

# Day 113, Romans 2

by David Servant

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*David Servant's sermon on Romans 2 emphasizes the necessity of true righteousness and grace for salvation, challenging false security in religious rituals.*

**Scripture:** Romans 2:4-5, Romans 2:7, Romans 2:25, Romans 2:29

**Topics:** "Gods Judgment", "Inward Transformation"

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## Description

David Servant preaches on Paul's logical argument in Romans, emphasizing that when we condemn others for wrongdoing, we testify that we know what is right and wrong, and desire justice for wrongdoers. However, by doing what we condemn in others, we self-condemn and deserve punishment for our own selfishness. The foundation of the gospel is that all, Jew and Gentile, are self-condemned sinners deserving of God's wrath, with eternal life granted to those who persevere in doing good. Paul challenges the misconception that salvation comes through circumcision or mere association with the Law of Moses, highlighting the need for inward transformation by the Spirit.

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## Transcript

Paul's logic is indisputable. When we condemn others for wrongdoing, we testify before the court of heaven that we know what is right and wrong. Moreover, we desire that wrongdoers be justly punished for their selfish deeds, don't we? So when we do what we have condemned in others, we stand self-condemned, bearing witness that we deserve to be punished for our own selfishness. Yet most people continue in their sin, "storing up wrath for themselves" (2:5), completely unprepared for the day when God, the righteous Judge, will "render to each person according to his deeds" (2:6). This is the foundation upon which the gospel is built: All of us, Jew and Gentile, are all self-condemned sinners who deserve God's wrath.

Anyone who may have accused Paul of proclaiming a gospel that nullified either God's righteousness or the necessity of righteous living to gain eternal life would have been silenced by today's reading. Paul declared that God will give eternal life to "those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality," and that He will give "glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good" (2:7, 10). In contrast, "wrath and indignation" awaits those who "are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness" (2:9). Moreover, "there will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil" whether they are Jew or Gentile (2:10).

These same statements also contradict the modern message of "grace" that is being proffered and that gives license to sin. Only the holy will inherit eternal life, and since all are sinners, the only way to gain holiness is through repentance, forgiveness and empowerment by the Holy Spirit. But I'm getting ahead of Paul!

Just as so many in our day assume that they are saved by virtue of being baptized church members, so Jews in Paul's day were convinced that, as God's chosen people, they had salvation "in the bag" by virtue of the fact that they were circumcised and had been given the Law of Moses. Paul exposes the fallacy of those assumptions. How absurd it would be to think that God would accept and eternally reward law-ignoring but circumcised Jews while rejecting and punishing a Gentile who, although uncircumcised, kept the moral aspects of the Mosaic Law as he followed his God-given conscience. To say otherwise would be to make God unjust and elevate circumcision above morality.

So Paul puts circumcision in its proper perspective: "For indeed circumcision is of value if you practice the Law; but if you are a transgressor of the Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision" (2:25). That is, your circumcision is useless, because it will not save you. A true Jew, Paul says, is one who is not just circumcised outwardly, but circumcised inwardly in his heart by the Spirit, that is, one who is born again.

With this first subject matter, Paul is preparing to demolish the grand Jewish objection to his message---that Gentiles can be justified, or made righteous, through faith apart from the Law of Moses. The plain truth was that the Jews were not obeying the Mosaic Law and were sinners every bit as much as Gentiles. They themselves could not hope to be saved through the Mosaic Law which they didn't keep, and so they needed some other way of salvation--one that would obviously require grace from God. That way of salvation, as you know and as Paul will soon reveal, is through the sacrificial death of Jesus. Jews can only be saved through faith in Him. That being so, it seems reasonable to conclude that Gentiles, as well, cannot be saved through the Law of Moses, but like the Jews, only through faith in Christ. Paul's logic is quite compelling.

One final note. Paul wrote, "the kindness of God leads you to repentance" (2:4). Based on this verse, some say that we should never mention God's wrath or humanity's guilt when we preach the gospel, since God's kindness is what leads people to repentance. Might that be taking Paul's words out of their context? (Hint: The answer begins with the letter Y!)

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