

# SRMBC Family Bible Study

## Romans: A New Lifestyle

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Reverend Thomas A. Keys, Pastor

### Lesson 3: The Judgment of God Romans 2

Prostitutes, drug addicts, thieves—it's easy to see why these people need the gospel. But what about ordinary people: the families in your neighborhood, the employees you see each day at work? They seem so contented, so fulfilled, so . . . nice!

In Romans 1:18-32 Paul described the depravity of those who reject God. Now he imagines someone saying, "You're absolutely right, Paul. We would never do such things and would be very critical of anyone who did." In this passage Paul shows why even "nice" people need the gospel.

#### **Group Discussion: Why is it sometimes hard to believe that ordinary people you know are sinful and under God's judgment?**

- I know some people that I love and who are really nice – but since they have rejected Jesus (and God's righteous standards) it is hard to comprehend.
- This may be hard to swallow that a guy like Gandhi – Civil rights leader and activist, if he rejected Jesus' salvation and Lordship is lost and under God's judgement.
- I often why God doesn't just give certain "good" people a break – cut them (us) some slack, grade on a curve. That's what I would do if I were God.

#### **Read Romans 2**

#### **1. When people are judgmental of others, how do they reveal both an understanding and a misunderstanding of God's judgment (vv. 1 – 4)?**

*1 You may think you can condemn such people, but you are just as bad, and you have no excuse! When you say they are wicked and should be punished, you are condemning yourself, for you who judge others do these very same things. 2 And we know that God, in his justice, will punish anyone who does such things. 3 Since you judge others for doing these things, why do you think you can avoid God's judgment when you do the same things? 4 Don't you see how wonderfully kind, tolerant, and patient God is with you? Does this mean nothing to you? Can't you see that his kindness is intended to turn you from your sin?'*

#### **Understanding of God's judgment**

- There is a right and wrong from God's Perspective
- God is displeased with our disobedience and will judge our sin/wrongdoing
- There is no excuse for wrongdoing

#### **Misunderstanding of God's Judgment**

- All of us have sinned (including you)
- It is foolish for us to judge others when we are doing the same things
- God's judgment will come upon us as well – we will not escape
- God's goodness and grace is the reason Judgment hasn't fallen on us (including you)

## **2. Verses 5 – 16 describe a future day of judgment. What will God consider important and unimportant on that day?**

*5 But because you are stubborn and refuse to turn from your sin, you are storing up terrible punishment for yourself. For a day of anger is coming, when God's righteous judgment will be revealed. 6 He will judge everyone according to what they have done. 7 He will give eternal life to those who keep on doing good, seeking after the glory and honor and immortality that God offers. 8 But he will pour out his anger and wrath on those who live for themselves, who refuse to obey the truth and instead live lives of wickedness. 9 There will be trouble and calamity for everyone who keeps on doing what is evil—for the Jew first and also for the Gentile. 10 But there will be glory and honor and peace from God for all who do good—for the Jew first and also for the Gentile. 11 For God does not show favoritism.*

### **Unimportant**

- Our own good works – in an attempt to be right with God
- What everyone else is doing
- Our excuses for not believing and obeying the Gospel

### **Important**

- Do we measure up to God's law?
- Did we believe in the Gospel of Jesus Christ?
- If we say we believed, did it show in our lifestyle?

*In verses 5-16 Paul states that God will decide our eternal destiny on the basis of our obedience or disobedience. He is not suggesting, however, that anyone will be saved by their obedience. We need to guard against the thinking that you can be saved by accepting Jesus, yet still live a sinful lifestyle.*

## **3. How are God's standards of judgment both similar and different for the two groups described in verses 12 – 16?**

### **Similarities of Jews and Gentiles**

- All will be judged by the same standards – the Law of God.
- Jews will be judged by the same law – when knowing fail to obey.
- Jesus Christ will judge everyone's "secret" sins

### **Differences**

- Jews have God's law written – and are responsible to know and obey God's righteousness
- The Gentiles although they don't have the law per se – God has instinctively placed the knowledge of right and wrong in each of them/us.

#### **4. Many non-Christians have high moral standards. How can we use their own standards to help them see their need of Christ?**

We Can Use Parables – Like Nathan did with David (Cf. II Sam.12:1 – 13) when he had sinned Against the Lord, Uriah and with Bathsheba..

As we look at the “Good – O – Meter” we, should realize that apart from the shed blood and resurrection of Jesus – None of us can be “Good Enough” – O how we should thank the Lord of His grace and Mercy.

#### **5. In verses 17 – 29 Paul focuses his attention on a hypocritical Jew. How does such a person view himself and others (vv. 17 – 20)?**

*17 You who call yourselves Jews are relying on God's law, and you boast about your special relationship with him. 18 You know what he wants; you know what is right because you have been taught his law. 19 You are convinced that you are a guide for the blind and a light for people who are lost in darkness. 20 You think you can instruct the ignorant and teach children the ways of God. For you are certain that God's law gives you complete knowledge and truth.*

#### **Themselves**

- They think we are the “bee’s knees” the only person who really knows God and are saved.
- We know more the Word and are more spiritual than others.
- We think we are the only ones who know the way.
- They do no wrong unlike like other people do (Luke 18:9 – 13).

#### **Others**

- Everybody is ignorant of God and His Word.
- People around them are utterly lost and useless.
- They are better and closer to God than everybody else.

*A rather pompous-looking pastor was endeavoring to impress upon a class of boys the importance of living the Christian life. "Why do people call me a Christian?" the man asked. After a moment's pause, one youngster said, "Maybe it's because they don't know you." Each of us need to spend more time examining ourselves than we spend examining others.*

#### **6. Why would non-Jews blaspheme God's name because of such people (vv. 21 – 24)? How has religious hypocrisy hurt the cause of Christ in our day?**

*21 Well then, if you teach others, why don't you teach yourself? You tell others not to steal, but do you steal? 22 You say it is wrong to commit adultery, but do you commit adultery? You condemn idolatry, but do you use items stolen from pagan temples? 23 You are so proud of knowing the law, but you dishonor God by breaking it. 24 No wonder the Scriptures say, "The Gentiles blaspheme the name of God because of you."*

When they see the people of God acting ungodly – unbelievers will attribute their bad actions to God.

People are looking to God through the people who are called and supposed to represent Him in the earth.

We are, in some ways, the only “Bible” people will see.

David Kinnaman, president of the Barna Research Group, has spent more than five years presenting to Christian leaders about the perceptions of Christians, based upon his bestselling book "*unchristian*". "In the research for that book project, our team discovered that **84% of young non-Christians say they know a Christian personally, yet only 15% say the lifestyles of those believers are noticeably different in a good way.**

"... The question of authentic faith—is a particularly sore topic for many Millennials—who are often leaving church due in large part to the hypocrisy they experience.

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**7. Jews placed great value on circumcision because it was the visible sign that they were God's people. How had some of them confused the sign with what it signified (vv. 25 – 29)?**

*25 The Jewish ceremony of circumcision has value only if you obey God's law. But if you don't obey God's law, you are no better off than an uncircumcised Gentile. 26 And if the Gentiles obey God's law, won't God declare them to be his own people? 27 In fact, uncircumcised Gentiles who keep God's law will condemn you Jews who are circumcised and possess God's law but don't obey it. 28 For you are not a true Jew just because you were born of Jewish parents or because you have gone through the ceremony of circumcision. 29 No, a true Jew is one whose heart is right with God. And true circumcision is not merely obeying the letter of the law; rather, it is a change of heart produced by the Spirit. And a person with a changed heart seeks praise from God, not from people.*

- They thought that the outward sign/work of circumcision made them righteous.
- Being circumcised, meant you can live anyway you want (no change).
- The sign of circumcision was/is to reflect the inward change of the heart.
- God is looking for inward change of heart that will affect your outward behavior.
- It is the Spirit of God that produces the change in us.
- When our hearts are changed – we seek to please God and not get praise for ourselves (How great **I** art!).

**8. How can this chapter help you share the gospel more effectively with seemingly respectable, religious or moral non-Christians you know?**

- First – I need to make sure I am maintaining regular reflection, confession and prayer for my own sin – repenting of any hypocrisy.
- Remembering to be humble before God and others – realizing I need a Savior as much as others.
- Speaking the truth about sin and God's judgment in love – not condescending or in an attitude of superiority.

*Pray that the Lord will reveal any area of hypocrisy in your life. Ask him for the grace to let your life truly reflect the values and beliefs you profess.*

## *Keys for Living*



It is futile to think that by condemning the sins and behaviors of others, we can get away with doing the same things. God will judge us all according to **His righteousness** – not ours.



One reason why many have not experienced the full judgment of God is due to His goodness that seeks to draw sinners to repentance.



Jesus is the only Way to salvation for all people - Jews, Gentile and the people of every nation. This way is **exclusive** (only Jesus) but also **inclusive** (for everyone).