

## ROMANS 2:1 | INEXCUSIBLE MAN

- A brief outline for context:
  - There are men today **who hold the truth in unrighteousness** (1:18-20)
  - The roots and fruits of this come from those who **changed the truth of God into a lie** (1:21-25). That is, from the days of Cain, men **knew God** yet **glorified him not as God** (v. 21) and mankind has been **vain in their imaginations** (v. 21).
  - Thus **God gave them up** (v. 26) to **vile affections** ranging from homosexuality to disobedience to parents to lack of mercy (vv. 26-31).
- Now, we see that, as children of this heritage, men are without merit to judge his fellow man. The context here demands that judgment be taken as "passing sentence" rather than "distinguishing between right and wrong."
- **Thou that judgest doeth the same thing** - Is there anyone entirely free from the list of 1:26-31?

## ROMANS 2:2-5 | FOUNDATIONS

- Verse 2 - A foundational element of Judeo-Christian thought is that God (and only God) is righteous and holy, and thus only God can pass judgment.
- Verse 3 –
  - **O Man** - The phrase, **O man**, signifies that Paul's comments are directed toward the unsaved. Paul uses this phrase five times, four of which are to the lost, and one which clarifies **O man of God** (1 Tim 6:11).
  - **escape the judgment** - Another foundational element of Judeo-Christian thought is that every individual will stand in judgement before the righteous and holy God.
- Verse 4 –
  - **Despise thou the riches** –
    - Paul is explaining the current age, the age of grace in this verse.
    - There are those of the world who despise **the riches of his goodness**.
    - The word for **despise** is καταφρονέω [kataphroneo], which is "the ultimate in over-thinking an issue," and always used negatively.
    - This is seen when lost people say things like, "if there is a good God, then why does (or doesn't) he..."
  - **Goodness** - The root word is χάραμαι [chraomai] simply means "to use." Here it is used in its adjective form χρηστός [chrastos], which is literally, "useful." As an adjective, it is translated as "easy" (Mt. 11:30) or "kind" (Lk 6.35). (Note: the **riches of his goodness**, previously in v. 4, uses the same word).
  - **leadeth to repentance** –
    - It is easy to rejoice in the **goodness of God** as far as it stretches to us, but not desire it to stretch to others (see: Jonah).
    - God's goodness gave us time to change our mind about God (i.e., **repentance**), and we should rejoice when others also have this time.
    - Note that those of chapter 1 had a *thinking problem* about God that led to a *behavior problem*. Repentance remedies the thinking problem and thus the behavior problem.
- Verse 5 –
  - **treasurest** - The word θησαυρίζω [thesaurizo] is the root of our word *thesaurus*. It is an "ultimate and complete collection" of things.
  - **escape the judgement** –

- These verses are directed to unsaved individuals (see note on **O Man** in v. 1).
- Saved individuals are **delivered from the wrath to come** (1 Thes 1:10).
- The **day of wrath** and the **revelation of the righteous judgment** is the day of judgment at the end of the tribulation.

## ROMANS 2:6-11 | JUDGMENT OUTSIDE THE AGE OF GRACE

- Verse 6 - Beginning in v. 6, the conversation turns to a general discussion of the coming judgment, both for the righteous and the unrighteous. It is very important to recognize that Christians will *not* be present at this judgment (the Great White Throne Judgment).
- Verses 7-10 –
  - This appears to be a contradiction with Paul's grace message.
    - Some try to "fix" this by saying "eternal life comes **to every man that worketh good**, but since none do, none can get eternal life apart from grace."
    - However, this lays aside the foundational principle of literal reading of the Scripture.
    - What if Paul is actually describing what God does for those *outside of the age of grace*, those who miss the rapture and are judged at the judgment of the nations and the Great White Throne judgement?
      - In this case, Paul's message aligns with that of Jesus, that those who "endure to the end" will be saved (Luke 8:15 would serve as an example), and the "overcomer" instructions of John for the assemblies in the tribulation period.
      - Since Paul introduced this section by stating that he was talking about **the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God** (v. 5), then it is best to take these words as instructional for *lost men and women who will not be part of the rapture and judgment of Christians*.
      - Note that in chapter 3 Paul will argue that there has been a dispensational change that brings about the *Saving Gospel*. He says in Rom. 3:23, **But now** (as opposed to previously) **the righteousness of God without the law is manifested...**
  - The problem in our interpretation comes from 1800+ years of the prevalence covenant theology. Even dispensational thinkers have a hard time getting away from this kind of thinking. When we try to fit every passage of Scripture into our preconceived notions of "everyone always by grace through faith," then we create contradictions that otherwise would not have been there.
  - For additional Scriptures that support the idea that those living under Law (pre and post age of Grace) would be saved by works of the Law, consider Lev. 18:5, Ezek. 20:11, 13, 21, Lk 10:25-28, Rom. 10:5-6 (where Paul speaks of the dispensational change).
- Verses 10-11 – **no respecter of persons** - While this is one of the hallmarks of the Age of Grace, it was true of all ages (see Deut. 10:17). Jews and Gentiles were always treated the same--they had to come under the law given through Moses in order to be right with God.