

**The Gospel of God**  
**Part 3**  
**Romans 2 and 3**  
**The Judgement of God**  
**Pastor Charles Price**

If you have got your Bible then let me read to you from Romans Chapter 2. I am actually going to speak from Romans Chapter 2 and 3. I am going to read only a section of Chapter 2 initially, though we will be looking into Chapter 3 as well.

And this is quite a large section of Scripture. As I have prepared this, I have begun to think I should have divided this up into a number of sections to understand it fully.

But the overall theme that we are going to look at today is the judgement of God. This is what Paul takes time to write about in the detail that he does write about it here in these chapters.

Let me read then from Chapter 2 and Verse 1. And you remember from last time in Chapter 1 he is writing about the wrath of God, which is being revealed from heaven, he has said.

Now he says,

“You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgement on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgement do the same things.

“Now we know that God’s judgement against those who do such things is based on truth.

“So when you, a mere man, pass judgement on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God’s judgement?

“Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God’s kindness leads you toward repentance?

“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 judgement will be revealed.

“God will give to each person according to what he has done.

“To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life.

“But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.

“There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile;

“but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

“For God does not show favoritism.”

Well, keep your Bible open there. There is a lot there we need to talk about.

I began last time by saying that when you go to visit a physician, their first and most important task is to make an accurate diagnosis of your presenting symptoms. If the diagnosis they make is wrong, then the remedy is going to be wrong.

And Paul began a diagnosis in Chapter 1:18 which follows through until Chapter 3:20. It is a diagnosis of the human condition and it's a diagnosis that cannot be treated superficially or casually.

For without a proper understanding of what is wrong, we will not get a proper understanding of the remedy.

So far we have looked at two essential ingredients that enable us to understand the gospel. The first was the righteousness of God in Chapter 1:17 when Paul wrote,

“For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last.”

We talked about that several weeks ago.

And then secondly we talked about the wrath of God in Verse 18 of Chapter 1.

“The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness.”

Now I remind you that we pointed out then Paul speaks or writes in the present tense there. The wrath of God is being revealed. Not in the future tense at this point – will be revealed – but is being revealed in the present tense.

And the wrath of God is being revealed in the fact that God gives people over to the sins that they have chosen to live with.

Chapter 1:24 he says,

“God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts.’

In Verse 26,

“God gave them over to shameful lusts.”

Verse 28,

“He gave them over to a depraved mind.”

And this is the expression of God’s wrath. He doesn’t smack us around the head; He simply lets us go in the direction that we have chosen to go, always, of course, with ultimate consequences.

Verse 27 of Chapter 1 it says,

“And they received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.”

That is, they reaped the consequences of their sin without any necessary divine intervention from God. Simply by letting sin take its own course it will bring them down, and when they are down, it will kick them hard, as sin always does.

Let’s not kid ourselves. Our sin is never our friend – ever.

I have enough of my own sin to know that and to have discovered that.

Now having talked about that in the present tense – that’s what is going on in our lives; God gives us over – I want to talk now from Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 about the judgement of God because God giving over is only Part 1 of the wrath of God.

There is a Part 2. And in Chapter 2 Paul writes about the day of God’s wrath, in Verse 5. He says,

“You are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God’s wrath, when his righteous judgement will be revealed.”

It is true that God expresses His wrath in the present tense by giving us over, here and now, to the sins that we have embraced. But that is not the end of the matter. Like a runaway train that gains momentum as it rolls down the hill, it will eventually derail and destroy.

And in Chapter 2:16 Paul says,

“This will take place on the day when God will judge men’s secrets through Jesus Christ.”

On that day everything is going to be exposed and brought into the open. There will come a day of judgement and a day of God’s wrath.

Now this is not something to be either blasé about on the one hand or cynical about or “well, well, this is just a piece of doctrine”. It isn’t. It’s about your life and it’s about my life.

It is not a question of fitting this neatly into a little doctrinal box and saying, “Well, okay, this is that, this is that.” It is something I, personally in my own life, you personally in your life, have to face.

Judgement is both necessary and logical. Human society cannot function without accountability for our behavior. Nations have to make laws and they have to establish law courts by which violators of those laws can be legitimately and properly judged.

We know that; we live in such a society.

We cannot live in a nation where a pronouncement is made, “We would prefer that you do not drive more than 110 km/hour on the freeway. We would prefer you don’t. Would you kindly think about this out of consideration for other people? But there is absolutely no recourse if you don’t.”

We could not live in a society that says, “This is one of our values. This is our ideal that we do not steal from one another, but we have no recourse in the event that someone is stealing.”

“We cannot live in a society – one of the guidelines we would suggest is that you don’t murder anybody. That is not good; we would prefer you wouldn’t do that, please. But we have no recourse in the event that that takes place.”

It is part of the dignity of human beings that we are accountable. We cannot have a responsible society without laws. You cannot have laws without judgement. You cannot have judgement without punishment.

And it is part of the dignity of being human that we are ultimately accountable to God. God actually cares about how we live. That gives us incredible dignity. We are not “nobody’s”, we are not incidental. And every one of us is accountable to God on that day.

Now I want you to notice something subtle but very important in how Paul addresses sin, first in Chapter 1, then in Chapter 2. In Chapter 1 he speaks in the third person about people’s sins. That is, in Verse 18, for instance, he speaks of,

“the wickedness of men who suppress the truth by *their* wickedness.”

In Verse 21,

“Although *they* knew God, *they* neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him.”

Verse 22:

“*They* claimed to be wise, *they* became fools.

Verse 24:

“God gave *them* over in the sinful desires of *their* hearts.”

This is just an example, because 30 times in 15 verses in Chapter 1 he speaks about they, them, their, those. The “they”, the “them”, are other people - they (whoever they are), them (whoever them is).

But now in Chapter 2 Paul changes to the second person and in Verse 1 he says,

“You”

Not them now –

“*You*, therefore, have no excuse, *you* who pass judgement on someone else, for at whatever point *you* judge the other, *you* are condemning *yourself*, because *you* who pass judgement do the same things.”

And I read that one verse as a sample because 42 times in the next 29 verses he talks about you, your, and yours. This is about you.

Now I imagine at the end of Chapter 1, as people had this letter read to them in the church in Rome, there was some agreement from the Christians in Rome about Paul’s analysis of their society.

Rome was a very hedonistic society and I imagine when they heard things like, “they did not glorify God, they did not give thanks to Him, their thinking became foolish, their foolish hearts were darkened, they claimed to be wise but became fools, they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, they reaped the results of their perversions, they had become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed, depravity, they are senseless, faithless, heartless and ruthless, so God gave them over.” (I just read 10 of the 30 occasions Paul speaks about they and them.)

And I imagine as this was read there were people listening, saying to themselves, “Amen! Paul has really understood the Roman hedonism and culture and depravity.” They could see it all around them, of course.

You know there is little that unites people in their enthusiasm more than cataloguing and condemning other people’s sins. Little unites us like that. Nothing feeds the fire of our own egos like the exposure of other people’s failures. It is relatively easy to get a crowd together to protest about other people’s failures and sins.

And Paul has opened up this possibility by saying it’s about them, them, them.

But then he turns the tables from the ambiguous them to the unambiguous and very personal you. That is our subject today - you, me. You, inside this building. You, watching on television, maybe in the privacy of your own home. You, listening on the radio.

We are going to put the blinkers on now and not look out there, because Paul has done that, and everybody agrees with what is out there.

We are now going to focus in on here, you, me.

I am going to point out three things that Paul speaks about here. First of all, God's judgement is individual. It is not blanket judgement; it is individually applied and given.

Verse 1 again:

“You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgement on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgement do the same things.”

Now this may seem a rather presumptuous thing to say: “Whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself.”

Paul, do you really mean that?

The answer is yes he does. As did Jesus when He said, “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye when there is a plank in your own eye?”

Why do you make the assumption there is a plank in your own eye?

Because the evidence that you make a fuss of the speck in your brother's eye is you have something in your own eye, because judging others is symptomatic of a cover-up going on within ourselves.

Now I am not going to talk about that much this morning because there is a lot in this verse to talk about. But he makes that assumption.

And in turning from talking about the third person (them), he now talks about the second person (you), that you, in passing judgement, are all very well looking at other people and wagging your heads and saying yes, they are doing bad things. But what about you, says Paul.

Last Sunday morning most of you would have been here and Theresa Malila from Malawi in Central Africa was speaking. She is, as you would have learned very quickly, a remarkable Christian leader in her country.

In her message she talked about what she described as gender-based violence. She gave an incident of 68 rapes in one day, ranging from an 80-year old woman to an 18 month old baby. Of this kind of behavior (and it is an extreme example), but of this kind of behavior, she said, “Where are the men standing up to this?” She said, “I would rather have one man stand up and speak about this than 20 women stand up and speak about this.”

And she has taken this issue on and we as a church have worked with her and supported those who are working with her in this awful brokenness of her society.

But I wonder how you felt if you were here and you heard her speak about that. I wonder if you were shocked by that. I am sure you were.

I wonder if you were pulled by it. I wonder if you felt indignant that such things go on. It is, as I say, an extreme example. A woman can't go to the well without fear of being beaten if she goes alone, or attacked.

And our hackles rise in indignation of this kind of horror, and so they should. It's like Paul talking like that and then saying, as a generalization, "They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed, depravity." (Paul writes that in Chapter 1.)

But let me ask another question. What about gender-based abuse in Toronto? What about gender-based abuse in this very congregation where there are husbands who dominate their wives, and there are wives who manipulate and abuse their husbands?

What if sitting here this morning, there are some wives and you are actually afraid of your husband? I think that is quite likely to be true. Husbands who are fearful of your wives?

You see it's all very well looking at an extreme case two continents away in Central Africa. What about right here?

What about husbands who bully their wives with the Bible? Who take hold of some verse and say to their wife, "Here it is,

'Wives, submit to your husband'"

and conveniently remove it from the overarching context of that statement, which says immediately before,

"Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ."

Then it says,

"Wives" (doesn't use the word submit in the next verse) "wives to husbands and then husbands in how they are to wives, and he explains how the husbands are to submit to their wives. And he says that they are to love their wives

"as Christ loved the church"

(Husbands, that's the verse we need to know about)

"and gave himself up for her."

That's the kind of love our wives need from us. What do you give up for her? What do we give up?

Or is it what we demand of her?

“To make her holy”

The word holy doesn't sound like whole by mistake. Holy is to be whole.

“cleansing her by the washing with water through the word,”

(I am reading what Paul said in that context) [Ephesians 5:26]

“to present her without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.”

You know, we men, we husbands, we are to give ourselves up for our wives, not dominate them – give ourselves up. Give sacrificially for their well-being. We are to commit to make her holy, not subservient.

We are to work to remove stains and wrinkles and blemish, whether they are emotionally or psychologically or spiritually inflicted and whether it is from way back in the past or whether it is from the present, that doesn't matter; we work to remove the blemish, not exploit it.

Sadly there are Christian husbands who add blemish to their wives. They don't remove it.

Or another verse which is often used to bully: [1 Corinthians 7:4]

“The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband.”

Nice one, huh? To demand your rights from her.

Let's not get upset about Malawi when that goes on right under our noses in some of our homes.

See, this is what Paul does. They, they, they – nothing contributes to a sense of smugness more than they, they - they do this and they do that and they deserve that.

Then Paul comes right in, “You are in the same situation – you.”

Verse 2 says,

“Now we know,” (he says) “that God's judgment against those who do such things is based on truth.”

Ours is based on prejudice – a prejudice against anybody else but ourselves. God's judgment is based on truth.



Verse 11:

“God does not show favoritism.”

Well we do, of course. We show favoritism to ourselves. We can excuse and justify ourselves, and we do. We are extremely self-defensive about ourselves.

But Paul writes this in the context that whatever is going on out there, it is you that His judgment is going to expose and scrutinize and talk to you about.

So God’s judgment is individual, first of all.

Second thing I want to point out from here is that God’s judgment is internal.

Verse 16 he says,

“God will judge men’s secrets through Jesus Christ.”

That’s the key to this second section of Chapter 2. He will not be taken in by bluff. He will not be taken in by externals. It’s our secrets that become exposed and become open.

It takes courage to do that – I know that. It takes courage to go inside and bring those secrets out into the open. It takes courage. It can be painful.

My wife and I are committed to no secrets between us. That’s painful sometimes.

It takes courage to get hold of your secrets and yank them out of the darkness where they have been hidden. But they are going to be brought out of the darkness because, you see, God is not concerned with the externals; He is concerned with the secrets because that’s where everything derives from.

Whatever is locked away in the secret part of your heart is going to make its way out. You may try to keep it locked up but in due course it will make its way out.

That’s why, you know, Jesus said in John 12:47, He said,

“As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it.”

“I am not looking at the outward form.”

I mean we are very quick and easy to judge. Jesus said, “I don’t do that”, so we have no right to do so.

But rather He is concerned with what goes on inside. So you remember when He preached the Sermon on the Mount?

He said in Matthew 5:21,

“You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’”

And I am sure the crowd listened, “Yes, that’s a good law. Murder is not good and we don’t murder.”

“But,” said Jesus, “I say unto you, if anyone is angry with his brother, even though he never has the courage to put a knife into his back or put a bullet into his head, he is already guilty of murder.”

“You have heard it said you must not commit adultery”, said Jesus.

And people said, “Yes, we have heard that one.”

“I say unto,” said Jesus “if you look at a woman and you lust after her even though you do not know her name, even if you don’t know where she lives, you would never have the courage to go and knock on her door, you are already guilty of adultery.”

What is He saying? He is saying, “I am not really interested in the externals. We can all build a nice defensive external. That’s not the real you. The real you is what goes on inside you.”

And that is what is to be exposed. You know we can have our hidden agendas. We can have our secret intentions. We can have our false motives. And we can go about things with an external that looks fine. But it is all going to be exposed.

And God is not the slightest bit interested in how piously we sit here on a Sunday morning where butter wouldn’t melt in our mouths if that isn’t the way we behave when we go home.

Do you know how I know that? Because Jesus talked to the Pharisees one day and you find this actually in Matthew Chapter 23. And let me just read to you some of the things He said to the Pharisees.

He said (Verse 25),

“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence.”

Nice clean cup on the shelf, but pull it down and look inside and it’s full of gunge and dirt. Now He said, “This is what you are like. You look good, you Pharisees, you invest an awful lot of energy in making yourself look good. But look inside; it’s very different.”

He says in Verse 26,

“Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside will also be clean.”

In Verse 27,

“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men’s bones and everything unclean.”

Beautiful tombstones, but inside dead bones.

“In the same way” (Verse 28) “on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.”

The point is God’s judgment is internal, as Chapter 2 of Romans Verse 16 says,

“God will judge men’s secrets through Jesus Christ.”

You see, Paul’s diagnosis (remember this is the diagnosis we are still looking at) moves from the world out there in Chapter 1, which everybody is comfortable about and everybody agrees with and everybody can see.

It moves to you, which is a lot less comfortable, the people of God he is writing you – in here, I am talking to you, about you, he says. That is uncomfortable. And then he says, “But not just you, as everybody else sees you, but right into your heart.”

That is where the scrutiny of God takes place. God will judge men’s secrets through Jesus Christ.

We are going to see, when we get to the remedy (this is still a diagnosis) that the gospel of Jesus Christ gives us reason and courage and resources to go deep into the inner part of our beings because that’s where the work has to be done.

And if we are just dealing with externals (well I prayed the prayer and so I prayed the prayer and I will go to heaven one day when I die) all we are doing then is turning the cross into a doormat to wipe our dirty feet on so we can get in with clean feet.

That isn’t the gospel at all. It’s something much richer, much deeper, much fuller than that.

And the third thing we will talk about that is here in these verses – God’s judgment is individual, God’s judgment is internal, but God’s judgment is impartial.

You see in the second half of Chapter 2 he addresses himself to those who call themselves Jews, as he puts it in Verse 17. He says,

“If you call yourself a Jew; if you rely on the law and brag about your relationship to God...”

He moves his focus now to those who call themselves Jews – and there were some Jews amongst the congregation in Rome, the Christian congregation there, as also there were of course Gentiles.

But he moves the focus to the Jews because the Jewish people share a unique dilemma with Christian people. And it’s this: that because we are the people of God and because there is a security in being the people of God, and there are certainties attached to being the people of God, we put ourselves above others and adopt an elitist position and also an entitled position. We have this sense of entitlement. “I am okay with God now; therefore, my sin is not so important.”

So he says in these following verses, Verse 17:

“You call yourself a Jew...and brag about your relationship to God.”

Verse 18:

“You know his will and approve of what is superior because you are instructed by the law.”

Verse 19:

“You are convinced that you are a guide to the blind, a light for those you are in the dark.”

Verse 20:

“You are an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of infants, because you have in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth.”

Now when Paul writes this, my sense in reading it and re-reading it, is that he is writing this with a sense of sarcasm. He is saying, you call yourself something, you brag about something else, you know this, you approve that, you are a guide to these over here, you are an instructor to those over there, you have the embodiment of knowledge and truth. In other words, you have nothing left to learn – wow! You really think yourself to be in a position that entitles you and allows you to develop a soft conscience and soft behavior when it comes to sin.

Because then in Verse 21 he says,

“You, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal?”

“You who say that people should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?”

“You who brag about the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law?”

“As it is written; ‘God’s name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.’”

Do you know something? The sins of Christians are far more significant than the sins of the world at large for several reasons.

One: because we have resources in the Lord Jesus Christ for a different quality of living. It doesn’t involve perfection but it involves a different quality of living where the character of Jesus Christ is reproduced in us and expressed through us.

But more than that, it is when you sin, it is God who gets blasphemed, is what he says.

“God’s name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.”

You see the world is not naïve. The world says, “Really? That’s Christian? Really? And you think I would be interested in your God?”

Look at the incredible damage to Christendom at large that the abuse of young people by pedophile priests in the Roman Catholic Church that has occurred in so many countries around the world and become a source of so much publicity. Think of what that has done to blaspheme the name of God in the minds of people who say, “These are the people who teach righteousness? These are the people who get hung up about abortion? Don’t kid me. Look at how they behave.”

You don’t have to talk to many people to get that kind of feedback. I have gotten it a number of times. Sit on the plane; start talking to somebody. “What do you do?”

What do I do? Well I tell them what I do and so, “Oh really?”

“Yeah.”

“You Catholic?”

“No.”

“Boy, I bet you’re glad you’re not, aren’t you? Or are you one of these people that tells people if they give you all their money that God will give them back a lot? Are you one of those thieves?”

You wouldn’t believe how the name of God is blasphemed because of the atrocious sinfulness of Christian leaders.

Paul says it there.

Now this is getting a little bit uncomfortable isn’t it?

So somebody jumps up in Chapter 3 and Verse 1 and says,

“What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew, or what value is there in circumcision?”

Now Paul raises this question because he knows fine well the people he is talking to are starting to get uncomfortable. And so he asks the question, what advantage is there in being a Jew?

In other words, “If I am Jew, aren’t I already within the covenant relationship with God? I can’t lose that, so does it really matter? Because I am in that relationship with God. I thought that if I am a Christian I am already right with God, I already have a security in my relationship with Him. I can’t lose that, so it doesn’t really matter as much, does it?”

That’s behind this question in Paul’s argument here. He says, is there any advantage in being a Jew? Of course there is, he says, there is much in every way, in Verse 2. And he gives some reasons.

“First of all,” he says, “they have been entrusted with the very words of God.”

Which means this: because you have been entrusted with the very words of God, you have less excuse; you have less of an alibi, if you try to produce one, for your sin. For to whom much is given, much is required, says Scripture.

He who knows what to do and does it not, for him it is sin, says Scripture. Every new thing you know creates the potential for more sin because now you know something you didn’t know before and you can commit sin.

When I led the Bible School at Capernwray in England I used to say to the students, every time you learn something new, you create a greater capacity for sin because that greater capacity is in your disobedience to what you know.

We used to have five classes a day. Everybody did the same course. And I would say, “Supposing four of these classes don’t teach you anything but just one does in a day. That’s five things a week – five days. You are here for about 30 weeks. Five 30’s is 150.”

I said, “It is extremely dangerous to come into this Bible school because in the next 30 weeks you will increase your capacity for sin by about 150 times if you only learn one thing one day and four of the classes are boring and you don’t learn anything.”

“Every time you come into this building I hope you learn something, but in so doing you increase your capacity for sin.”

Is there any advantage in being a Jew? They say.

He says, “Well of course there is. First is you know more than anybody else.”

Any advantage of being a Christian when it comes to my sin?

Yes there is much more advantage in being a Christian – you know more which means you can live in the good of what you know.

Or you have a greater capacity to disobey.

And then there are a couple of remarkable excuses that allow Christians to sin. Here in Verse 5 of Chapter 3:

“If our unrighteousness brings out God’s righteousness more clearly, what shall we say? That God is unjust in bringing his wrath on us?”

You know, okay, so I behave badly, I commit sin, I engage in unrighteousness. Doesn’t that bring out God’s righteousness more clearly? It shows Him off in His grace and goodness by the fact He forgives and He forgives and He forgives. And so if my unrighteousness shows off God’s righteousness, why in the world does God treat me with wrath?

That’s the argument.

Paul doesn’t answer these things because they are so – he treats them with contempt actually – but he raises them.

“I’m a Christian now; I can show God’s wonder by the fact He has to forgive me for a lot. I’ll give Him some really big ones.”

You know that’s the argument.

This is the wrong deductions that come from the wonderful doctrine of eternal security because there is a judgement day for believers, there is a loss for believers. We haven’t time to go into the other Scriptures, but our works will be judged and some will be like wood, hay and stubble, which will all burn up in the fire. Some like gold, silver, precious stones, which are refined by the fire. But there is going to be a judgement of them.

And then in Verse 7 Paul says,

“Someone might argue, ‘If my falsehood enhances God’s truthfulness and so increases his glory, why am I still being condemned as a sinner?’

“Why not say – as we are being slanderously reported as saying and as some claim that we say – ‘Let us do evil that good may result?’”

That is a slight variation of the same argument. “My falsehood brings out God’s truthfulness; my sin brings out His glory.”

And Paul was being accused of this but he refutes it absolutely here. But it is not a question that my sin shows the contrast of God's glory. How does God show His glory? How does God show His truthfulness?

He shows it in us. That's how He shows it.

So you can't say, "Well, my sin will show up His glory." No, your sin will disguise His glory because Christ in you is your hope of glory. That's where the glory of God is seen - Christ living within us.

We are being transformed from one degree of glory into another, into His likeness. It is in us He shows His glory.

So you can't say, "Well you can sin just to show in contrast His glory." No, you are the expression of His glory. That does not mean perfection, but God works in a man's life, in a man's heart, in a woman's heart, in a young person's heart, in such a way that in them you begin to see and sense something of the presence of God Himself.

But if you are not living in that relationship and you are instead saying, "Well I am okay on the one hand; I am on my way to heaven and I have got security about that, but I can play around with the other and I can ill-treat my wife and my family" and you see, we are kidding ourselves. We are deluded.

Perfect love casts out fear. That's the antidote. When a wife is fearful of her husband or a husband is fearful of his wife, that's the antidote - perfect love. And you don't get that overnight but you have got to work on that.

And a measure will be the measure to which there is no fear because it is driven out.

And when the glory of God is not seen in us (back to Paul's statement), God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of us.

And so when the world looks at the Christian church they see the Lord Jesus Christ exhibited in people - people they work with, people they live next door to, people in their families, people who are in-laws, where Jesus Christ lives in a person's life and they see the glory of God.

They won't like it and they won't recognize what it is, but if they don't see that, they will simply blaspheme Him and they will see in you the crookedness of your own selfishness.

That's what Paul is saying to these believers, these Jews and these believers - believing Jews - in Rome.

And so he concludes, Verse 9:

"What shall we conclude then? Are we any better?"



Are we any better? And he says,

“Not at all! We have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin.”

(That’s in Verse 9.)

“There is no one righteous, not even one;” (In Verse 10)

“there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God (Verse 11)

Verse 12:

“All have turned away...there is no one who does good, not even one.”

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Verse 23).

And he gives this comprehensive set of statements that leave us standing accused, exposed and guilty.

Now I am going to finish with this point. But let me remind you this is the diagnosis of the disease. And before a physician can begin to apply the remedy we have got to understand the diagnosis.

And having made this diagnosis, the diagnosis we must take seriously, we must think about me – not where does this fit into doctrine, but what does this say about me and where is it true about me and what needs to happen in me? That’s the diagnosis.

But I finish with this, which we will pick up next week. Having made the diagnosis he says in Chapter 3 Verse 21,

“But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.

“This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.”

This is now the physician, having made the diagnosis. And of course the patient must agree with the diagnosis to get the remedy – we must agree, “yes, this is where I am.”

He then says now let’s look at the remedy. And he takes a number of chapters to talk about the remedy.

But what he begins to say here in Chapter 3 and Verse 21 and goes through to the end of Chapter 3 is, I suggest to you, the very heart of the Bible and the very heart of the Christian message.

And we can hear it, understand it, repeat it. We won't know it until we also know the diagnosis and we are honest about the diagnosis because the remedy is not a doctrine you stick on a shelf; it is a medicine that is applied to the need.

We are going to pray together. And I want to suggest we take just a few moments of quiet. Some of you may feel a long way from dealing with what God has exposed in your heart this morning. As I have been speaking, your mind has gone in all kinds of directions. Some of you thinking about your marriage, some of you thinking about your family, some of you thinking about your manner of work in the workplace, your integrity on your income tax forms.

I don't know how God has spoken to you.

Would you speak to Him in a few moments of silence about this?

Lord, we are so grateful this morning that this verse sits here in Romans 2.

“Do you show contempt for the riches of His kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you towards repentance?”

We pray, Lord Jesus, that there will be repentance in the hearts of those of us who need to repent. We know it is more than just being forgiven for the past, but finding our way out of the sinking sands that we feel we are in, the habitual behavior we don't know how to deal with, the habits, even addictions that we find our hearts and minds locked into.

Lord, thank You there is a way, there is a way back. But we recognize it begins with repentance at the cross of Jesus confessing, being honest, being open about the secrets of our hearts, thanking You for Your forgiveness, but thanking You that more than that, You will lead us on to a life of godliness and holiness.

We pray, Lord Jesus, that there would be lives here this morning that will change as a result of Your Word, marriages that will be different, family life that will be a joy to be part of.