

Romans Chapter 2: (1-16)

Judgment According to Our Knowledge:

1. Therefore you have no excuse, every one of you who passes judgment, for in that which you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things.

Now what Paul is doing in chapter 2 is engaging in a rhetorical technique called diatribe which is basically asking questions. He asks questions and then gives the answer by himself. He addresses both Jews and gentiles because in Chapter 2 verse 9 it says that “There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also the Greek”. So in passing judgment on one another you condemn yourself because you the judge practice the very same things. So the thing is you actually condemn yourself because when you condemn other people you actually condemn yourself because you are practising the same thing.

2. We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who practice such things.

3. Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God?

So judgement of God is impersonal. It is unbiased. If you judge other people God will judge you. The Jews believe that they will not be judged. They were circumcised, they had the law, they were chosen, because of that it was their belief, and Paul is trying to dispel that. All of us have hypocrisy in built. Basically, it is very hard to criticize somebody else when yourself are not clean and hypocrisy runs through everywhere. We all have in-built in us a moral hypocrisy. Let me share with you some data from the Journal of Experimental Social Psychology published in 2008 and this is a study of 93 subjects. What they did was they have two groups of people and they came in to their experimental setup and they were given two tasks to do. One task was very simple, all they have to do is to arrange the photos in a set order and that task only took 10 minutes. The other one which will be to do complex trigonometric equations that will take you 45 minutes, very hard. So the first group came in and they told the first group that you have a choice, two things, to do this or to do this. Now the choice is theirs or they could press on a computer and the computer will randomize and tell you what to do. So when they press the button on computer tells you to do this one, you do this one. Or you can say that you do not want to use the computer, I am going to choose myself. So the next guy will choose after one has made a choice, which means once they choose a particular task then the next guy coming in will have to choose that.

After this test 75% of the people choose to do the photos and did not use the computer program to randomize. All of these people were then asked the question “Is this choice fair or not?” The choices here are not fair, but when they asked the 75% they said that it is very fair. Why? Because we are morally invested hypocrites. This proves scientifically that we are hypocrites.

Then they did another experiment that they did, the only difference is now is that they gave wrist bands, either red or yellow. So all of these fellows have red or yellow wrist bands and outside observers had red or yellow wrist bands and then they watched them doing the same experiment. Then they asked this group, was it fair or was it not fair? If you have no wrist band 100% of observe will say it is not fair? If you wear a wrist band what do you think will

happen? So all of them who were wearing red wrist bands would say all the red wrist band was fair and all the yellow wrist bands were not fair, simply because they wore the same wrist band. This is human biasness, human nature. Basically, the conclusion is that moral hypocrisy occurs in normal cognitive processing. So when you are thinking about the whole thing you are absolutely biased.

Francis Schaeffer said, "If you have a recorder and you can put it around your neck and it would record only what you say how others should live. For example, the fellow cut you in a cue coming to church. The things you say to such people and everything you say you apply to yourself, most of us will fail. By the very things we judge other people we are actually guilty of it ourselves. We are morally flawed. So the Law of the Lord is actually gets to the heart of a person. we cannot read the law in a self-justifying way.

Here what is says in Mathew 5:

22 "But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell.

28 but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

So what Jesus is doing is getting to not the fact that you do not kill someone, but actually you should love someone. Get to the fact that you should be honourable and pure rather than committing adultery. He is getting inside your heart. Whether you swear or not, do not swear because let your 'yes' be 'yes' and 'no' be 'no' because he is trying to get you to stop lying. People swear in order to lie. So basically the heart of the law is, it starts here, it is like a corn before it becomes a tree. When God judges it starts down here that is where the Law is getting at. So Jesus said to Mathew 5

17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

18 For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

19 Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

20 For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

This teaching is extremely important. We are coming to a time in this world that a lot of churches are subscribing to 'Hyper Grace', which is everything talk about cross, everything talk about Jesus dying for you and you do not have to face judgement and that is the excuse to basically sin. So I do not have to live under law anymore, but Jesus said not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

Now we study Romans then we will find out how can the law apply exactly and yet we can be saved by grace.

Judgment According to God's Patience:

4 Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?

5 But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.

So judgment does not often happen directly. Just because you lie you do not get struck by lightning straightaway, may be later on but not straightaway and why because is justice slow. Justice in God's economy is always very-very slow is that how works goes on church, very-very slow. The wheels of the church turn but very slowly. Three things:

1. Is designed to give you repentance, give you more time. Because if you were judged directly, imagine you condemn other people, want them to be condemn straightaway, if God gave you the same criteria you will be condemned too. So time is to give you more time to repent and the other thing is all the setbacks and tragedies. So if it give you more time then you go on in life, you may have setbacks and tragedies and those sat back and tragedies allow us to see our own terrible condition and allows us time to repent and lastly sometimes it also allows us to have good things happen to us by grace and that should basically lead us to repentance. For example, if I constantly bribe as an architect to get a job, if for long time I am not caught you have two ways of thinking about it, 'I am very clever and I bribe the right way, so I never get caught'. That is one way. Or another way of thinking is that, "O my goodness! I got away so long, I might get caught the next time, so I better stop". So God's gives us time but we can respond to time in two ways, one because you are so clever you can escape or two "O! my time is nearly I better repent" and then sometimes it gets harder to bribe, the price goes up, business not going well, your wife leave and you certainly look into your condition and you say "Oh my God! these things are happening" may be God is trying to tell you something and then you repent, He allows that to happen. Sometimes good things happen as you get your contract, you have a large project, and then you get on your knees and thank God by saying I am such a terrible person yet I got a big project, I think I will do this project and I will never sin again. Or you can say, 'why I escaped, I am so clever, I bribe and I got big project then you do some more'. You see time is two-edged sword, it can either lead you to repentance or it can make you worse. It is a very important thing to understand. So the slow judgement because of your impenitent heart, you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed and the picture Paul gives here is storage of grain, you store up. That means the more time you have for you to repent, the more you can actually more store up more and more and more, so that the judgment will be even greater and greater and greater. If we look at the Canaanites, this is Genesis 15.

13 Then the Lord said to Abram, "Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years.

14 But I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions.

15 As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age.

16 And they shall come back here in the fourth generation, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.”

What he means is you have Canaanites, Amorites, you got the Israelites with the Egyptians and God said they will be afflicted for 400 years. Here God delayed his punishment for Amorites to 400 years as they were horrible people. When He is finished giving them enough chance for 400 years, which means during the 400 years you have to get suffering from Egypt. So when 400 years were up, God then judges the Egyptians by the ten plagues and brings Israel across and Israel will then judge the Amorites. So this is how God's economy works. So when you see why God you do not judge them and given them time, sometimes all the most horrible in the world and God is not doing anything, God is actually giving them a chance by not doing anything and they are also storing for themselves not only money but also judgment and one day that judgment will come. So if you look at all the horrible political situation in this country, they are not getting away, they are storing up more and more wrath and one day the wrath will break, not in this world or the next world but somehow there will be judgment.

Now judgment is also according to works, this is controversial.

6 He will render to each one according to his works:

7 to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life;

8 but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury.

So how does He judge?

9 There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek,

10 but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek.

11 For God shows no partiality.

So I will give you some Old Testament background. Proverbs 24 says

12 If you say, “Behold, we did not know this,”
does not he who weighs the heart perceive it?
Does not he who keeps watch over your soul know it,
and will he not repay man according to his work?

So judgment is according to work.

Psalm 62:

11 Once God has spoken;
twice have I heard this:
that power belongs to God,

12 and that to you, O Lord, belongs steadfast love.
For you will render to a man
according to his work.

New Testament background

Matthew 16:

27 For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.

2 Corinthians 11:

15 So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.

Revelation 14:

13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!"

So very clearly both the New Testament and the Old Testament tells us that there is judgement by works. So if you look in this passage very clearly you have got two kinds of people. One motive; glory, honour, immortality. The other fellow motive was self. Behaviour, well doing, good works, practices disobedience, unrighteous behaviour and in the end reward glory, honour, peace, eternal life, reward is wrath, fury, tribulation and distress. This is final judgment. Who does this apply to? We think that we are saved by grace, but by this passage it becomes very confusing. I thought you were saved by grace where Jesus paid it all and now we are talking about Romans 2 where we are actually saved by works. So people get very confused on this particular passage.

Who does this applies to? Is it applied to non-Christians or Christians?

There are about four to five different interpretations but the most common of the two, take one non-Christians. So if you are a non-Christian. If your motive is glory, honour of God, honour in mortality then if you do good works and then you get order and glory, so which means if you are non-Christian you could get saved like this. But we believe that non-Christians will be punished. It means that if you are leaving somewhere in Papua New Guinea or somewhere in China in those days, by your conscience if you actually had a conscience you obey your conscience and you actually sought for glory, immortality and all that, you would be saved by yours works. That is one way of looking at it. But I will fast forward to two studies from now. Romans 3:10 states

10 as it is written:

“None is righteous, no, not one;

11 no one understands;
no one seeks for God.

12 All have turned aside; together they have become worthless;
no one does good,
not even one.”

This is a simplest scheme what Paul is doing is that he describes to you, yes God is very fair, He judges everybody for same criteria, you seek for honour, glory, immortality, you practice good works and you will get eternal life, but chapter 3 tells you that nobody does. Some people want to go to heaven for themselves not for God. The only reason why they are good is why; I want to go to heaven. This is a wrong motive. “I want to get to heaven; Jesus is a means to an end. My goal is heaven, Jesus I use him to get to heaven”. The moment you say who are you seeking, Jesus or yourself, it is our self. This is a big problem. Nobody can get rid of this motive of self, all of us when we wake up in the morning till we sleep at night we got a motive of self. We have to watch in Chapter 3 how that motive is removed.

The other one is that Christians whose good works are evidence of faith. When Paul describes this, he is actually describing Christians who are already justified by faith and they live a life honouring God then they will be rewarded with eternal life, so that is the other possibility. Either way we take the interpretation it does not really matter, because the main crux is that they all will need Jesus Christ in Chapter 3.

Paul’s focus is on the standard of judgment by God.

Judgment According To Knowledge:

12 For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law.

13 For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified.

14 For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law.

15 They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them

16 on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

So here Paul is telling you there is knowledge, there is the law written in peoples hearts. All over the world this is a very important argument for the existence of God and this is called a moral argument. If God does not exist objective moral value do not exist, objective moral values do exist therefore God exists and a proof of that we go all over the world whether we will tell someone when you die your wife must jump in the funeral and be burnt with you,

you think it is a good thing or bad thing. Most people will say that it is a bad thing. Or you go to China and they bind feet so you can hardly walk, so you look very nice, do you think it is a good thing or bad thing. Most people all over the world will say that it is a bad thing. Are women captured by ISIS and raped in order to become Muslim, is a good thing or bad thing. I think most people except ISIS will say that it is a bad thing. Even Muslims will tell you it is a bad thing. So we actually have quite a uniform standard of moral understanding all over the world, which is the argument that if moral values exist where do they come from? They must come from a moral God who put a code inside us. No matter how bad you are. There are the SS Troops in the World War II, they are the worst of the worst of the worst, and even then they have a code of honour. They do not like people who steal things but they will kill and rape and all other stuff. Even in the worst human cases there is a moral code. I was told of a teacher who started to teach a group of American kids and American kids are so irreligious now, when they read the sermon on the mount, they found it very difficult to read because they could not do all of these things and the teacher asked them one thing, "would you like a person who lives by the sermon of the mount to be your friend?". They said obviously, they cannot do it but they do not mind the guy being their friend because he would be a very nice person. If we look at the universal declaration of human rights, it is based on a moral code. "You have a right to marry, you have protection under law, you have got freedom". Freedom is a moral code. The fact that you have a universal declaration of human rights tells you there is a uniform moral code across the world. Now let me go back to the experiment.

If you go back to this experiment and you ask them, when you took the personal choice, is it a fair question or unfair question? When you ask them to answer the question and at the same question, you ask them to memorize something. Two things at one time, so they are busy in memorizing. Then you ask them this question, all of them say it was not fair. If on their own they were not doing a complex task like memorizing something, then they will say it is always fair they are biased, but we ask them to memorization, wow! They ask them this question they say it was completely unfair, why? And what does it prove? Because your mind is occupied doing mathematical memorization, right. So we go back to our default instinct. So the instinct will tell you that you are biased. So therefore this experiment all shows you that inside our instinct there is a moral code. It is only clouded by our sin. Our sin is looking after ourselves. We are biased because we are selfish, but if we can take that away underneath we actually have a sense of rightness and sense of wrongness. What about evolutionist, they would argue.

"The position of the modern evolutionist ... is that humans have an awareness of morality ... because such an awareness is of biological worth. Morality is a biological adaptation no less than are hands and feet and teeth. ... Considered as a rationally justifiable set of claims about an objective something, ethics is illusory. I appreciate that when somebody says, 'Love thy neighbour as thyself,' they think they are referring above and beyond themselves. ... Nevertheless, ... such reference is truly without foundation. Morality is just an aid to survival and reproduction, ... and any deeper meaning is illusory."

So what Michael Ruse, is an atheist, is saying, your morality is because of natural selection. Evolution is a way for you to reproduce, there is no real morality. There is just a standard among all organisms in order to reproduce and survive and what he will say is that the Darwinian argument is that moral values are due to biochemical brain states which then through evolution leads you to survive.

Evolution is about change but moral values are timeless through the years from the beginning of time to now killing something is not a good thing. Evolution defers to geography, because if you are in a particular place like a dog in Russia may be white, in African may be black because of the different climate, so therefore this argument is off.

Richard Dawkins says,

In a universe of blind physical forces and genetic replication, some people are going to get hurt, and other people are going to get lucky; and you won't find any rhyme or reason to it, nor any justice. The universe we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is at the bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil and no good. Nothing but blind pitiless indifference. DNA neither knows nor cares. DNA just is, and we dance to its music.

On the other hand he condemns harassment, abuse of homosexuals, religious indoctrination of children and the Incan Practice of human sacrifice. There is a contradiction. On one hand he says no values and on the other hand he says abuse of homosexual is not good.

16 on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

Very important, so therefore we cannot judge. The whole problem with Christians today, we start off with Chapter 2 verse 1, '**you judge**'. Judging is not a very good thing because you do not have God's chair. At the end of judgment day there will be one chair up there, only one person to get sit on the chair. The moment you start to judge your friends, your neighbours, your family, your church members, you actually sit on that chair. Do you have that knowledge to sit on that chair like God and you do not have the authority. That is the problem but we spend half of our time judging other people. It is fact of life, we all judge people all the time.

Poh Soo Kai wrote a book that tells you that during the time in 1960s Lee Kuan Yew actually locked up a whole bunch of people including him for 17 years simply because they oppose his ideas and he labelled them as Marxist Communism. British commissioner, Lord Selkirk in Singapore at the time say "Mr Lee was quite clearly attracted by the prospect of wiping out his main political opposition before the next Singapore elections". He condemned the life of all of these people to jail and destruction. Poh Soo Kai wife's left him because of that. A lot of people were destroyed by Lee Kuan Yew but it comes up only after his death. So all of these are secrets you cannot know.

God will one day judge the secrets of man. Now we know that all of these famous people are paedophile, although they all raped woman, only when they die all the secrets come out. So it is very hard for us to judge. If it is very hard for us to judge we should not hold a grudge because you are holding a grudge means that are judging someone.

When you start to judge people you become hard and cold, you lose self-pity, you become self-absorbed and it changes you. So take God's view. God's view is basically most of us live in the valley and we judge everybody but actually we will climb up the hill and you have a bird's eye view you actually see things clearer. If we climb up to the mountain you will see that you are a son of God and God will be with you right up to the end and nothing will separate you from the love of Christ. If you see that view the other fellows will scold you, it means nothing as it is not going to affect your eternal salvation. The love of Christ is so great, you just have to get up there and see God's view so that you do not have to judge.

Lastly, you need to mirror God's love. This is the ultimate place of injustice; he had the ultimate injustice, the most righteous man who ever lived. He was executed as the most evil man that ever lived and yet God vindicated him. So when you are unjustly accused, when you are unjustly judged, you are unjustly underlined do you not think that God will also vindicate you? So mirror God's love. So remember try in church not to judge, because we are absolutely not qualified to do so.