



(For access to all available commentaries and sermons of Charlie's click [HERE](#))

# Romans

**And do you think this, O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God? Romans 2:3**

This is a direct question from Paul to the Jews of his day. There is a definite train of thought since verse 1.

1) When a person condemns another it proves they have a sense that an offense was committed. If the one who condemns knows this and passes judgment but also commits the offense, then they have no excuse for their actions.

2) God's judgment on those who commit transgressions is based on His nature – He is absolute truth and therefore His judgment is perfect and must be executed equally in all. As Habakkuk says so clearly –

You are of purer eyes than to behold evil,  
And cannot look on wickedness. Habakkuk 1:13

3) Therefore, because the person who condemns does so when they know an action is wrong, and yet they commit the same type of actions, how can they expect to escape God's judgment? It would be unthinkable based on the standard of truth which defines who He is.

The Jew standing in judgment of the gentile actually condemns himself in his decision! What brought about his accusation of them – God’s law, of which he was the steward – is what brings his own condemnation. The Jew is without excuse.

However a point that should not be missed is that as time has passed, the question now appropriately belongs to the Christian as well. When Israel was exiled for their disobedience and rejection of Christ, the gentile world became the stewards not only of God’s Old Testament law, but the Gospel of Christ as well. Now, the logic of verses 1-3 which Paul writes points a finger directly at the Church. How can we stand in judgment of others if we fail to first pronounce the gospel? If we keep it a secret and yet condemn others for being heathen or unconverted Jews, then aren’t we “doing the same?”

Later in Romans 11, we will come upon this passage which is speaking of the mystery of Jewish exile and the grafting in of the Church –

“For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience, even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy. For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all.” (vss. 30-32)

We err if we point our fingers at the Jews and say how stupid they are for having rejected the Lord and His cross. Were that not to have happened, the church as we know it would never have come into existence. But God, in his infinite wisdom, blinded them in part so that salvation might come to the gentile people of the world. Let us not be so arrogant against our unbelieving Jewish brethren, but let us pray for them and pray for their eyes to be opened to the glorious gospel which saves all men.

Life application: The times are coming to their fulfillment and Jesus Christ’s return is closer each day. By Jesus’ own words He has promised to return to His people Israel and to their capital, Jerusalem. The Church Age will end and then will come

the Tribulation period. At the end of that time, Jesus will return to set up His millennial kingdom from Jerusalem. Let your daily prayers reflect a desire for Israel's eyes to be opened to their long-rejected Messiah, Jesus.

**Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? Romans 2:4**

An alternative to what was just presented is now given – “Or.” Paul has been speaking about those who condemn others and yet are guilty of practicing the very sins which they condemn in them. And so he asks, “Or do you despise...?” This is in the indicative mood and therefore it requires the answer, “Yes, in fact you do.”

The idea is that these people had been shown the unmerited favor of God and yet “despised” it by becoming ungrateful of it and even expecting that it should continue because they somehow deserved it. This is the sentiment of Luke 13:1-5 and which Jesus forcefully corrects –

“There were present at that season some who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all other men who dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.’”

Those who came to Him intimated that the Galileans must have been pretty big sinners to have Pilate mingle their blood with his sacrifices. Jesus turned around and brought their fallen state to mind. God had been abundant in His riches to them and they had trampled on this grace by expecting it to continue on ad infinitum regardless of their conduct.

America has had this attitude for far too long. Because we have been so richly blessed, when calamity falls (such as 9/11) we try to project it on the wickedness of others and not look at it as deserved judgment. Anyone who speaks out against our moral impurity is sure to get an earful from those who either dismiss the judgment of God or who only see their own perceived moral flawlessness and not a nation ripe for God's punishing hand.

The "riches of" God Paul notes are His 1) "goodness" – this is His benign nature. He is a compassionate God who is in no way arbitrary or vindictive; 2) His "forbearance" – this reflects God's restraint. When judgment would be expected under almost any conceivable circumstance, He still withholds His wrath, understanding that we are prone to sin from birth; and 3) because of His forbearance, He is also "long-suffering." This concept shows that not only does He withhold His wrath, but He is also "slow to anger" as is noted in Exodus 34:6, 7 –

"And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation."

These are the riches which the people were despising. They looked at the world around them as fallen and ripe for judgment and yet they thought they had a free pass to act in the same manner with no expected repercussions. But Paul says that these riches of His goodness were meant not to promote license, but to lead them to repentance. He will take this concept and refine it in the chapters ahead. In chapter 6, we will read this –

"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?" (vss. 1, 2) God's grace is shown in the goodness of His riches, so why can't we continue to sin in order for His grace to be seen in an even greater light? This is the perverse nature of man – looking for a way to excuse or even justify that which is contrary to

normal order, right thinking, and holy living. Let us never presume upon the goodness of the Lord in this manner!

Life application: Do you look at yourself as of high value? Do you perceive others as sinful whereas you are guilt-free? What about the society in which you live. Has prosperity led you to believe that you are God's favored and chosen and that you can therefore act in any way you wish? Let us never assume that we can flagrantly sin and be excused when we do.