

Parson to Person

(Repeated from last Sunday)

ROMANS 2 PART 1B

“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. But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things.

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? Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? 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, who ‘will render to each one according to his deeds’: eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek; but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For there is no partiality with God.

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 (for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified; 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, 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) in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel” (Romans 2:1–16 NKJV).

Having made his case for the depravity of a rebellious sin-practicing populous, Paul moves on to the so-called righteous. There are many people who see the sins of others but scarcely see their own. It is quite easy to see the spec that is in another person’s eye while failing to note the beam in one’s own. This is Paul’s aim: to show the judgmental and critical person that their sin is of little difference from that of the flagrantly wicked.

When Paul called out the “self-righteous” Romans, they might have been able to say, “I am not committing adultery,” “I am not gossiping,” or “I’m not a murderer.” However, not actively engaging in such things does not leave a person without equal guilt before God. The man or woman who claims they are not committing adultery but is nonetheless complaining about their marriage, lusting for someone other than their spouse, or intentionally withholding the due affection required in the cultivation of a strong marriage is just as guilty (in the eyes of God) as the one who openly commits the physical act of adultery (see Matthew 5:28). A man or woman may not *voice* destructive or condescending information (gossip), but may simply *think* judgmentally of others and therefore be just as guilty of self-righteousness and division by self-exaltation and/or personal withdrawal from the one(s) criticized (see Matthew 7:1–2). A man or woman who carries hate for another is categorically a murderer though not physically committing the act (see 1 John 3:15). Therefore, Paul raises the bar on the self-righteous and judgmental by showing them that they are just as guilty. This is his point: all are guilty, all are sinners!

Furthermore, Paul shows that those who “know better” are that much more accountable for sin. Therefore, the Jews (to whom were given the Law) are guilty before God, and even still, those who knew nothing about the Law are nonetheless guilty—based upon the common grace and illumination provided them. And again, as stated above, all are sinners, all are guilty! Therefore, rather than being judgmental of those we may see as “worse” than us, we should see ourselves in the light of God’s holiness—and recognize the need we all have for a savior. Moreover, we should recognize that God’s patience with man during this season of grace should lead us to repentance rather than self-righteousness.

However, even still, some wrongly accuse the Lord with the following: 1) His lack of *ability to see sin*—as if He is not omnipresent and omniscient, 2) His lack of *ability to judge sin*—as if He is not omnipotent, or finally, 3) His aloof disposition about sin—as though He is careless or has *no desire to judge sin*. However, let it be known: God sees all, knows all, and as the righteous judge will vindicate His name and, moreover, His Son who gave his life in ransom.

May we let God’s patience be a constant reminder that His longsuffering and kindness is designed to bring us to repentance—not to arrogant judgmentalism.

I love you all, Pastor Paul