

Romans 2:1-16

RO 2:1 You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things. ² Now we know that God's judgment against those who do such things is based on truth. ³ So when you, a mere man, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God's judgment? ⁴ Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you toward repentance?

RO 2:5 But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. ⁶ God "will give to each person according to what he has done." ⁷ To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. ⁸ But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. ⁹ There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; ¹⁰ but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. ¹¹ For God does not show favoritism.

RO 2:12 All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law. ¹³ For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous. ¹⁴ (Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, ¹⁵ since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.) ¹⁶ This will take place on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares.

Last week we talked about sin and how everyone does it. It is a shame that there is a chapter break where it is. Because really Paul's conclusion for last week is in the first part of this chapter.

RO 2:1 You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things. ² Now we know that God's judgment against those who do such things is based on truth. ³ So when you, a mere man, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God's judgment? ⁴ Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you toward repentance?

There we have it!!! No excuse. **We have no grounds to accuse others because we do the same thing.** We sin. Some comments on last week such as surely God hates murder more than lying, or God hates pedophiles more than tax cheats have been amusing. It says here – we do the same thing – we sin. We assume from that statement that Paul places no distinction on the size of the sin, only on the fact that it happened.

RO 2:5 But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. ⁶ God "will give to each person according to what he has done." ⁷ To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. ⁸ But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. ⁹ There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; ¹⁰ but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. ¹¹ For God does not show favoritism.

Notice He goes on to say ***RO 2:5 But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath.*** Here he is talking to Roman Christians, he is talking to Armidale Christians, He is accusing us of being stubborn and not being sorry for our sin. Paul is not talking to Pagans, paedophiles, witches, warlocks, or other basically evil people but to Christians.

Actually he is talking to us!

Paul emphasises that God will deal with it. ***God "will give to each person according to what he has done"*** The verb here to give can be translated to render or to recompense. Kind of like a fair days pay for a fair days work. You get what your worth. Cf Psalm 62:12.

PS 62:12 and that you, O Lord, are loving. Surely you will reward each person according to what he has done.

Hang on, are we judged by what we do or by our relationship with Jesus?

Well placing this verse in **Paul's thinking has created some debate.**

It could be

- i. This is what applies without taking the gospel into account. (as Paul has been saying – all sin – all fail)
- ii. The doing good which Paul has in mind is precisely trusting God and is faith.
- iii. It is not the faith itself, but the fruit of faith, well doing which demonstrates faith.

Now having said all that. I think if we take the context of the passage. It is talking about sin and its consequences. It is talking about the universality of sin. That means that what each person deserves is God's wrath, God's punishment. We are held accountable.

This next bit goes further

To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life.

Those who persistently do good will be granted eternal life. Let's not take this out of its context either. The context tells us that we are accountable for our sin, that only by faith in God can eternal life be achieved.

Thus the good it is talking about is a result of faith in Christ.

Interestingly, the word here translated as immortality, which is a valid translation, can also be translated incorruptibility. The word is *afqarsian* += *aphtharsian* which can mean immortal, or incorruptible or imperishable. We see here a statement from the then current doctrine of justification by good works that was apparently current in Jewish theology at the time of Paul's writing.

Verse 8 states the reverse situation but the basis of the good works or legalist theology.

.⁸ But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger

Remember that Paul has just spoken about the universality of sin. All sin, = evil. Then he comes up with this.

⁹ There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; ¹⁰ but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

We are all included in the evil bit, then we all can be included in the good works bit. Jew and Gentile. Is Paul confusing us? No, he is setting a scene. A scene for us to realise that sin is sin, we all have it, we all have access to what is needed for it to be dealt with. It will become clear when we get to ***Romans 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.***

It is about setting a scene so that we can not ignore our need for Jesus. – All of us.

But at this stage – that is a glimpse of what is to come.

Back to this passage. This universality is made clear in the next statement.

.¹¹ For God does not show favoritism.

No favoritism. Doesn't God love Christians more than non Christians??? No, he died for all, He responds to our response in love, he responds to others rejection with sadness but

integrity. He allows people to say no. As I said last week **He respects our decisions.** There is no favoritism, just God reacting appropriately.

Here it is like he has gone right back to verse 1. We have no excuse, we sin too and God shows no favourites. We get no special treatment. Neither do the Jews, the gentiles. the greeks, the non greeks, the wise or the foolish. **All are accountable before God.**

Paul goes on to expound this bit.

RO 2:12 All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law. ¹³ For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous. ¹⁴ (Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, ¹⁵ since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.) ¹⁶ This will take place on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares.

All will be judged. Judged by the understanding of God they are given.

AND none of use can reach those standards.

If we know about Jesus, we will be judged according to what we did with that knowledge. If we didn't know then God will work it out.

Lets be realistic here, without God's absolute graciousness to offer us a way out, there is no hope. No one is exempt, no one will miss **out God will deal with each person with integrity.** And none of make the grade.

But lets think of our personal perspective. We know. We are accountable for the knowledge we have. Let's not get stressed out about how God will treat those who don't, leave that to Him, but for goodness sake, make sure you deal with the information you have with integrity.

Notice it says ***¹⁶ This will take place on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares.***

We will be judged through Jesus. It will be our relationship to Jesus that affects our judgement. What we have done with the knowledge of Jesus sacrificial death on the cross, affects how God will look at us. What is God's image of us. One of hopeless sinner or forgiven sinner because of Jesus? What is the photo in His mind?

Notice too it says "as my gospel declares. Paul is saying, I am saying this to you. This is the message, the good news stuff that you need to be aware of. Sin is, but through Jesus, God will judge us. There is hope, while all sin, all can be forgiven.