

Romans, Chapter 2

God's Righteous Judgment

2:1: judges / κρίνων: Recall Romans 1:18. St. Paul now convicts all who sit back and "judge" those who do such things. **They are doing the exact same things. Sin is universal.** Franzmann: "Paul tells the judge, you are under judgment too." (do not judge does not mean do not discern)

2:2: God judges literally "in accordance with truth" = κατὰ ἀλήθειαν (objective truth)

2:3: Not only is the fool judging others, but **they are unaware that they will not escape judgment.**

2:4: forbearance/ ἀνοχῆς = patiently withholding judgement. Why? God wants all sinners to do what? He wants us led to? **Μετάνοιάν**...the Greek begins with "Meta," then "Mind."

2:5: People store up treasures, apart from Jesus, that "treasure" is God's wrath/ ὀργῆς // Back at 1:18 it was present wrath, but this is now **FUTURE** wrath. What is "hard"? The second word "impenitent"/ ἀμετανόητον informs us about their **hearts.**

2:6: What kind of "**works**" are we talking about here? There are **different kinds.**

2:7: Presents one kind: those which flow from justification. Thus: **works of faith**

2:8: Presents a different kind: **works of the Law.** The crux: motivation.

NOTE: both verse 7 and 8 present people as seeking. **EVERYONE** is seeking. What are we seeking? Seeking God's Kingdom or Seeking one's own kingdom? Verse 8: **Self-Seekers "do not obey the truth" (recall "obedience of faith" at Romans 1:5). These OBEY wickedness!** Luther: *incurvatus in se*/ curved in on oneself.

2:9-11: **God shows no partiality, this is axiomatic.** Law condemns all. Gospel saves all (through faith in Christ). The Gospel is 100% inclusive and 100% exclusive.

God's Judgment and the Law

2:12: Gentiles without Torah fell, but so did Jews with Torah. **Universal sin again.**

2:13: Regarding **Jews here.**

2:14-15: Regarding **Gentiles here.** The point overall is impartial judgment. All had a form of God's law. In verse 14, all four uses of νόμον/ νόμου/ νόμον/ νόμος **refer to the Mosaic Law, but at verse 15 νόμου/law refers to God's law upon the heart. In the end, all have violated God's Law/law.**

2:16: What will God judge on the Last Day? Answer: "the secrets of men." τὰ κρυπτά = "the hidden things. 2:17-21: A very long sentence!

2:17: What two things were these Jews doing? **1) relying on the law; and 2) boasting in God.** This is a terrible combination. The great Western philosopher Clint Eastwood put it this way: "You're a legend in your own mind!" Here, is the illusory idea that one is actually keeping the Law, then boasts in God in the sense of assuming that God accepts man's misguided self-righteousness. Here is St. Paul's combination depicted by St. Luke (note: as Mark relied on Peter for his Gospel; Luke relied upon Paul): Luke 18:9-14: ⁹ He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: ¹⁰ "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.'" This is the one who relies on the law and boasts in God.

2:18: That is, **they should know** because they've been catechized. Warning: **status is deceptive**. It is easy to reason that because one is attached to the church that they are therefore covered. This is self-deception. So, 2:17 shows **inward complacency**; **2:18 shows misguided outward association**. **3rd commandment** rightly understood: "We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear it and learn it."

2:19: Jesus calls His people, "the light of the world" (Jn 5:14a), but here pride has made the light a reason for self-absorption. No! The light Christians shine come from Christian's who – by the grace of God – maintain an outward orientation upon Jesus. **Extra Nos** = Outside ourselves is our orientation in respect to both our justification *and* our sanctification.

2:20: The proper handling of the truth **necessitates** humility.

2:21: **We know what the Law reveals (think Romans 7:15b**: "For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.").

2:22: Dr. David Scaer (Concordia Theological Seminary): "Personal testimonies turn us into hypocrites." = our testimony must be Jesus Christ. // What is "**rob temples**" mean?

Answer: A believer might be tempted to rob from a pagan temple. "I mean what's the harm? It's to a false god that doesn't even exist!" The problem is that anything associated with a pagan temple is detestable to God, so we must honor God by avoiding any such entanglements. Otherwise, one's own greed betrays a deeper idolatry. **The OTHER** possible meaning is robbing directly from God's temple. How would one do that? Malachi 3:8-10:

"Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, 'How have we robbed you?' In your tithes and contributions. ⁹You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me...

¹⁰Bring the full tithe into the storehouse...". But how do we bring "the full tithe" into the storehouse of God today? By living for God and never being dupped into believing we can serve two masters: Matthew 6:24: ²⁴"**No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.**" **This is the work of God through Word and Sacrament.**

2:23: Romans 3:23. **Everyone** is guilty of breaking God's Law. *The Law is an equal opportunity convicter.*

2:24: The more people in the world **observe Christians living hypocritically**, then we (Christians) blaspheme the name of God and push those outside the church away. In this way, Christians can contribute to people avoiding the church and the Word of Christ. This is a call to Christians for us to be humble. Lord have mercy / **Kyrie eleison**.

2:25: Circumcision was the sign of the Abrahamic covenant, but even this covenant (God established bond) **hinged on faith that awaited the seed of the woman/Messiah**. But if we deliberately keep sinning and deny the faith, what good is the sign of the covenant?

2:26: This verse is another way of saying **all that is necessary is faith in Christ**. Faith will adorn us with the righteous robes of Christ, so that no outward signs are necessary.

2:27: St. Paul is using a kind of **reductio ad absurdum** (reduction to the absurd).

2:28-29: The true child of God is one **by faith in Christ**. Not by the letter – by our trying to keep written down Law – **but by the Spirit (the work of God drawing us to Christ)**.