



Romans

Right With God

Bad News - Part Three

Lesson Twelve

Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex Curriculum

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Bad News—Part Three

In our last lesson Paul was condemning all those awful people. He was pointing out sins that we knew were there and have wanted to point out ourselves. Sometimes it just seems right to judge them and say, “Thank you God for laying it on those terrible people.”

But, remember this: God is, and will always be, the final judge. God outranks even the Supreme Court. Daniel Webster, lawyer and statesman, was asked “What is the greatest thought that ever entered your mind?” He said, “My responsibility to my Maker.” One day we will meet the true God, the God who has never changed in any way. He is not going to be any different, nor is He going to change at all when He becomes our judge. (Read Romans 2:1-3)

Here we see people who do not believe that the things at the end of chapter one apply to them. Two types: First, there are those who consider themselves better because they haven’t been openly bad.* They seem to be better because of their level of education, their living conditions, their race or cultural background. They say, “those people are the poor sinners. I, on the other hand, am one of the first class folks. You won’t catch me doing those awful things.” Second type; there are those who look down on the “bad folks” thinking they are better because they practice some religion, know something of the Scriptures, or may consider themselves to be one of the “chosen people.”

What is said in the second chapter is forever linked to what is said in the first chapter by the word “therefore.” God condemns those in the first chapter and also condemns those in the second chapter. Paul actually says that those who point out the sinners mentioned in the first chapter are just as guilty of sin. It may not be one of the specific sins mentioned in the first chapter, however, God sees in their hearts; and their sin of self-righteousness, is just as bad in God’s eyes as all those other sins. As Jesus pointed out in the Sermon on the Mount, it is in the heart that people really sin. (Matthew 5)

Paul makes it very clear that God is the one who passes judgment. Humans should not be in the business of judging. Again, in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus warned against judging. “Do not judge,” He said, “or you will be judged.” (Matthew 7:1) The word judge here means criticizing or pointing out the failures of someone. Paul says those who do that will be condemned. God is going to hand down a judgment on them. (I Corinthians 4:5)

Verse two points out something that is most important. It says that when God judges, He knows all the truth, so His Judgment is absolutely perfect. All the facts of the case are His and He makes no mistakes. When God judges there are no errors. His sentence is always fair.

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Remember that in chapter one Paul was talking about people who commit terrible sins. Can't you just see some of the people in the crowd nodding their heads, eager to condemn those terrible people? Well, that doesn't last very long, because Paul suddenly lumps the "good folks" right in with the "bad folks."

(Read verse three.) It could read, "Now, don't think that you can pull the wool over God's eyes by acting so nice, and by trying to distract God by pointing out the sins of other people." The obvious response is, "Not a chance." God is God. He knows everything. And, He is going to judge everyone, the bad ones and also those who think they are good just because they haven't done something they consider all that bad.

Scripture Memory: "Now we know that God's judgment against those who do such things is based on truth." Romans 2:2

*Underlined statements in this Teacher's Guide appear in the Student Worksheet with blanks to be filled in by the student during the lesson. Words in the Student Worksheet may not appear exactly as printed in the Teacher's Guide.

For the Teacher:

Lesson Goal: To help students to understand that God judges sin, even in those who claim righteousness.

1. You might want to clarify the meaning of self-righteousness. We might consider it to be believing that you are good in spite of the fact that you sin. It might be believing you are better than someone else. It is the opposite of humility. The Bible is full of condemnation of those who boast, who are proud. Psalm 94:1-11; II Timothy 3:1-5

2. According to Griffith Thomas, chapter two indicates seven principles of God's judgment. Concerning those who consider themselves better because they haven't been openly bad...or think they haven't, God's judgment is:

1. According to the truth—Verse 2
2. According to accumulated guilt—Verse 5
3. According to works—Verse 6
4. Without respect of persons—Verse 11
5. According to following God's will, not simply knowledge of God's will—Verse 13
6. According to the secrets of the heart—Verse 16

Concerning those who think they are better because they are religious, God's judgment is:

7. According to reality, not religious profession—Verses 17-29
3. When Paul uses "no excuse" in 2:1, he is saying that there is no way for one to defend himself against the charges.
4. Understanding the meaning of 2:1, we are reminded of the scene when Nathan approached King David and told him the terrible story of the rich man who took the one lamb of the poor shepherd, instead of sacrificing one of his own flock. David was livid. He was ready to condemn the rich man to death. Then, Nathan told David that he was that person. Paul has told the Romans that there were awful sinners in the world. Then, he has to tell them that they are also sinners. See II Samuel 12:1-7.

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Student Worksheet

Bad News—Part Three

=We see people who do not believe that the things at the end of chapter one _____ to them.

Two types: First, there are those who consider themselves _____ because they haven't been openly _____. Second, there are those who look down on the "_____ folks" thinking they are better because they practice some _____.

=Paul makes it very clear that God is the one who passes _____. Humans should not be judging. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus _____ against judging. "Do not judge," He said, "or _____ will be judged." (Matthew 7:1)

=Verse three could read, "Now, don't think that you can pull the wool over God's _____ by acting so nice, and by _____ to distract God pointing out the _____ of other people."

=God knows everything. _____ is going to judge everyone, the _____ ones and the _____ ones.

Scripture Memory: "Now we know that God's judgment against those who do such things is based on truth." Romans 2:2

A Roman Road to Salvation:

Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Everyone is a sinner and needs salvation.

Romans 6:23a "For the wages of sin is death." The law of God is unchangeable. If someone sins the penalty must be paid, the payment is death.

Romans 5:8 "But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners Christ died for us." God loves us so much, according to John 3:16, that He sent His Son, Jesus, to die for our sins.

Romans 6:23b "But the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." The penalty for sin is spiritual death, but God, through the death of Jesus on the cross, took the penalty for the sins of all people, and now everyone can have eternal life. See also, II Corinthians 5:21

Romans 10:9, 10 "That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved." To personally receive the gift of God, eternal life in Christ Jesus, you trust God to be what He says He is. Believing that "God raised Him (Jesus) from the dead" is to accept all that the Bible says about God and His Son, Jesus. Then you speak (confess) the words, "Jesus is Lord," as a statement of faith. Believing "with your heart" means that you believe with your mind and with everything that you are.

Romans 10:13 "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." You have the promise of God Himself that if you do what Romans 10:9, 10 says, you will become God's child and have eternal life.

Romans 12:1, 2 "I urge you brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will." Becoming a Christian is a life-long act of faith and worship.