

ROMANS: THE RELIGIOUS SINNER

Wednesday, May 29

Reading: Romans 2:1-16

Romans 2:5 *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 judgment will be revealed.*

From pagan people, Paul now turns to religious people who believe they are OK because they don't do the terrible things 'those heathen' do! But Paul declares that they too stand condemned before God.

THEY ARE CONDEMNED FOR IGNORING THEIR OWN SIN (2:1-3) – While condemning others, these religious people refuse to recognize the sin in their own lives (Matthew 7:2-3). They refuse to see that they are equally guilty before God. Unlike their biased judgment, the judgment of God is based on truth and they will not escape His justice.

THEY ARE CONDEMNED FOR THEIR HARD HEARTS (2:4-11) - God is good in that He does not bring judgment the moment a person sins. He is patient and gives sinners time to turn from their sins in repentance. However, religious types often despise God's goodness by receiving His blessings and yet refusing to repent of their sins. Their hard hearts (Matthew 13:15) are storing up God's wrath that will be poured out at the final judgment.

THEY ARE CONDEMNED FOR THEIR DISOBEDIENCE OF GOD'S LAW (2:12-16) - The emphasis here is that God will judge all people on the basis of the knowledge they have. The heathen, who did not have God's written law, will be judged by "the law written on their hearts" (2:14-15). Every person has a God-given conscience that tells them right from wrong and is enough to show a person that they are sinners. However, these religious people have heard and know the Law of God. Yet they do not obey it! They believe they are righteous but simply hearing God's word is not enough. They were not "doers of the law" (see James 1:22-25).

LESSON ONE: "God's Kindness is Intended to Lead You to Repentance." Religious people tend to think they are right with God merely because they go to church or had some religious experience in their past. They take God's grace for granted and believe they can live anyway they please while at the same time condemning others. What they really need is not some religious experience but a relationship with Jesus Christ. What they need is repentance, not ritual. It is easy to get caught up in "church world" and miss the fact that our hearts are getting hard to the people around us. The church does not need "religious people" but on-fire disciples of Jesus Christ. Which one are you?

LESSON TWO: "God Judges People's Secrets." We cannot hide anything from God. "The secrets of men" will be revealed on the Day of Judgment when God will judge all people with what they have done with Jesus Christ (2:16). All people are guilty of breaking God's law. When they stand before the Lord there will be no excuses. But it is a wonderful promise that though judgment is inevitable, Christ will be the Judge and those who are trusting in His righteousness for salvation do not need fear condemnation (Romans 8:1).