

Romans 2:1 *Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things.*

Paul just spoke of the Gentile or non-religious persons need for righteousness. I can see the religious person thinking yes, they need righteousness but Paul then turns to them and basically says “and you”.

Chapter two discusses the Jew or religious person need for righteousness. It is easy to see someone who is not living for God and their need for righteousness but Paul says the religious person is inexcusable as well. The Gentiles had a witness inside them and the Jews had the same witness plus the word of God given to them which made them double accountable.

The word judge in Greek is *krinō* and means to pronounce an opinion concerning right and wrong. The religious person always passes judgement on other people. They believe they are closer in a sense to God because they are not doing what other people are doing but Paul says here the people you judge, you are doing the same thing.

Outwardly the Jews were observing the law, but inwardly they had violated it because all are born with a sin nature (Rom 5:13). In this chapter, Paul list and describes some of the things that the Jews were judging the Gentiles for that they too were guilty of doing.

Romans 2:2 *But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things.*

God’s judgement is always fair. A person that is practicing something is performing an act repeatedly or habitually.

God is not unjust and He does not forgive our sins unjustly (Heb 6:10). Sin was not overlooked by God but was judged in the person of Jesus. The cross is substitutionary; Jesus the Righteous in place for us, the unrighteous. God would have been unjust to overlook sin but Jesus not only took sin, He became it and took our place. (Rom 4:25).

The suffering Jesus endured was the suffering of the cross. God sent one Son to bring in many sons (Heb 2:10).

Romans 2:3 *And do you think this, O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God?*

The religious person is no better than the non-religious person because it all comes down to a heart issue. There is only one Judge and we are not Him. We will one day stand next to the person we are judging before God, and when we see ourselves compared to Jesus it will eliminate all judgement.

Jesus said to be perfect, as our Father in heaven is perfect (Mat 5:48). The only one that could produce perfection is Jesus. Paul is getting into the heart of the law; all have sinned and you are no better than them.

Romans 2:4 Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?

The religious person is always focused on outward acts and will compare themselves to their neighbor. They do not believe God's goodness is sufficient enough to have people walk away from sin. Many Christians use fear as a tool and there can be some results there but fear has a side effect and its torment. God's way to have His people repent is love. God has drawn us with loving kindness not wrath and rejection (Jer 31:3).

There is typology of this mentioned in the book of Galatians that refers to two women symbolizing two covenants. The enemy has always tried to separate grace (Sarah) and faith (Abraham). In a sense, it is saying bring in the law (Hagar), for grace (Sarah) is not sufficient to the job done. It is only through grace and faith that the promises will be produced.

The gospel uses positive means and brings us closer to God. Religion will always keep a person at a distance and have them feeling condemned and running away from God. When you hear it is finished, God's not angry with you, you don't have to please Him to earn anything, and that you are righteous because of what Jesus did not because of what you were doing this brings good news. Now, through that righteousness, He can legally bless you with everything and this is what releases the power for healing, deliverance, or any of God's other blessings. You'll never get close to anyone you think is angry at you and the whole point of the gospel is to bring us into relationship with God. The good news is God is not mad at you (Is 54:9-10). Religion is a complete attack on God's nature; He's angry, we have to please Him, He won't bless us until you do better and the whole time God is like I love you, I don't even remember that sin that my Son paid for (Heb 10:17).

Romans 2:5 But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,

The word hardness in Greek is sklērotēs and means stubbornness. In context, Paul is speaking of the religious person believing the Gentile needs righteousness but they do as well. It takes a stubborn person who is heaped in pride to think they are better than others and that God accepts them above another.

This verse states that they are bringing this wrath on themselves. There is a wrath that is coming for those who reject Jesus.

Romans 2:6 who "will render to each one according to his deeds":

This is not saying our works determine God's love or treatment towards us; that would violate this book and all of Paul's other epistles. This entire letter Paul speaks about the foundation is all

about what God does for us. Our works don't earn us anything. This verse through verse 16 speak about final judgement from the Lord at the end of world.

The law demands holiness but grace supplies it. When a person believes something there will be action. The book of James appears to be contradicting Paul's letters however; they complement one another. Paul's letters are vertical; God's dealings with us independent our actions. James letters are horizontal; because God has released grace to us now there will be actions produced.

Romans 2:7 *eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality;*

Those who have received Jesus will be judged based off putting faith in Jesus and will receive eternal life and be declared righteous.

This verse says by patient continuance in doing good. The author of Hebrews says that that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises (Heb 6:12). The Christian walk is not a passive lifestyle. Again, this is not stating that a person is righteous based off their works.

Romans 2:8 *but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath,*

Those who do not obey is referring to those who disbelief the truth. Anyone who rejects salvation through Jesus; indignation and wrath await them.

Jesus is the only way to the Father (Jn 14:6).

Romans 2:9 *tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek;*

This applies to the Jew and the Greek. The Jews as a whole thought they were better or a superior group to the Gentiles but all are on the same playing field. Anyone who rejects Jesus rejects God's only means for justification with Him.

Romans 2:10 *but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*

Works are the fruit of salvation not the root.

Romans 2:11 *For there is no partiality with God.*

Works of faith are our response to what God has done. This word partiality means there is not favoritism from God. Works are not bad but if it's to get God to move it is no longer works of faith but works of the law and God will never move according to our holiness because it is not good enough.

Under the law God demands righteousness, but under Grace God supplies it through His Son as a gift.

Romans 2:12 *For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law*

The many mentioned in this verse who have sinned without the law are referring to the Gentiles. The many who sinned with the law is referring to the Jews. Both are guilty before God. The law is written in every man's heart.

Romans 2:13 *for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified;*

The word doer in Greek is poiētēs and means one who obeys or fulfils the law. Anyone who is able to fulfill the entire law will be justified by the law but the problem is no one can fulfill the entire law. It's not you fulfill 90% of the law and God will accept you. No, if you miss one point you break the entire law (Jam 2:10). Why would Jesus need to come if we could be right with God on our own?

This says the doers. The law demands and says do, grace is supply and says done.

Romans 2:14 *for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves,*

Gentiles has an intuitive knowledge but the Jews had both an intuitive knowledge plus they were given God's word. They were actually doubly guilty before God. Their intuitive knowledge was a homing device to know God's standard of holiness. The Israelites were supposed to be God's evangelistic Nation to spread the gospel but they misinterpreted the use of the law and did not attract people to them, rather they distanced people away by being judgmental.

If there are two siblings that violate their parent's instructions, it will be the older one that will be in trouble more than they younger because they are held more accountable. Likewise, the Jews were held more accountable than the Gentiles.

Romans 2:15 *who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them)*

For the Gentiles the law of God was written in their hearts. The conscience can help a person detect right from wrong.

Romans 2:16 *in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.*

The apostle Paul had a boldness and that can be seen in this verse as he states, my gospel. Paul is preaching that there is a time that man will be judged and this verse says the day. We are now in

the acceptable year of the Lord's favor and God is not imputing sin to man's account (2 Cor 5:19).

Romans 2:17 *Indeed you are called a Jew, and rest on the law, and make your boast in God,*

The Greek word for rest is epanapauomai and means to settle upon. The Jews had become convinced that the law was used to be justified by God and were not waiving from it. This verse is not saying that the law is rest. The law is the exact opposite of rest and is work. The law is work and grace is rest.

The Jews made their boast in the law because God specifically gave it to them and they thought that they were superior to any other nation because of that.

Romans 2:18 *and know His will, and approve the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law,*

Instruction comes from the law and requires rules and regulations. The word instruct in Greek is katēcheō and means to teach orally. The law is taught by man, but a true revelation of grace comes from an inward witness of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 2:19 *and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness,*

The apostle Paul said that his commission was to open their eyes from darkness to light, and from the power of satan to the power of God (Act 26:18). Paul is about to transition into asking the Jews since they have the law, how much progress have they made in keeping it.

Romans 2:20 *an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of knowledge and truth in the law.*

Attempting to follow rules and regulations can appear to have knowledge but in the end; it leads to destruction. God does not just demand our actions to be perfect, but our thoughts and attitudes as well. Jesus fulfilled the law perfectly in thought, word, and deed.

Romans 2:21 *You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal?*

The Jews were hypocrites to the Gentiles. They thought they were holier than the Gentiles but Paul begins to go into detail saying that the Jews say to the Gentiles; "you steal and deserve judgment", but the Jews had stolen too. The Jews had committed white collar crimes.

Romans 2:22 *You who say, "Do not commit adultery," do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?*

The point Paul was making is that the Jews were judging the Gentiles for the same thing they were committing. The question for the Jews was, "have you committed adultery?", and their

response was absolutely not. Paul then goes deeper stating well, “have you even lusted in your heart”? Now they were beginning to be revealed the perfection of the law and seeing the laws intent was to expose mans need for a heart change.

The Gentiles worshiped idols but the scriptures say idolatry is covetousness (Col 3:5)

Romans 2:23 *You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law?*

The very Word of God was given to the Jews and should have shown them God’s holiness but instead they had a legalistic interpretation of the law and used it to try to be in right standing with God and in turn judged other people. The law was given to show us our sin and our need for a Savior because we could not save ourself.

The word dishonor in Greek is atimazō and is something done is in word, deed or thought. The Jews saw the actions that the Gentiles were performing but they had violated the law in thought which means they violated it as well.

Romans 2:24 *For "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you," as it is written.*

The word blasphemed is blasphemeo and means to speak evil or defame. The Jews were such hypocrites judging other people that Gentiles saw this and it turned them away from God. We see this in the church now where many Christians proclaim one thing but live an entirely different way. Non-believers are turned off because much of the church today are hypocrites.

Romans 2:25 *For circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep the law; but if you are a breaker of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision.*

The Jews in Paul’s day were preaching the act of circumcision as a means to be justified with God, along with keeping the law. Paul speaks on this deeper in the book of Galatians as the Judaizes were coming in and professing the act of circumcision for justification. Here, Paul is saying your circumcision would give you an advantage if you kept the law but again the issue is that no one can keep the law. If a Jew breaks the law (which they all did) their circumcision meant nothing and were no different than the Gentiles.

In context, Paul is speaking to people who prided themselves as being God’s covenant people and were given the very oracles of God. Paul steps on the scene and starts to tell them they are no different than the Gentiles who weren’t living for God and this was offensive to them.

Romans 2:26 *Therefore, if an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision?*

An uncircumcised man here is referring to a Gentile. Jesus said it was right for Him to fulfill all righteousness (Mt 3:15). No one can keep the requirements of the law but we can fulfill them in Christ when we get born again.

Romans 2:27 And will not the physically uncircumcised, if he fulfills the law, judge you who, even with your written code and circumcision, are a transgressor of the law?

Paul is making a point to the legalistic Jews that they are no different than a Gentile and that circumcision does not matter (Gal 6:15). Anyone who puts faith in Jesus has fulfilled the righteous requirements of the law; Jew or Gentile.

Romans 2:28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh;

Circumcision in the New Covenant is the circumcision of the heart. We were all born with a sin nature and through the working of the Holy Spirit during the new birth we are washed (Titus 3:5) and given a new heart that is identical to God (Ez 36:27). Circumcision in the New Covenant is not of the flesh, it is a spiritual circumcision. The physical act of circumcision is the cutting away of excess skin and discarded. The spiritual act of circumcision is the death and discarding of the old man (Rom 6:6).

Romans 2:29 but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.

The spiritual circumcision that we experienced was an inward one.