

Romans – A Survey

“The Gospel - Revealing The Righteousness of God”

I. Introductory Matters (1:1-17)

II. God’s Righteousness Revealed in Condemnation (Sin) (1:18-3:20)

A. Condemnation against **pagan, immoral humanity (1:18-32)**.

B. **Condemnation against the moralist (2:1-16)**. This man is perhaps religious and outwardly “moral,” but **lacks any true righteousness**. Cf. Is. 64:6. He may have said to Paul: “Yes, Paul you are right, these pagans need to be judged.” The people Paul is addressing in this section are all people who judge others in this manner, both Jews and Gentiles (v. 9, 10). This man knows right from wrong, he possesses moral judgment capabilities. The key word in this section is “judgest,” and “judgment.” It occurs 9 times. Notice the contrast between the first and last verse. **Man judges** in verse one, and **God judges** in verse 16. God has the last word! There are two main sections in this passage 1. The moral man is condemned by his own judgment (v.1), and 2. The moral man is condemned by God’s judgment (v.2-16).

v.17 R+ of
God revealed
v.18 Wrath of
God revealed

1. **The moral man condemned according to his own judgment (2:1)** The key word in this verse is “thou.” It occurs 5 times.

- a. **“Whosoever thou art that judgest.”** Anyone Jews and Gentile alike.
- b. **“Thou that judgest.”** We all possess faculties of moral discernment. That is good! In life I must exercise this moral capability to make sound decisions. As soon as I do that I have judged!
- c. **“Thou condemnest thyself.”** The faculty of moral judgment is right. God approves it. Every man ought to have it. Everyone ought to be able to look at another man and say, **“That is wrong” or “That is right.”** This man was not condemned because he condemned others. He was condemned because while he was condemning others, **he was doing the same thing** and therefore condemned himself for his own sins. Think of David and Nathan and the story Nathan told David. Never let anybody tell you that it is wrong to judge things in the lives of others. **It is right.** If we did not have the faculty moral discrimination, think where we would be. However, God wants us first to judge things in our own lives. (McClain)
- d. **“Thou..doest.. the same thing.”** He may not be as grossly involved in idol worship, or sexual perversion as the pagan, but there is something in that vice list that will apply to this man.-, i.e covetousness, boasting, backbiting, etc...At the very least he will be guilty of the secret inner sins described in Matthew 5 – anger = murder, and lust = adultery.

The Bible is a book of God’s propositional truths. It says that stealing is wrong. We cannot say that it may be wrong for you, but it is OK for me. There are no subjective allowances for sins.

- e. **“Thou art without excuse.”** By condemning the sin in another, he is doubly guilty because by disapproving of it he **violates his own moral standard** by doing the same thing. Perhaps not as openly, or a frequently as the pagan.

2. The moral man condemned by **God’s judgment** (2:2-16)

a. **“Judged According to TRUTH” (v.2-5)**

- (1) **Thinkest** thou...you will escape? (v.3) False reasoning
- (2) **Despisest** thou (v.4) False conclusion about God’s longsuffering
- (3) **Treasurest** thou (v.5) storing up God’s wrath until the final judgment.

b. **“Judged According to his Deeds” (v.6-10)**

- (1) **“Well doing”** Genesis 4:3-7: **“If thou doest well”**- the same expression. Well doing in that age was bringing the appointed sacrifice. Abel brought the sacrifice of an animal; Cain did not. What is well doing in this age? Well doing in this age is **believing in the name of the Son of God**. “What must we do that we may work the works of God? Jesus answered and said Ito them, “This is the work of God, **that ye believe on him whom he hath sent**” (John 6:28·29).

It is a common literary device used in many works of antiquity

- (2) **Chiasm** sentence structure. Concepts or ideas are placed in a special symmetric order or pattern in a chiastic structure to emphasize them. Please note verse 7 (a), 8 (b), 9 (b¹), 10 (a¹)

- c. **“Gods’ Impartiality in Judging”** (v. 11-15). The word “for” (v.12,13,14) is the connecting word for the thoughts presented in these verses.

- (1) Verse 12 has two parts to it. **12a** is for the **Gentiles** and **12b** is for the **Jews**.
- (2) **For the Jew** (v.12b and v.13). They will be judged according to the law they received. Possession of the law by the Jew will not save Jew, because he does not keep his own law.

Every person breaks his own code of conduct of right and wrong.

“Conscience is **innate**. and universal. It is not the product of environment, training, habit, race impression, or education, though it is influenced by all of these factors.”

Baker’s Dictionary of Theology

- (3) **For the Gentiles** (v.12a + 14 +15) they will be judged based on their conscience, heart, and thoughts. The standard of righteousness is written in the very inner conscience of every moralist, no matter how far from the law of God he is. He shows this by his conduct. “They show the work of the law written in the hearts.” Hearts, conscience. Thoughts: they all bare witness to the existence of this standard, which shows itself in the man’s conduct. In other words. Just as the Jew had a court where he was tried (there was the law, judge, and witnesses - a regular court), this was also true for the Gentile. This man had a court within himself comprised of the same three things: the law was written on his heart; his conscience sat as a judge. **The thoughts of the man accused him or excused him**. Here is the conclusion: God will judge

every man by the standard that man actually has, not by the standard he did not have. He will judge the Jew by the written law, the Gentile by the law written in his heart. If God does that, what will happen to the man? He will perish. Ignorance of the law then, will not save the Gentile, because he has a standard that agrees with God's standard, even though only partially. (McClain)

- d. **“God will judge the Secrets of Man”** (v.16, cf. Eccl 12:13-14). What is said here is that God is going to judge men according to Jesus Christ. Paul preached that Jesus Christ will be the Judge. At Athens Paul said that God has appointed day when **He shall judge the world by Jesus Christ** (Acts 7:31). The principle stated here is that God is going to judge the secrets of men.

Bibliography

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