

- 2) Simply hearing God's law (the Bible) is not the answer; to merit righteousness one must do all of God's law flawlessly during his entire life (v.13).
- 3) Even those who have never heard God's law are still guilty because God has placed in the conscience of every human a sense of right and wrong (v.14-15).

b. God is just in condemning the guilty moralist (v.16)

- 1) Every sinner is guilty because he has not always obeyed what he knows to be right and wrong.
- 2) On judgment day, God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ. God will not just judge sinful outward actions as in Romans 1:18-32, He will also judge the sinful secrets of the heart.
- 3) The moralist may look good in society, but when he or she stands before Almighty God on Judgment Day who will judge the secrets of his heart, he will lack righteousness.
- 4) No matter how good a person may be, he or she is not righteous. The very best moralist needs God's righteousness. (Rom 5:8, *But God commendeth his love...*)

Conclusion: You may believe in God, go to church, read the Bible, and live a decent life as a "good" person, but since you have sinned in your heart, you are guilty before God and lack God's righteousness.

God sees the secret sins of your heart. Only Jesus can wash away those sins. If you admit that you are a guilty sinner, believe that Jesus died and rose again to pay for your sin, and by faith will ask Him to wash you clean, He will cleanse your sin and give you His righteousness. Rom 10:13 "*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*"

As you interact with good moral people, do not assume that they are true Christians. Being good will never save anyone. We must assume that every person we meet is unrighteous until he shows by life and lips that Christ has made him righteous. Winning a moralist to Christ is often more difficult than winning a humanist, but moralists need the Gospel.

Christian friend, God knows the secret sins in your heart as well. You cannot hide from God. If you obey God's word in 1Jn 1:9, you can have a clean heart before you leave today.

Song: Cleanse Me - 166

Moralists Need God's Righteousness

7 November 2021 AM - Romans 2:1-16 - Ro2021 - Scott Childs

Introduction: In Romans 1:18-32, we learned that humanists are not righteous and need God's righteousness. That was not difficult for us to grasp about God rejecters, but what about the good people in our world who do not reject God. Are they unrighteous and guilty before God? Do they need God's righteousness?

Romans 2:1-16 answers that question for us. In these verses, God places His spotlight on good, moral people. He shows us how **He** sees the moral people in our world. This may be eye-opening for some.

Transition: In these verses, we will find God's charge to the moral people in society, His criterion, and their conviction.

1. God's Charge (Ro 2:1-5)

a. God charged the moral good people with guilt.

- 1) He knew that many who would read this book would consider themselves moral compared with the humanists just condemned (Ro 1:18-32).
- 2) He points out that many moral people do the same sins in the heart that humanists do openly (v.1). Jesus said, (Matthew 5:28) "*But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*" (Mark 7:21-22) "*For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness.*" They are inexcusable.
- 3) God always judges according to truth (v.2). He knows all the facts. (Psalm 44:21) "*Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart.*" (Proverbs 5:21) "*For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings.*" God looks on the heart.
- 4) If we secretly do sinful things in our hearts, we will not escape the judgment of God (v.3).

b. God charged the moral reader with ignorance.

- 1) Moral people tend to *despise* (i.e., think little of) *the riches of God's goodness, forbearance and longsuffering* (v.4). These attributes of God are priceless treasures.

- a) God's *goodness* is that he is kind.
 - b) His *forbearance* is that he is very tolerant.
 - c) His *longsuffering* is that he is patient.
- 2) **If God were not kind, tolerant and patient, we would all be burnt toast.** When we think we are moral and good, not needing God's kindness, tolerance, and patience, we make a HUGE mistake. We are ignorant of the fact that God treats us patiently *to lead us to repentance*.
- a) When in our hearts, we struggle with lust, pride, rebellion, disobedience, covetousness, or deceit **and God does not strike you dead**, it is to bring us to repentance.
 - b) God knows we are but dust. He knows we struggle with a sin nature. He cannot overlook our sins, but He is kind, forbearing, and longsuffering.
 - c) It is our *duty to humbly repent and change*.
- 3) When we have hard and unrepentant hearts, we **store up** for ourselves God's wrath (v.5). God is patient with moral sinners, but **He cannot justly overlook their sin**. Judgment day is coming. God will judge righteously.

✧ *Moralists are unrighteous and truly need God's righteousness.*

2. God's Criterion (Ro 2:6-11) On what does he base His judgment?

a. God will judge our deeds (v.6-9)

- 1) Many religious people are counting on their good deeds to get them into heaven. They imagine that God has big scales, on which he places their good deeds on one side and their bad deeds on the other side. Being convinced that they are primarily good, they think that God will welcome them into heaven. **They are sadly mistaken!**
- 2) What did God mean when He said that He will *render* (i.e., deliver) *to every man according to his deeds*. The moral person who **thinks** he has nothing to fear is forgetting what we just learned in (v.1-5). **He, too**, is unrighteous.
- 3) Paul first describes God's judgment of the perfect (v.7). Here is a person who continually does only good and who is seeking glory, honour, and immortality. This perfect person will receive **eternal life**. The problem with this

scenario is that no one meets the criteria. Good people still have sinful hearts. It only takes one sin in a lifetime to spoil perfection. The Apostle James wrote, (James 2:10) *"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."* In this scenario, **Paul is describing the impossible**.

- 4) Paul then describes God's judgment of those who obey unrighteous (v.8-9). They are *contentious* (i.e., self-seeking) and *refuse to obey the truth*. They will receive **indignation, wrath, tribulation and anguish**.

- a) They do *evil* – anything less than perfection (v.9). Every man who does evil will receive this judgment.
- b) Jews and Gentiles alike will receive this.

b. God will judge fairly (v.10-11)

- 1) He will not make a distinction between Jew and Gentile.
- 2) God is not a respecter of persons. He takes no bribes. He is not moved by crying or pleading. He treats all fairly.
- 3) He will judge according to truth (v.2). He knows all the facts. (Hebrews 4:13) *"Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."*
- 4) He judges in righteousness (v.5). Every sentence that God hands down is right. None is too harsh or too lenient.
- 5) He judges according to man's deeds (v.6). Man's deeds are condemning. The only good deed that any person can do is to repent and trust Christ for salvation.
- 6) He judges the secrets of man's hearts (v.16). Again, this indicates that no man can earn eternal life by being good. God knows the sinful thoughts and intents of our hearts.

3. Their Conviction (Ro 2:12-16)

a. All moralists are guilty (v.12-15).

- 1) God does not base right and wrong on one's knowledge of His laws. God has not confined His righteous demands to His written law. God's righteous character is the standard of right and wrong, and he has placed in the conscience of every human a basic understanding of right and wrong. Both God's written and unwritten laws condemn.