



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

No Excuse! (Romans, Chapter 2)

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Paul condemned the culture of Rome where values were treated as relative. People decided what was right or wrong for them. Renowned thinker C.S. Lewis warned "It is a disaster for humanity when values, such as dignity and freedom, become meaningless." Lewis reasoned that natural law (or objective morality) is essential to the well-being of humanity. God's high standards assure that the gospel, the good news of God's grace, is relevant for all. How has God shown you grace recently?

INTRODUCTION

We saw in Romans 1:20 that even those who have not heard the gospel are just as accountable as those who see themselves as very religious. Righteousness, right-living, is not possible without a heart change. Paul stated: "There is none righteous, not even one." (Romans 3:20). **How close have you come to keeping God's law, even man's law all your life?**

ATTEMPTING TO BE GOOD ENOUGH

Romans 2:11-12 For God does not show favoritism. All who sin without the law will also perish without the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law.

People know right from wrong, even without knowing God! Conscience accuses or excuses them. However, we are guilty of sin when we pass judgment on others! Have we kept all God's law in practice and thought? Consider the Ten Commandments (Deuteronomy, Chapter 5): The first four address our vertical relationship with God. Have we loved or feared someone more than God? Have we idolized something or someone? Have we used God's name as a curse word? Have we kept holy the Sabbath day? The last six address our horizontal relationships: Honoring/respecting our father and mother. Murder, or in anger, planning how to rid someone from our life. Committing, even fantasizing adultery. Theft, even borrowing without returning. False testimony, lying, or slandering another. Coveting, languishing over something another has. Even the Golden Rule condemns us (Mathew 7:12)! **Do you strive to treat others as you desire to be treated?**

GOD'S RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT

Romans 1:4 Do you despise the riches of His kindness, restraint, and patience, not recognizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?

Paul has a tough message for people who are self-righteous. Perhaps without realizing it, they show contempt for God's mercy toward others and toward them! God's judgment is without error; it rightly falls. It is based upon one's actions, according to his deeds. It is unbiased, so there is no partiality. We avoid final judgment by repenting and trusting Jesus's payment for our sin (Romans 1:16-18). **Can you recall times when God has firmly and lovingly corrected you to keep you from harm or from sin?**

HARD TRUTH FOR RELIGIOUS PEOPLE

Romans 2:19-21 If you are sure that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth – you then who teach others, do you not teach yourself?

Paul was as tough on the Jewish leaders of his day as we should be with some fundamentalist and devout Christian teachers today. We can be self-righteous, proud of our knowledge, our heritage, and yet lack humility in Christ's saving grace (Micah 3:9; John 8:31-32). We see outward appearances, but God sees the heart (1Samuel 16:7). Paul's criticism of the religious leaders was sharp! Some transgressed the very law and statutes they were teaching (Romans 3:24). Paul quoted Old Testament verses to condemn those rulers (Deuteronomy 10:16; Isaiah 52:5; Ezekiel 36:22). **How are you striving to refresh God's spirit in your heart, enriching your talk and your walk?**

A PRAYER

Father God: I rejoice that I have a place in Your kingdom, a promise of eternity in Your presence. Thank You for filling me with Your spirit, empowering me to serve with both humility and boldness as one of Your own during my season here on earth. I pray in the name of Your Son, Jesus. Amen!