

The Good News

Week 3 - Romans 2:1-16

Objectives:

- Recognize we all sin and need a Savior.
- Wrestle with our inability to judge others because we do the same things and are all on a level playing field.

? What's something you think you know more about than 95% of the people in this room?

A No-Judgement Zone

Can someone summarize Romans 1?

Read Romans 2:1–16 NIV:

2 You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge another, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things. ² Now we know that God's judgment against those who do such things is based on truth. ³ So when you, a mere human being, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God's judgment? ⁴ Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?

⁵ But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. ⁶ God "will repay each person according to what they have done." ⁷ To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. ⁸ But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. ⁹ There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; ¹⁰ but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. ¹¹ For God does not show favoritism.

¹² All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law. ¹³ For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous. ¹⁴ (Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law. ¹⁵ They show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts sometimes accusing them and at other times even defending them.) ¹⁶ This will take place on the day when God judges people's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares.

? What are some observations from Romans 2:1-16 (no interpretations, just observations)?

Possible answers: Answers will vary.

? Who is Paul talking to in chapter 2? Why is this significant?

Possible answers: The “you” to start the chapter is referring to everyone. Then Paul is talking to the Jewish people who thought they were better than the Gentiles. It’s significant because Paul is saying we are all on a level playing field - we all need Jesus. This would have been shocking to the Jewish people at the time.

? Verse 1 starts with “therefore”. What is therefore referring to in chapter 1?

Possible answers: Paul just got done listing a bunch of sins at the end of chapter 1 and Paul is making it clear that everyone does these things and so for that reason, no one has an excuse to judge others who do that.

? How does passing judgment show contempt for the riches of God’s kindness, forbearance and patience?

Possible answers: If God’s kindness leads us to repentance and we don’t think we sin, we are completely rejecting what God has done for us. We aren’t seeing God for who he is if we don’t see ourselves correctly. We miss out on experiencing the good news of God’s grace if we think we have done anything that makes us better than someone else.

? Why is it so easy to judge others? What does it reveal about our own hearts? (Read Luke 18:9-14)

Possible answers: It makes us feel good about ourselves or better about ourselves, even if it’s a temporary feeling. We’re constantly comparing ourselves to others and our culture makes it so easy to. It reveals our selfishness and our want to be right/whole on our own.

? Where do you see this (judging others and putting yourself above others) play out in the world? In your own life?

Possible answers: Culture: Racism, cancel culture, the way people post on social media, Corporate America, Nationalism, etc.

Own life: Answers will vary. Thinking you’re better than someone who struggles with homosexuality, thinking you are in the “correct” political party, thinking you parent your kids better than others, feeling superior because of your job or how much money you make, etc.

? Judging can be very subtle—oftentimes we don’t know we’re doing it. What are indicators that we are judging others?

Possible answers: The thought “I’m so glad I’m not like that person.” Judging other people’s sin more harshly than our sin (example: sexual sin) Feeling better or worse about ourselves after seeing others’ lives. Feeling good because we go to church, participate in small group, read our Bibles, etc... (these can all good things, but don’t make us right with God!)

? What are the dangers of judging others?

Possible answers: It blinds us to our own sin and our need for God.

Bad News/Good News...

? It says in verse 6 that God will repay each person according to what they have done. The first four verses just got done saying we are all sinners. What is Paul saying here?

Possible answers: We will be judged according to deeds (bad news for us) No one would be saved based on what we have done. We are all deserving of wrath. Only Jesus perfectly fulfilled the law and when we are judged for deeds, God will see what Jesus did (good news for us!)

? This is pretty bleak. Where is the good news? Read Galatians 1:3-5. ³ Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴ who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, ⁵ to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Possible answers: We all fall short. There is nothing we can do to make us right with God. But God is faithful and just to forgive us and gave himself to save us. We need to see the bad news to see how good the good news is. Because Jesus lived a perfect life and died for us, when we are judged according to what we have done, God sees what Jesus has done.

? Have you experienced the requirements of the law being written on your heart? What are examples?

Possible answers: Answers will vary

? The purpose of the law was to reveal our sin and show us our need for a Savior. Knowing that the law is written in everyone, how does this affect how we view and treat others? Non-believers?

Possible answers: It takes the pressure off of us to point out everyone's sin around us. We know that is God's work and we have the freedom to walk alongside and love the people God has placed around us.

For Discussion and Accountability

? Are there areas in your life where you feel like you are better than others? How can we as your small group keep you accountable?

? Are there things you do that make you feel like you have earned favor with God? How can you remind yourself of the truth this week?