

**Subject: *Principles of God's Judgment***

**Scripture: *Romans 2:1-16***

Paul's argument is very logical and step by step. He is out to prove that all people are sinners who deserve God's judgment, and therefore stand in need of salvation. In most of chapter 1, Paul uncovered and proved the guilt of the heathen world. The world is condemned and without excuse. In chapter 2 Paul deals with the guilt of self-righteous hypocrites who feel they are better off than the people just described in chapter 1.

Look at some of the key words and phrases. In 1:17 we see "the righteousness of God." In 1:18 we find "the wrath of God." Then in 1:32 we see the judgment of God." Paul then deals with this subject of God's judgment and gives six principles by which God judges sinners.

When Christians speak about the righteousness of God and the wrath of God and then talk about specific sins like the ones mentioned in 1:24-32, unbelievers often object and say, "Who are you to judge me?" The world says that Christians are judgmental. How do we answer that? We are not judging people by our own standard, but we are upholding the standard that God sets. God has already judged things to be right or wrong. His judgment matters because He will judge every person by His righteous standard. There is no escape from God's judgment.

People generally reject the idea of God's judgment. They like the concept of God as our loving Father, our generous Provider, and our strong Protector, and our faithful Friend, but they don't want God as our righteous Judge. Instead, man wants to be his own judge. He wants to set the standard of right and wrong. He wants the freedom to condemn others, but reserves the right to justify his own actions. That is exactly where Paul begins in Romans 2.

**1. God's judgment is based on *our judgment of others* (2:1)**

Paul addresses the issue of hypocrisy, to be more precise, self-righteous hypocrisy. The worst form of badness is human goodness when it becomes a substitute for the new birth.

This is Paul's argument. If someone has sufficient knowledge to judge other people, he condemns himself, because he shows he has sufficient knowledge to judge himself. In condemning other people, hypocrites overlook and excuse their own sins. But, as Paul says in 2:1, they are inexcusable (without excuse).

**2. God's judgment is based on *facts* (2:2-3)**

The word "truth" means right. God always does what is right. His judgment is always right. Truth is reality. Truth is based on facts. In a court of law the oath is administered to every witness: "Do you promise to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?" The outcome of the case depends on the truth. God's judgment is based on truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. He knows all the facts.

**3. God's judgment is based on *goodness despised* (2:4-5)**

To despise is to think little of something, to undervalue it, or to treat it with contempt. The riches of God's goodness ought to melt our hearts. His forbearance is how God puts up with us. He graciously holds back His judgment. His longsuffering is patience. This should lead us to repentance, to agree with God about our sin, to be deeply sorry for sin, and forsake it.

Repentance means turning away from sin and turning to Christ to forgive us and save us.

Something that has always saddened me is how people want God to heal and restore them when they are sick or undergoing serious surgery, but then when they recover they won't use that God-given strength to worship and serve God.

Our stubbornness and unrepentant heart is storing up more of God's righteous wrath on judgment day. The word for hardness (Gk., *sclerosis*) refers to the danger of spiritual hardness of the heart, a refusing to repent and live for God.

#### **4. God's judgment is based on works done (2:6-11)**

In verse 6 Paul makes a general statement. Then in verses 7-10 he describes the works of saved people and lost people. There are two groups and two kinds of works: the works of the redeemed (vs. 7, 10) and the works of the unredeemed (vs. 8, 9).

We are not saved by works, but we will be judged by works. Our works are the evidence or proof of a saved life or an unsaved life. Works are proof of a person who is justified or a person who is condemned.

Judgment will be rendered to everyone, to the Jew first and also to the Greek (vs. 9, 10). Just as Paul said: "the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (1:16). God is impartial with regard to salvation and with regard to condemnation. There is no respect of persons (lit., of faces) with God (2:11).

#### **5. God's judgment is based on light given (2:12-15)**

All people have some light or knowledge of right and wrong. All people have the light of creation and conscience. Some have the greater light of God's law (Scripture).

Those who have the law are held to a higher account. What matters is not only hearing God's law, but doing it. Some Gentiles who did not have the law lived as if they did (vs. 14). They obeyed that inner sense of right and wrong written on their hearts (vs. 15).

The conscience is that inner alarm that tells us when we do what is wrong and confirms when we do what is right.

#### **6. God's judgment is based on hidden things (2:16)**

This verse tells us there is a special time determined for God's judgment (the day). There is a special person determined to be the judge (by Jesus Christ).

*Acts 17:31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.*

*John 5:22-23<sup>22</sup> For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:<sup>23</sup> That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent him.*

There is a special depth in judgment (the secrets of men). Every hidden thing you've every done, every hidden word you've ever spoken, every hidden thought you've ever had will not be hidden from God. All of it will be exposed on judgment day.

All that Paul says about God's judgment is in keeping with the gospel (vs. 16). The bad news is that all have sinned and are condemned...guilty as charged. The good news is that our Judge is also the One who died for sin and in the place of sinners. The Judge is the Savior who will justify all who believe in Him.

Do you want God to judge you on the basis of these six principles?

- Based on how we have judged others
- Based on the facts
- Based on goodness despised
- Based on works done
- Based on light given
- Based on things hidden

No person in his right mind would want God to judge him on the basis of those principles. The only option is to settle your case out of court. Repent of your sins and put your total trust in Christ as Lord and Savior if you want to escape God's judgment and condemnation.