

**I. Introduction and Review.**

- A. Human justice is often flawed.
- B. Divine judgment is perfect.
- C. Paul acts as God's prosecuting attorney against humanity. 1:18-3:20

**II. God judges you according to truth (reality). v. 1-5**

- A. You are condemned by your own hypocrisy. v. 1-2
  - 1. You judge others for practicing the very sins in which you indulge. v. 1 Mt. 7:1-3
  - 2. How are these outwardly moral and religious people as guilty as the pagans? v. 29-31 1:18,21 Js. 2:10 Mt. 5:22,28 Lu. 11:39
  - 3. You know God's judgment falls upon such sins. v. 2
  - 4. You can't fool God Who judges truly. v. 2 Ps. 11:4 Lu. 16:15 Mt. 23:27 He.
  - 5. You are without excuse. 1:20b
  
- B. You have abused your privileges. v. 3-4 John 8:33 Mt. 3:9
  - 1. Don't think you will escape judgment because of your outward religion. v. 3
  - 2. Nor should you interpret God's favor towards you as approval. v. 4 II Pe. 3:4-9
  - 3. His goodness should lead you to repentance. II Pe. 3:9 Ez. 33:11 Mt. 23:37
  - 4. Instead you have despised God's blessings.
  
- C. Your stubborn presumption provokes God's wrath. v. 5
  - 1. God's patience with your sin has a limit. He has set a day of judgment. v. 16
  - 2. Your punishment will be in proportion to your guilt.
  - 3. Your heart is hard. Dt. 10:16 Pr. 28:14 Heb. 3:8,12,15 4:7 Je. 17:9 Acts 7:51

**III. God judges you justly. v. 6-11**

- A. God judges you according to your works.
  - A chiasm
  - a. God's judgement is equitable. v. 6
    - b. Those who do good gain eternal life. v. 7
    - c. Those who are unrighteous endure wrath. v. 8
    - c. Distress to those who do evil. v. 9
    - b. Glory to those who do good. v. 10
  - a. There is no partiality with God. v. 11
  
- 1. The general principle: God judges each person according to his deeds. v. 6  
Ps. 62:12 Pr. 24:12 Ec. 12:14 Je. 17:10 Mt. 16:27 21:31f Jo. 5:29 Re. 20:12 22:12  
II Co. 5:10 Ga. 5:21 I Co. 6:9-11
- 2. The righteous. v. 7, 10 (Goal, actions, result)
  - a. Seek glory, honor, and immortality from God. Jo. 5:44 I Pe. 1:3-4 I Co. 15:52
  - b. Persevere in doing good. Ga. 6:9 Mt. 24:13
  - c. Receive eternal life: glory, honor, and peace.
- 3. The wicked. v. 8-9 (Goal, actions, result)
  - a. Driven by selfish ambition: godlessness. Eph. 2:2-3 Isa. 14:14
  - b. Disobey the truth and obey unrighteousness. Mt. 6:24
  - c. Resulting in wrath, indignation, tribulation and distress. II Th. 1:7f Mt. 8:12
- 4. God shows no favoritism between Jew and Gentiles. v. 11, 9b, 10b Acts 10:34-35  
Deut. 10:17 II Chron 19:7 Eph. 6:9 Ga. 2:6 I Pe. 1:17  
Greater privilege brings greater responsibility. I Pe. 4:17 Amos 3:2 Lu. 12:48

- B. In what sense does God judge people according to their works?**
1. Paul cannot be teaching another way of salvation! 1:16-17 3:20f 5:1 Ga. 1:8-9
  2. Paul expounds the Law in order to prepare us for the gospel. 3:19-24 Ga. 3:24
    - a. According to the law, judgment is according to works.
    - b. Your compliance would have to be perfect in order to be made righteous.
    - c. Paul will go on to show that no-one is keeping the law.
    - d. Therefore, justification must come in another way: through faith in Christ.
  3. There is a sense in which at the last judgment the lost will be shown to be wicked and the saved will be shown to be righteous. 6:22 Mt. 7:16-21 25:31f Eph. 2:10 Ga. 5:6 Js. 2:14f II Co. 5:17 John 14:15 Ti. 2:11-15
    - a. Righteousness is not the grounds of your salvation, but the evidence.
    - b. Obedience is the necessary fruit of spiritual renewal. Ti. 2:14
    - c. Those who say they are converted and have no good works are self deceived. I John 2:3f James 2:14f
    - d. God does reward according to works. II Co. 5:10 Mt. 25:14f 5:12 I Co. 3:8 He. 6:10 11:6,26

#### IV. God judges you impartially. v. 12-16.

- A. He deals with Jews and Gentiles by the same fair standard. v. 12**
1. How can judgment be equal when the Jews have received the Mosaic law and the Gentiles are without special revelation?
  2. Each is judged according to the revelation he has been given. Lu. 12:47-48 Am. 3:2 He. 10:26-29
- B. The Jews will be judged by the law of Moses. v. 13**
1. Merely possessing or hearing God's law will not justify you. Mt. 7:24-29 Js. 1:22
  2. Only those who do the Word will be justified.
  3. Those who violate the law will perish. Deut. 27:26 Lev. 18:5 Mt. 10:28 13:42,50
  4. Limited obedience will not justify you. Lu. 18:12,21 Phil. 3:5-9
- C. The Gentiles will be judged according to the work of law in their hearts. v. 14-15**
1. Even though they are ignorant of the Mosaic law, they are instinctively aware of the moral law of God. v. 14 1:32
    - a. God creates every person a moral being with an innate knowledge of His law.
    - b. Their own (partial) lawful behavior proves they know the law of God.
    - c. This is why various cultures, religions, philosophies and governments have similar moral and ethical norms: *natural law*.
    - d. The image of God is not totally ruined in man. Ez. 1:1-4 5:13-17 7:27-28 II Chr. 24:2 Lu. 6:33 Acts 19:35-41 23:12f 28:2 Da. 6:25-28
  2. Their conscience continually bears witness to the truth of God's law. v. 15
  3. Conscience is not always right. Pr. 3:5-6 14:12 I Ti. 4:2
  4. Paul answers the question: What about those who never heard?
    - a. No-one lives up to the light he has been given. 3:10,19,20,23
    - b. Gentiles don't perish for lack of knowledge, but for wilful sin.
- D. God will judge perfectly in the last day. v. 16, 5-6**
1. Every secret will be revealed. I Co. 4:5 I Sa. 16:7 Ps. 139:1f He. 4:13 Mt. 12:36
  2. Christ is the judge He has appointed. John 5:22,27-28 Acts 17:31 I Co. 4:5

#### V. Concluding Applications.

**Discussion questions for family worship**

- 1. What excuse would the Jew try to make in order to avoid God's judgment? v. 1a**
- 2. Why is he without excuse? v. 1b-3**
- 3. How do people abuse the kindness and patience of God? v. 4-5**
- 4. What is the standard by which God judges? v. 6**
- 5. Compare the motives, actions, and ends of the righteous and the wicked. v. 7-10**
- 6. Is Paul teaching justification by works?  
In what sense are the saved more righteous than the wicked?**
- 7. By what standard will the Jew be judged? v. 12-13**
- 8. By what standard will the Gentile be judged? v. 14-15**
- 9. What evidence does Paul give to prove that all people know God's law? v. 14-15**
- 10. How does this section prepare us for the gospel?**