

## Romans – session # 7

Today we pick up our study with chapter 2. Chapter 2 continues with Paul expounding about the topic of sin.

Vs. 1-16 are often referred to as “the condemnation of the Jews” (Read ch.2: 1-16).

Vs. 1 – Paul states something that should humble us all. Paul says when we stand in judgement of others, we are often guilty of the same sins as those we are passing judgement on. This reflects the truth that it is far easier to see the sins of others, then to see our own sins. There is a bit of pharisee in each one of us. How easy it is for me to see the sin in all of you, while being blind to the sin within me! Here Paul is not speaking in particular about the Jews, he says all people of all races condemn others, while being oblivious to how our sins somehow escape us. It is not until vs. 17 that Paul mentions the Jews by name, but vs. 1-16 infer that this is about the chosen people of God that Paul is addressing. We are all under the bondage of sin: Jew, Gentile, slave, free, male, female. “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”.

Vs. 2 – Paul affirms that God’s judgement falls upon us all, and rightfully so.

Vs. 3 – Paul asks: “Do you think that when you judge others, and yet you do them yourself, you will escape God’s judgement?”. Paul can say this because Paul knows that one of God’s attributes is that He is **JUST**. God plays no favorites. God’s judgement is not an arbitrary decision. He is just within His own being. There is not decision making involved. God, unlike we humans, does not have inconsistencies with His own being. Therefore nobody escapes his justice, his judgement.

Vs. 4 – Paul says “don’t deceive yourselves, because God is kind and tolerant and patient with us all. Those traits of God’s love, are meant to lead us to repentance. Yes, God is a merciful God. He doesn’t punish us for the sake of punishment. He rather, seeks to draw us into a relationship with Him based on love. Sometimes love requires punishment. His love desires we repent, which means we turn away from something, towards something. We turn away from our fallen behavior, to a new way of living.

Vs. 5-16 – Deal with Judgement

Vs. 5 – This issue is our hardened and impenitent hearts. They will lead us to experience God’s wrath. The words translated “Storing up”, are used in connection with the idea of treasure. Paul is saying, your storing up for yourselves, and your treasure will be God’s wrath! The “Day of Wrath” will be on judgement Day, when God’s righteous judgement will be revealed.

Vs. 6 – For he will render... to every man according to his works. We need to be clear here – Paul is not saying we are saved by our own works, though these words sound that way. What Paul is inferring is that you can tell a person’s inner being, reflected in how he or she lives their life. By their fruits. The issue of salvation for Paul is all about God’s grace in sending His son Jesus to die on the cross and rise again. Salvation is a free unearned gift to all who believe, all who place their trust in Him. But it is true that our works, how we live our lives, are an expression and reflection of our beliefs.

Vs. 7-8 – Paul divides people into two groups or classes.

Vs. 7 – Paul says Group 1 – are those seeking for glory, for honor and immortality. Group 2 – are those who are factious, do not obey the truth, but obey wickedness. For them there will be God’s wrath and fury.

We manifest who we follow and what we believe, by the way we live our lives. Paul is saying our inner attitude counts and reflects what we believe and who we follow.

Vs. 8 – Paul speaks about those who factious and who reject the Truth. They chose to be faithful to wickedness, not to Christ. Their fate will be God’s wrath and fury.

Vs. 9 – There will be tribulation and distress for those who do evil, the Jew first and the Greek second.

Vs. 10 – But, glory, and honor and peace will be the experience for everyone who does good, the Jew first and the Greek. When we are right with God, we receive untold blessings.

Vs. 11 – God’s judgement is impartial. “God shows no partiality”. He plays no favorites. He is consistent. Never changing, by virtue of His attribute of being JUST. Justice will be done.

Vs. 12-13 – It doesn’t matter whether you are under the law – as a Jew; or not under the law, as a Gentile. All are condemned. All have sinned. It is not the hearers of the law, but the doers of the law, who will be justified and righteous. All will be judged according to the response to the revelation of God, that God has given to them. Gentiles will not be judged by the law, but by their response to the Light they have been given. Paul in chapter 1 makes it clear, they have not lived in accordance with that Light that was revealed to them. So they are condemned. The Jews have the Law, but they have not kept the Law given to them, so they also will be condemned.

Vs 13 – The doers of the Law, in other words, those whose lives are lived in accordance with God’s revelation to them, will be justified as righteous. Paul is saying, where the Law is concerned, deeds matter.

Vs. 14-15 – Gentiles, who do not have the Law, do by nature what the Law requires, show that God sees the attitude “written on their hearts”. They are a Law unto themselves. They get it! God knows the hearts of all people. The Gentile never had the Law, but Gentile has revealed to him, God’s Light, God’s revealed ways. And so the Gentiles will be judged by their response to it.

This is all, pre the sending of Jesus, the Christ. With the advent of Jesus, and His death on the cross and resurrection, a new measure of righteousness, of justification, of being right with God has come. Belief and placing one’s trust in Him is now the litmus test for salvation. He is as St. John records: “The Way, the Truth, and the Life” Nobody comes to the Father but through Jesus.

Vs. 16 – Paul speaks of “his” Gospel. God will now judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ! Lets stop here today and pick it up with Vs. 17 next week.