.

Proverbs 25:21-22

If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee.

Paul quotes this in Romans 12:20.

Paul says in Acts 17 to the Athenians at Mars Hill,

Acts 17:23-27

For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us

God's Will has always been that men seek after Him, and He has given this common grace to man in His creation that they might seek after Him and find Him.

Romans 2:5 - *But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God...*

Every day that unregenerate man lives, he treasures up—*stores up*—for himself increasing wrath from God, proportional to the number and nature of his sins.

That there are degrees of sin is evidenced by scripture:

Matthew 10:14-15

And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.

Matthew 12:42

The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

These had been exposed to a greater degree of truth than those of the past, and so, to reject that truth means a greater degree of sin.

John 19:11

Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

Pilate sat in a position of governmental authority, which God Himself ordained, and he himself gave witness that he could find no fault in Him, and was a just man. Therefore Jesus' own people, to whom were committed the oracles of God which prophesied of Jesus, who demanded Jesus' death, had the greater sin.

There is a day appointed for all men wherein the wrath of God will be finally, judiciously revealed against all sinners before His eternal throne; that final judgment is described for us in Revelation 20.

There is another day wherein the wrath of God will be revealed from heaven against those who dwell on the earth, when Jesus Himself returns:

2 Thessalonians 1:6-10

*Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;
And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,
In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:
Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;
When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.*

Christ however has delivered *us* from the wrath to come, both that which is to take place on the earth, and the eternal wrath of hell itself (1 Thess. 1:10).

Romans 2:6-10 - *Who will render to every man according to his deeds:*

To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:

But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,

Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;

But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile...

Romans 2:6 is a quote from Proverbs 24:12:

Proverbs 24:11-12

If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?

As we have seen and will continue to see, the Holy Ghost is pulling truths contained in the Old Testament and using them to demonstrate the legal case against humanity, as well as the subsequent case for justification by faith alone in later chapters.

God, being a perfectly righteous judge, must render to every man for every action, whether good or bad; the problem is, that God's standard is *perfection*, thus all men, if judged by their works, would fall short.

The testimony of scripture is that unsaved man will be judged *according to their works*:

John 5:28-29

Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

2 Cor. 11:13-15

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

Rev. 20:12-13

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

If, by patient continuance in well doing, that is, through the course of their entire life with perfection, the reward would be eternal life.

Though true, this is a hypothetical statement, as man, as we will see, has been entirely concluded under sin, and that there is none good, no not one. We are all by nature, through Adam, sinners. And so this statement is not in reality possible, but is hypothetical to illustrate the point of God's righteous judgment.

And so, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, to every soul that does evil, but glory, honor and peace to every man that works good, to the Jew first, and also to the gentile. The Jew, being instructed out of the Law and having the form of knowledge contained therein, were at an advantage, and since, through their covenants of promise, were given privilege over the gentile, God was disposed to give them priority, either in blessing or cursing.

To the Jew, who knew they had priority, they were quick to assume the blessings, but Paul here is making the point that not only are they first in line for the blessings, but also for the curses.

Romans 2:11

For there is no respect of persons with God.

There is nonpartiality or respect of persons with God. This is one of the things God was trying to teach Israel under the Law. When Moses was appointed elders to help him judge, he told them not to have respect of persons in judgment:

Deuteronomy 1:16-17

And I charged your judges at that time, saying, Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him.

Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God's: and the cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto me, and I will hear it.

In Deuteronomy 16:18-19, Moses says,

Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment.

Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.

James speaks concerning this in James chapter 2,

James 2:1,9

My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons...

...But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

This same exhortation is found also in 2 Chronicles 19:7, Proverbs 24:23, Proverbs 28:21, Ephesians 6:9, Colossians 3:25, and 1 Peter 1:17.