



7/15/25

Today's passage reminds me of a pendulum swinging. Paul is showing us that neither living in ignorance of God and His law nor living in legalism with His laws brings salvation. Both sides of the pendulum are living for SELF, just in a different way. God wants to take us to a whole new place... living in freedom FROM sin and condemnation through Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit. That's the place to be! What God has for us is so much better!!! It reminds me of my dog, Toby. He is so obedient... most of the time. Hahaha. But He's not obedient out of fear of punishment... but because he loves the relationship he has with me. Yes. We have a relationship! Hahaha. And when Toby does do something wrong, he knows that my discipline will never cross over into condemnation. That's the relationship God wants with you and me... maybe ever better. 😊

*Blessings,
Jonna*

Romans 2:12-21

As I continue this passage in Romans 2, I see that Paul is making the case for true salvation in Christ. The Jew cannot claim salvation through the law, and the Gentile cannot claim that he's entitled to salvation through ignorance. All this is setting the foundation for righteousness and salvation that only come through faith in Jesus Christ.

Vs. 12 ~ "For all who have sinned WITHOUT the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned UNDER the law will be judged by the law." It doesn't matter who I am, whether Jew or Gentile... salvation only comes through Jesus. I cannot earn it, and I cannot avoid my need for it by claiming ignorance. The truth of God's divine nature is stamped on my soul, so I am without excuse if I don't turn to the Lord through Jesus. This is a big deal... The only thing that makes me worthy of salvation is that Jesus "fulfilled the righteous requirement of the law in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit" (Romans 8:4).

But wait... this passage says, "All who have SINNED" with or without the law will be judged by the law. What if I haven't sinned? I'm going to see in Romans 3:23, "For ALL have sinned and

fall short of the glory of God." So... anyone who does not receive Jesus as their Savior and confess Him as their Lord WILL be judged by the law. Galatians 3:10 tells me that being judged by the law leaves us cursed because we would have to be judged absolutely perfect without falling short of God's glory even once... ever. There are no mulligans under the law. That's why Jesus had to fulfill the righteous requirement of the law FOR us. He HAS followed it perfectly without falling short even once. He didn't just know the law or hear the law. He lived the law.

Vs. 13 ~ "For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified." To be justified is to be treated "just as if I'd always obeyed, just as if I'd never sinned, just as if I had the perfection of Jesus." Churches and synagogues are filled with people who hear God's word, but never actually put it into action. The evidence that I'm truly justified is that I'll put God's word into action IN FAITH. James 1:22-25 says, "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing." Being obedient to God's word is the evidence of my faith and my justification before God... whether I am a Jew or a Gentile. Being free from condemnation under the law doesn't mean that God now gives me a pass on sin and I can sin all I want... It means that God frees me from punishment for failing the law, and He gives me the Holy Spirit to help me stop sinning against Him... whether I am a Jew or a Gentile.

For the Gentile...

Vs. 14-16 ~ The moral nature of God is stamped on every soul, even those who don't know God. The Gentile, who doesn't have God's law, still does a lot of what it says... The Gentile still understands the importance of fairness and kindness, not stealing and not murdering. The Gentile has a conscience that bears witness to God's absolute truth. Even in a time when people are veering farther and farther away from the truth by calling out, "I have to live by MY truth", their arguments break down when logically challenged... even without the Bible. They wrestle conflicting thoughts of right and wrong... but they will be judged by whether or not they embraced the gospel... "For Christ is the end of the law for everyone who BELIEVES" (Romans 10:4).

For the Jew...

Vs. 17-21 ~ Even though Jesus came and fulfilled the law, the Jew still believes that his salvation is through the law. He relies on the law and boasts that he knows God because he's in the bloodline of His chosen race. He says he knows God's will and approves what's excellent... but Philippians 1:9-11 says that it's through the love of Christ that we grow in LOVE, not law, "and so approve what is excellent." The law is meant to point us to Jesus.

Without Jesus, the Jew is the blind leading the blind, the darkness trying to point others in darkness to light. But Jesus is the light. "In Jesus was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it" (John 1:4-5).

The Jew misses the wisdom of God and thinks he's teaching wisdom to the fool, but he doesn't have the wisdom from above because "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden" in Christ Jesus (Colossians 2:3). The Jew believes that he has all knowledge and truth through the law, but Jesus is "the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but through Him" (John 14:6). The law is the MRI that reveals the need for a Savior, but the law cannot save just as an MRI cannot heal.

O Lord, let me not claim ignorance and let me not claim knowledge apart from You. Knowing Your written word does not mean I know You unless I know Your Word become flesh... Jesus Christ... and confess Him as my Lord. The evidence that I truly know You will be that I live what I teach and practice what I preach. I pray that I will turn to You and let the gospel change me so that I look more like Jesus today than I did yesterday. Let me not rely on conscience or the law, but on the Holy Spirit to lead me. Let the Holy Spirit teach me Your word and speak to my conscience as I follow Him, walk by Him, and keep in step with Him so that I can walk in the steps of Jesus.