

We speak of faith in His righteousness. But why so much emphasis on the holiness and righteousness of God? It must be known that in His holiness and righteousness, God cannot tolerate and abide by sin.

God's Wrath on Unrighteousness

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

Last week, we spoke about our faith in God's righteousness. How we firmly believed that God is the father to the fatherless, Mercy to the merciful, Light in a dark world, Truth against a battery of lies and Love to those who are not loved. It is in all of these things and so much more that our faith is that one day God will make things right standing with Him again. God foretold of His plans for mankind's salvation through His prophets and His word through thousands of years. God made it clear that He will make a way because He was the only one willing to do so and able to do so.

God warns of this very thing in

Hosea 4:6:

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge,

19 For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them.

God told us over and over and over again that "I will be sending your Messiah, your King, your Lord, your Commander, your Saviour. I can guarantee this because I am sending Myself to you." Not only that, he goes on to explain:

20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

God beat it into our heads. God appears in the flesh as Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ spoke about it over and over again. He died because He became all of our sin and in His death, killed sin with it. He was buried. He rose and therefore conquering death and hell. Some of us got it. Some didn't. Those who didn't get it simply not only choose to ignore it but suppress the truth.

Or look at it this way, some held the truth of unrighteousness. Holding all things true that go against God.

21 For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

This goes one step beyond pretending to praise and give thanks but your heart and mind is somewhere else. This is the outright rejection of the Son of God. They turn away from God and start walking.

22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

Martin Luther once said, "If we we don't break the first two commandments of loving God with everything you have, having no other gods before God and and worshipping no other gods, the other commandments usually take care of themselves." (heavily paraphrasing)

But we as sinners simply worship things we can create with our hands. We read Deuteronomy 4 and think, "Pish, those foolish ancient cultures, they are so silly with their worshipping the sun, stars or little figurines." then turn around and will say something like "Oh how I love being married... being married will fix all my problems. I can't wait to have kids... having kids will fix all my problems. If I can just get a better job, better clothes, better body... all of my problems will be gone. Yay!!!!!!!"

"But those foolish ancient cultures. Just so silly."

Some people think we do not see the judgement of God in our day and age. We don't see the partings of the Red Seas, the death of all firstborn or even fire from heaven to consume before the sacrifice and the unrighteous. It was in a conversation with my grandma that reminded me that some people see the visible God's hand of miracles all the time no matter what. I submit to you if we open our eyes, we will see the God's judgement all around us:

24 Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, 25 because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

26 For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; 27 and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

28 And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.

Make no mistake that sin is a decision that is made to go against the will of God. I am not contesting that. But what of the people that put themselves before God and made themselves better than God? What about those who knew the truth and made a decision to go after unrighteousness? What about those who will suppress the truth?

I read these verses and I realize that these are judgements of God. This makes me think about Sodom and Gomorrah:

Make no mistake that Sodom and Gomorrah did **indulged in sexuality immorality and pursued unnatural desires** just as described in **Jude 1:7** and **narrated in Genesis 18-19**

Among Sodom and Gomorrah many sins, they stand accessed of bitterness:

Deuteronomy 32:32 For their vine comes from the vine of Sodom and from the fields of Gomorrah; their grapes are grapes of poison; their clusters are bitter;

They were full of pride and refused to help those in need:

Ezekiel 16:49 Behold, this was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease, but did not aid the poor and needy. 50 They were haughty and did an abomination before me. So I removed them, when I saw it.

They wore their pride, bitterness upon their face:

Isaiah 3:9 9 For the look on their faces bears witness against them; they proclaim their sin like Sodom; they do not hide it. Woe to them! For they have brought evil on themselves.

Gathering all of that, it now becomes the classic question "chicken or the egg?" (to which we already know the answer to that but for the lack of a better analogy...). What came first? The pride and idolatry or the sexual immorality which includes homosexuality? Based on verse 28, it would seem to me it is because of their pride and idolatry, that God simply gives them up to a debased mind or put it in another way, gave them up to themselves. If they wanted themselves so badly, then God lets them have themselves.

I have made that point to lest you think that all human sin is simply rooted in sexual sin. It is in fact that sexual sin is rooted in pride and idolatry which God will not stand for and will not tolerate it. Paul expounds on that point further on:

29 They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, 30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, 31 foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. 32 Though they know God's decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

I am not suggesting that these sins are grouped based on importance or categories. However, if I think that every single comma, period, iota or slash is important in the Bible just as Jesus said in **Matthew 5:18** then I have to think that the Holy Spirit did this on purpose.

He puts the envious with the murderers, strife, deceit and maliciousness?

He puts the gossips and disobedient to parents with the slanderers, haters of God, insolent, prideful, boastful and inventors of evil and as well as the foolish, faithless, heartless and ruthless?

Real quick: don't confuse the foolish here are not the simple-minded. Who did God call foolish earlier in the chapter? The ones who worship man created things.

Paul wrote this say what. That all sin is the same before the eyes of God. Have you ever gossiped? You are in the group with the haters of God. Ever disobeyed your parents? Everybody? Then you get paired up with the inventors of evil.

This is a warm and fuzzy Bible Study. Oh wait, it gets better!

God's Righteous Judgment

2:1 Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things. 2 We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who practice such things. 3 Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God?

Now that we have have past the end of chapter 1 and gone a bit into chapter 2, it is from this perspective that Paul, addressing the Jews in Rome, talks about the unrighteousness of the Gentiles and highlights the sins of the Greeks. Essentially throws them under the bus.

I have to imagine that some of the Jews, being addressed by a Jew, that they would have it in their mind "oh those Gentiles... those swine... those dogs... they are so unrighteous. You tell them, Paul! YEAH!". They think, "oh yea, I have been following the law... I at least get some extra credit in all of this!".

Paul immediately in chapter 2 starts breaking down their pride and misconceptions. Again, one of the themes of Romans is that everybody, Jew and Gentiles alike, are all on the same playing field. Jesus Christ leveled the playing field so that all will come to Him and all could be saved.

This is not to be confused with **1 Corinthians 6:1-8** where were we are given wisdom to resolve disputes and trivial lawsuits and can ease the burdens on the civil courts. (This does not give us the right to judge criminal issues within the church. If you come to me or any leader and told me that you did or plan to do something criminal, then that becomes a matter for the authorities. We are not above the law but we are subjected to the governing authorities (**Romans 13:1-7**).

This is the same type of judgment that Jesus told you not to do in **Matthew 7:1 "Judge not, that you not be judge"**. Jesus expounds on this so beautifully as we look further in **Matthew 7**. Jesus said, "**How are you going to say, 'hey brother, there is a speck in your eye, let me get that for you' when there is a friggin' log in your eye? Take care of that log and then help your brother!**" Paul is saying here, "You pass judgement, you turn your nose up on them when you struggle with the same things."

Verse 2 proclaims that judgement is of God. **1 Corinthians 4:5 states Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God.**

God, as judge, will reveal all things hidden in darkness and will reveal the heart. We spoke earlier of having faith that God will restore all things back to right standing before Him. We also have to have faith that God will judge according to the details of the heart.

4 Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience,

not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?

This is why certain preachers such as Robert Morris and John MacArthur teach "Lordship Salvation" whereas we are not truly saved unless Jesus Christ is first in our lives both as Lord and Saviour . The all-too-common testimony of the one person who prayed the Sinner's Prayer when they were 8 but spent the next 20+ years doing whatever they very well pleased. I am not saying all but at least some people who have prayed that prayer and thinking they are good to go for the rest of their lives. They count on the grace and mercies and goodness of Christ on high to forgive them all. That is why when we read books about Christ and hear preachers preach on Christ, it always ALWAYS must be taught that Jesus is not only good, merciful, gracious, faithful and true but He is a Commander, Lord, King, Judge, Power, reign above all creation in the heavens and the earth. He is beyond 50/50 of both sides. He is 100/100 of both sides. He is all these things the scriptures claim.

Keep a discerning spirit when you hear someone speak of just His love and not His might or just His power and sovereignty and not His mercy.

5 But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is what I would call a promise. Numerous times (most quoting Exodus and Numbers) calls God "***gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.***"

Yes "***slow to anger***" but God does come to anger and does bring wrath and judgement upon creation. Read Revelation 19 and see how that turns out.

6 He will render to each one according to his works:

Stop reading. Close your Bibles and walk away. Now, if you stop reading on that verse, what could that mean? I could stop here, use that verse by itself and suggest, without reading even the rest of Romans, that salvation will come by works alone. That is what we call "using verses out of context". Even when people, such as myself and especially myself, use verses to make their point, take the extra effort and keep reading. Read the verses before it and read the verses after it and see if that really proves the point.

The Bible is always better when you just keep reading. Let me give you an example. Every gets to filling so tingly good when you read or sing ***Psalm 73:25 "Whom have I in heaven but You? There is none I desire on earth besides You."*** Ah, but finish Asaph's thoughts in verse ***26 "My heart and flesh may fail."*** He is saying, "Oh yea, I am going to mess up. I am going to sin. A lot. Sure I am Christian but I am human." He goes on to cry out in hope and faith "***But You are the strength of my heart and my portion forever.***"

Even better in Isaiah 6, Isaiah calls out to Jesus Christ "***Here I am! Send me!***" Jesus responds, "Alright. Awesome. Guess what you do. You get to tell prophecies that will detail my arrival to save all of mankind once and for all. You are going to be so detailed and I will fulfill all those prophecies. Yet, they are going to be eyewitnesses to my coming and yet, they will outright reject me because of the hardness of their hearts. Geoffrey Cohen, our Messianic Pastor, recalled once where he had stickers made up of the Star of David with Isaiah 53 underneath the star and plastered them all over a Jewish neighborhood

in New York only for them to disappear the next morning.

7 to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; 8 but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. 9 There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, 10 but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. 11 For God shows no partiality.

Paul is telling the Jews and essentially a ear to hear "Seek after God. Don't seek after yourself. Commandments still hold true but Jesus Christ wants them written upon your heart. Starting with the 1st one: Love your God with all of your heart and mind and soul and strength. Don't put other gods, beliefs, ideas, persons or whatever in-between you and Jesus Christ."

God's Judgment and the Law

12 For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. 13 For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified.

The playing field is leveled by Christ. You had the law, you will be judged. You didn't have the law, you will still be judged. You accept Jesus Christ into your heart, then He will soften your heart, change your heart, cut away the crap out of your heart and will forever keep working on your heart.

I can go on and never drink beer, never get an abortion, never go to the strip clubs and essentially never do a bad thing. Without Christ in your heart, then anything you have ever done wrong, even the smallest little fib, will be judged and you will go to hell. If you have Christ in your heart and you have made Him your Lord and Saviour, He has already taken judgement for your sins. All you will get judged on are the fruits of your heart... the works of your faith and your heart.

14 For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. 15 They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them 16 on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

Again, it is all about the matters of the heart and God will judge what is upon your heart and what is in your mind.

17 But if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast in God 18 and know his will and approve what is excellent, because you are instructed from the law; 19 and if you are sure that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, 20 an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth— 21 you then who teach others, do you not teach yourself? While you preach against stealing, do you steal? 22 You

who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? 23 You who boast in the law dishonor God by breaking the law. 24 For, as it is written, "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you."

Read this passage and replace the word Jew with Christian. How does this resonate with you?

You cannot do good by teaching and preaching that others should not sin and should not do bad things when it is yourself who does bad things. You are the doing the complete opposite of glorifying the name of Christ by telling others they shouldn't sin when all you do is sin. This text should weigh heavy on us all but even greater upon those who are called to be leaders.

25 For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision.

When it comes to circumcision, do you think he is talking about foreskin being lopped off or is he talking about another part of the body?

26 So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? 27 Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. 28 For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. 29 But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.

Here is what Paul is saying: Are you fake or are you real? Are you doing Christian-ingly things, listening to Christian music, wearing the clothes, the WWJD bracelets, listening to Christian-ly music, hanging out with just Christians, your parents, grandparents and great-grandparents are all Christians and you think all of this is what makes me a Christian?

Or is Jesus Christ in your heart. Is Jesus Christ first in your life? Are you second to Him? All you care about is pleasing God in heaven which is in Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour?

Flip over to Luke 18:9-14