



**Moral People are Guilty Too
(Romans 2:1-16)**

Romans 2:1-16 (ESV)

Therefore, you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things. 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? 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 hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.

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 [*contentious*] and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. 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.

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.

Let us pray . . .

Paul's Direction in Romans, chapters 1-3

- (By Leland Ryken and Philip Graham Ryken in *The Literary Study Bible*)
- **(Romans 1:18-32)** Immoral people are guilty before God (Gentiles/ "Pagans")
- **(Romans 2:1-16)** Moral people are guilty too (moral philosophy)
- **(Romans 2:17-3:8)** Even religious people are guilty (Jews)
- **(Romans 3:9-20)** The whole world is guilty before God (Everyone)
- **(Romans 3:21-31)** The righteousness of God through faith (The Solution)

“Diatribes”: Definition

- An ancient Greek form of argument in which the speaker addresses an imaginary character who poses questions and challenges the speaker’s argument.

“Moral People are Guilty Too” (Romans 2:1-16)

Outline . . .

I. Morality is Not Enough

II. God Displays both Wrath and Kindness

II. God Rewards both Faith and Works

Closing Thoughts

I. Morality is Not Enough

A. Moral People are Guilty Too

B. Judging Others

1. Hypocritical Judgment

2. Righteous Judgment

a. Militant Judgment

b. Humble Judgment

I. Morality is Not Enough

A. Moral People are Guilty Too

- Shameless Immorality of Gentiles/"Pagans" (Romans 1:18-32)

- Self-Conscious Moralism

 - Jewish leaders (e.g., Pharisees)

 - Gentile/Greek philosophers (e.g., Aristotle, Seneca)

- All (both Gentiles and Jews) fall short even of their own standards, much less God's standards

Greek moral philosophers

- Aristotle (384-322 B.C.): Virtue Theory
- Seneca (4 B.C.-65 A.D.): Stoicism

I. Morality is Not Enough

B. Judging Others

1. Hypocritical Judgment

--² For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and **with the measure you use it will be measured to you.** ³ Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?" (Matthew 7:2-3)

--Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness. ²⁸ So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness." (Matthew 23:27-28)

2. Righteous Judgment

2. Righteous Judgment:

--“Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment.” (John 7:24)

--“They are gossips, . . . haughty, . . . disobedient to parents (Romans 1:29-30)

a. Militant Judgment (-)

¹¹ The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed^[a] thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. (Luke 18:11)

****b. Humble Judgment (+)**

²⁴ And the Lord's servant^[e] must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, ²⁵ correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, ²⁶ and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will. (2 Timothy 2:24-26)

II. God Displays both Wrath and Kindness

A. The Day of God's Wrath

1. Present Times
2. End Times

B. The Purpose of God's Kindness

1. Penitence/Repentance
2. Faith in Christ Jesus

A. The Day of God's Wrath

1. Present Times

²⁶ “See, I am setting before you today **a blessing and a curse**: ²⁷ **the blessing**, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, ²⁸ and **the curse**, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way that I am commanding you today, to go after other gods that you have not known. (Deuteronomy 11:26-28)

2. End Times

⁵ But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on **the day of wrath** when God's righteous judgment will be revealed. (Romans 2:5)

¹⁸ Woe to you who desire the day of the LORD!
Why would you have the day of the LORD?
It is darkness, and not light (Amos 5:18)

B. The Purpose of God's Kindness

1. Penitence/Repentance

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? (Romans 2:4)

⁸ But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you,^[a] not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. (2 Peter 3:8-9)

B. The Purpose of God's Kindness

2. Faith in Christ Jesus

⁴ But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (Titus 3:4-7)

****How God Draws Sinners to Himself**

- God draws some by His Power (truly a fear of the Lord)
- God draws some by His kindness

III. God Rewards both Faith and Works

A. Justification by Faith

1. The Means for **Salvation** Now
2. The Means for Sanctification in the Future

B. Judgment by Works (-)

B. Judgment by Works (+)

1. Works as a Sign of Faith and Obedience
2. Works as the Basis for Future Rewards
3. Works as Enabled by the Holy Spirit

A. Justification by Faith

1. The Means for Salvation Now

“The one who by faith is righteous shall live” (Romans 1:17)

2. The Means for Sanctification in the Future

“The righteous shall live by faith” (Romans 1:17)

“We walk by faith and not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7)

****B. Judgment by Works (-)**

- ⁶ He will render to each one according to his works (Romans 2:6)
- “We must remember that Paul is not speaking of salvation here but of judgment. The two concepts are distinct. . . . Judgment comes first in the flow of the apostle’s argument. There is no need of salvation, of course, if there is no judgment upon individual guilt or innocence. One must be found guilty before salvation is necessary or even desired!” (David Seemuth)
- 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. (Romans 2:9-11). [For whomever does good ALL THE TIME, which is no one.]
- Under this definition of “judgment,” the judgment for all—Gentiles with their law of conscience and Jews with their Law of Moses—is always the same: guilty!

Paul's Direction in Romans, chapters 1-3

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- **(Romans 3:21-31)** The righteousness of God through faith (*Salvation*)

****B. Judgment by Works (+)**

1. Works as a Sign of Faith and Obedience

⁸ The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. (Titus 3:8)

****2. Works as the Basis for Future Rewards (not for salvation)**

⁹ And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. (Galatians 6:9)

¹² “Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done. (Revelation 22:12)

****3. Works as Enabled by the Holy Spirit**

- “Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. . . . ⁴ Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵ and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; ⁶ and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone.” (1 Corinthians 12:1, 4-6)
- “All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.” (1 Corinthians 12:11)
- Summary: God seems to reward us for our good works (i.e., He makes a judgment and rewards us without partiality.) Thus, we feel good doing good works, AND we are rewarded—at some point in the future--for doing them.

Closing Thoughts:

****From Judgment to Insights and Blessings:**

Maintaining accountability of others (and of ourselves) yet softening our moral condemnation of the person leads us to humility and receptiveness to the presence of the Holy Spirit.

We all are to be humble servants who rest in God's grace.

Let Us Pray

