

NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL

— A Study of Romans —

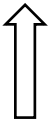
Lesson Four

Romans 2:1-11

...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?
Romans 2:4

Day 1

Pray: Colossians 3:16a



Father may your words dwell in me richly. Let them seep into my heart and leak out of my life in every situation. Thank you for giving me your word and please give me insight and understanding through your Holy Spirit.

Read: Romans 2:1-11. Read it again in another translation such as NLT.

Observe:

- Write key words and themes, repeated words or phrases. Circle on your Scripture pages any transition words (therefore, but, because, if/then etc.)
- Are there any commands to be obeyed, or truths to be trusted?
- What questions do you have about the text?

Day 2- Romans 2:1-3

1. Who is Paul directing his comments to according to verses 1 and 3a?
2. Why are they without excuse according to 2:1?

Scholar's Note: to “pass judgment” is to believe that others are worthy of God’s judgment while you are not.”¹

3. In Jesus’ parable of the prodigal son there were two wayward brothers; one was rebellious, and one was self-righteous. This is the point Paul is making. In 1:24-32 we see shameless rebellion; in 2:1-16 we see self-righteous hypocrisy. Look at 1:32a and 2:2. What similarity is there in these two groups of people?
 - a. Look at 1:32b and 2:1,3. What is the difference between these two groups?

For Discussion

In verse 3 Paul asks those who are judging, *Do you suppose you will escape the judgment of God?* How does hypocrisy deceive us into thinking we can escape God’s judgment?

Picture and Ponder

“Condemning others while excusing ourselves is what allows us to hang onto both our self-righteousness and our sin.”²



Commentator John Stott says that “we are often as harsh in our judgment of others as we are lenient towards ourselves.”³ We condemn and are exasperated or repulsed by the same sins in others that we excuse, ignore or justify in ourselves. Sometimes the sin that is so glaring in someone else, we are completely blind to in ourselves.

- ◆ What sin in someone else is so unpleasant to you? Ask God to show you if this sin or a form of it, is somehow having its way in your life as well.

- ◆ Make this prayer from Psalm 139:23-24 a regular part of your prayer life.

*Search me, O God, and know my heart!
Try me and know my thoughts!
And see if there be any grievous way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting!*

Day 3- Romans 2:4-5

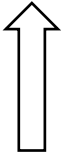
1. Look up 2:4 in other translations. Use Bible Gateway to view other translations (you can use Biblegateway). What words do other translations use in place of *presume*?

2. Verse 4 tells us God is abundant in kindness, forbearance and patience. How would you describe these characteristics in relation to God’s actions toward sinners?

Kindness-

Forbearance-

Patience-



God you are so good and kind! You have every right to annihilate sin and sinners, but you hold back your wrath and wait for people to turn to you. Thank you for your patience and for your goodness in forgiving my sins.

3. What is God's kindness, forbearance and patience toward sinners meant to do according to verse 4?

Repentance- "literally a military word meaning "about turn."⁴ Repentance is to turn away from your sin and to God.

4. Though God is showing patience and kindness toward self-righteous sinners for the time being, ultimately, they will experience his wrath. How does the concept of *storing up wrath* impact you?
 - a. What obstacle keeps self-righteous people from repentance according to verse 5?



When we carry on in our sin because God hasn't nailed us, we compound our sin by showing contempt for the grace of God. Our hard hearts are oblivious to God's kindness and patience and blind to our sin. In our self-righteousness, "we may acknowledge the existence of God, but we see no need for him—we are doing fine on our own."⁵ Paul's warning here is to religious people who know God's commands but prefer to be their own savior.

- ◆ Write out a prayer you can pray for yourself and others knowing the truth of verses 4 and 5.

Day 4- Romans 2:6

1. How does verse 11 help to explain verse 6 at least partly? (What won't judgment be based on?)

Digging Deeper

In the first chapter (vs.16-17) Paul has laid the foundation that righteousness comes from God through faith—so we know that we are not saved by our works; and Paul will continue to clarify this truth in the coming chapters. We need the continual reminder because we are so prone to try and earn right standing with God. How then should we understand verse 6 that says *He will render to each one according to his works*? Read the verses in James and Luke below. What is the relationship between faith and works?

James 2:14,18 **14** *What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don't show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone?... 18* Now someone may argue, "Some people have faith; others have good deeds." But I say, "How can you show me your faith if you don't have good deeds? I will show you my faith by my good deeds."(NLT)

Luke 6:43-45a (Jesus speaking) ⁴³ "A good tree can't produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can't produce good fruit. ⁴⁴ A tree is identified by its fruit. Figs are never gathered from thornbushes, and grapes are not picked from bramble bushes. ⁴⁵ A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart. (NLT)

Later in Romans 8 we are promised that there is *no condemnation for those who are in Christ*. All God's wrath for our sin was poured out on Jesus. So then, what does it mean for someone in Christ to be repaid according to their works or deeds? What do you learn about works being judged for those who are in Christ, from the following passages?

1 Corinthians 3:11-15 ¹¹ For no one can lay any foundation other than the one we already have—Jesus Christ. ¹² Anyone who builds on that foundation may use a variety of materials—gold, silver, jewels, wood, hay, or straw. ¹³ But on the judgment day, fire will reveal what kind of work each builder has done. The fire will show if a person's work has any value. ¹⁴ If the work survives, that builder will receive a reward. ¹⁵ But if the work is burned up, the builder will suffer great loss. The builder will be saved, but like someone barely escaping through a wall of flames. (NLT)

2 Corinthians 5:9-10 ⁹ So whether we are at home or away we make it our aim to please him. ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

Revelation 20:12,15 ¹² I saw the dead, both great and small, standing before God's throne. And the books were opened, including the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to what they had done, as recorded in the books... And anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire. (NLT)

Picture and Ponder

"What is written in the books is condemnation for those who are not connected to Christ, but it will be confirmation for all who are joined to him by faith."⁶ "If you are in Christ, the books will show how you threw yourself on his mercy and welcomed his forgiveness, how your appetites and affections changed as his Holy Spirit was at work in you, and it became evident in how you lived your life. The books will provide an accounting of all the things God's grace in your life has empowered you to do and become because of your connectedness to Jesus."⁷

For Discussion

If we are saved by grace through faith, why are we judged by our works—why does it matter what we do?



So we keep on praying for you, asking our God to enable you to live a life worthy of his call. May he give you the power to accomplish all the good things your faith prompts you to do. ¹² Then the name of our Lord Jesus will be honored because of the way you live, and you will be honored along with him. This is all made possible because of the grace of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ. 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12 (NLT)

- ◆ Underline or highlight all the ways you see good works are a result of God's work.
- ◆ Do your deeds show evidence of your faith? The point is not to try harder but to abide in Jesus more fully so that his life is lived out in yours. What areas in your life do you need to surrender to Jesus and obey him?
- ◆ If your actions are aligned with God's ways, are there areas your heart or attitude need to match your outward actions? Is Christ being honored in your heart as well as your actions?
- ◆ Make the prayer in 2 Thessalonians your prayer.

Day 5- Romans 2:7-11

1. In verses 7 and 8 Paul is contrasting two different ways of living that are opposites. One way of life, leading to wrath, shown in verse 8, is characterized by self-seeking and obeying unrighteousness. Describe these characteristics in your own words and then write its' opposite from verse 7:

Self-seeking-

Opposite-

Refuse to obey truth but obey unrighteousness -

Opposite-

2. How are *well-doing* and *seek* related in verse 7?

a. What does the need for *patience* in well-doing indicate?

3. Draw a line from the word (in v. 7) to its' meaning.

Seeking ***immortality***

Seeking ***glory***

Seeking ***honor***

The manifestation of God himself

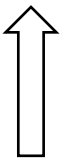
God's approval

The unfading joy of God's presence



One commentator summarizes helpfully, "As Paul addresses "you" and establishes that "you" encompasses everyone, he charges all his listeners to stop judging others and start appraising themselves. Where Paul said, "Jew and Greek," we might say "Christians and agnostics" or "churchgoers and outsiders" or "God's friends and strangers." Paul emphasizes that we will render an account for our deeds, but he also tells us to assess our goals. So, then, what do you seek?"⁸

◆ What do you seek? What is your goal in life? Are your goals for self-glory or God's glory?



Father help me to seek your kingdom and your character above all else. (Matt.6:33) Give me the strength and desire to live out your kingdom principles in this world and to be concerned about eternal things more than material things.

One Thing:

What is one thing from this week's study that God has impressed on your heart, or convicted you about; is there something new that you learned or is there a verse you want to ponder and meditate on?

Praise God for this and thank him for the work he is doing in your life. Ask him to help you remember this and live it out for his glory.

¹ Keller, Timothy. Romans 1-7 For You: For reading, for feeding, for leading (God's Word For You - Romans Series) (p. 42). The Good Book Company. Kindle Edition.

² Keller, Timothy. Romans 1-7 For You: For reading, for feeding, for leading (God's Word For You - Romans Series) (p. 42). The Good Book Company. Kindle Edition.

³ Stott, John R.W. The Message of Romans. P. 82. Intersity Press USA

⁴ Keller, Timothy. Romans 1-7 For You: For reading, for feeding, for leading (God's Word For You - Romans Series) (p. 42). The Good Book Company. Kindle Edition.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Piper John, "We Will All Stand Before the Judgment of God" sermon. Bethlehem Baptist Church Minneapolis MN. Oct. 30, 2005 <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/we-will-all-stand-before-the-judgment-of-god>

⁷ Guthrie Nancie. Blessed p.218. Crossway, 2022

⁸ Ibid.
