

The Moral Man Without Excuse

Romans 2:1-16

Pastor John Miller

Let me read Romans 2:1, "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man..." notice that phrase "inexcusable, O man." This would be mankind or men and women. "...whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things."

I heard the story of a father who complained about the amount of time that his family was spending watching television. He was really bothered by that. It seemed the kids were watching television way too much and not doing their homework. It seemed that his wife was watching television way too much, and she wasn't doing her housework. So, he decided and said this, "As soon as the NBA season is over, I'm going to unplug the television." You know whenever we point our finger at someone else, there are at least three fingers pointing back at us.

Well, when we move into the second chapter of Romans, that is exactly the scenario that we encounter. Paul in chapter one has shown that the pagan Gentile world is guilty before God, and he lists the horrible sins that they have committed. Paul is anticipating the argument of the moralist, the good guy, the good gal, the person that lives a good life and doesn't do all the horrible things listed in chapter one, how they would actually say, "I agree with you, Paul, the pagans in their idolatry and in their immorality, they are under the wrath of God, but I'm a good person. I don't lie. I don't steal. I don't cheat. I don't kick my dog. I've got a good Sam sticker on my car next to my AAA sticker." Don't ask me what that has to do with anything, but "I'm just a good all-around guy. Now, I don't really go to church, but I'm a good person. I treat everybody the way I would expect to be treated." Paul is actually saying to this moral man, this good man that would say, "Amen" to the sins that are listed here in chapter one, that when you judge someone else, you have then a criteria by which you are also going to be judged, and the truth is you are doing the same thing. At least, everybody has one of the sins named in chapter one, and we're going to see tonight they are not only sins of the flesh, but they are sins of the spirit. There are action sins as well as attitude sins. I believe that God looks at our heart, and many times the moralist, in his pride and self righteousness, is just as big a sinner as the person that is out doing drugs, getting drunk, lying, stealing and sleeping around. The Bible says, "All have sinned and all have fallen short of the glory of God. There is no one righteous, no not one." So, in the first 16 verses, Paul is dealing with the moral man. In verse 17 to the end of the chapter, verse 29, he is going to be dealing with the religious man or the religious individual.

Now, the question that is being asked in this section is: Is the world lost? The answer is yes, all the world is guilty before God. So this section is known as "Condemnation," and we've seen that the Gentile pagan world is guilty before God. Now Paul calls the moral man into the courtroom to show him that he is lost and guilty before God, and he is without excuse. The

question that needs to be asked, and I'm not sure we can answer it completely is, is this moral man addressed in verses 1-16 of Romans chapter 2 a Jew or a Gentile. You say, "Does it really matter?" Not actually, but it seems as though to me that Paul is talking more about mankind in general. Notice when he opens up in verse 1 he says, "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man." O man is the generic term for mankind. He is not talking about men in the sense of male. He is talking about people, and he is saying you are inexcusable because when you judge someone else you're indicating that you know the standard and you are condemning your very own heart, but when you jump down to verse 17, and we'll get there next Wednesday, he says, "Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God." It's clear that when you get to verse 17 he is talking specifically to the Jew, seems to be more the religious individual, but in these first 16 verses he is introducing the topic that even good people, even religious people, stand guilty before God.

I can't tell you how many times over the years I've had people come to me, even people that have sat under my preaching and teaching for some time. They have this idea that if you are really a good person God is going to let you go into heaven. I had a guy once say, "You know, did you read the news about this guy that gave his life to try to rescue some people and he died trying to rescue them? He's going to go to heaven for that isn't he?" The issue isn't whether he is going to go to heaven for a good deed. The issue is, was he born again? Jesus told Nicodemus who was a Jew, a very religious Jew, he said, "You must be born again if you're going to see the kingdom of God." It doesn't matter if you're a general run-of-the mill pagan idolator or you're just a good Sam or you're very religious, you must be born again, amen, if you want to see the kingdom of God. It's not just being good. It's not just being religious. It's being regenerated. You'll hear me use that word from time to time, by the way. That's the same phrase as being born again. Born again is the everyday common term that we hear more often, but the technical term means to regenerate. What it means is that you're given new life. So, you were dead, and when you were born again you were given new life. That's regeneration.

Now, if a person hasn't been regenerated, they are not saved. If they have not been regenerated, they are not saved and they are not a Christian. You got that? I'm trying to make it as clear as I can. You're either a Christian or you're not. You're either born again or you're not. By the way, the only kind of Christians there are are the born again kind. I've had people say, "I'm a Christian, but I'm not one of those born-again kind." I don't know any other kind. If you're not regenerated or born again, you're not a Christian. You might call yourself a Christian. I've had people say, "I'm a Christian, I was born in America. I'm a Christian, I eat apple pie." That doesn't make you a Christian. So, he's talking to the moral man.

We've all seen people that won't admit they are a sinner. "I'm a good person. I go to church. I'm religious." Billy Graham once asked a man, "Are you a Christian?" He said, "No. Thank God I'm a Baptist." I have nothing against Baptists. If I was going to be in a denomination, that probably would be one of the first I'd join. Being a Baptist and a member of a church doesn't make you a member of the family of God. Coming to Revival Christian Fellowship won't get you to heaven. If you stand before God someday, and He says, "Why should I let you into heaven?" "Because I went to Wednesday night at Revival. I outta get in here. Some of those sermons

were long and boring, so I did my dues. Let me in here.” “Oh, come on in, come on in.” It’s not going to happen like that. The issue is what did you do with My Son, Jesus Christ, who died on the cross for your sins. Have you trusted Him? Have you been born again? We all know people that feel like they don’t need Christ. They are good people. So this is what we’re going to find in verses 1-16, that this so-called good person is guilty before God.

In verse one of this section, man is on the throne judging. In verse 16, God is on the throne in judgment. Now, if you’re taking notes, I want you to write them down. There are four reasons why the moral person is under condemnation. First, he is condemned according to his very own judgment. So, the moral person, or moral people, are condemned according to their own judgment. Why would the moral man be condemned before God? Because by his own judgment he is condemned. Go back with me again to verse one. He starts with the word “therefore” that’s why he’s building on chapter 1, there’s no real break, “Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man.” At the end of chapter one we have the pagan that not only does these things, but he gives his hearty approval to those that do them. Then he goes into verse 1 of chapter 2, “Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest...,” now before I forget a really important point, and it may be in your translation, but the word “judgest” in my King James Bible, literally means condemns. It’s not talking about the act of judging, it’s talking about pronouncing the verdict. It’s not talking about the act of judging, it’s talking about pronouncing a verdict. You’re actually saying, “They are going to hell. They are condemned.” Again, as you point the finger, three are pointing back at you. You know the standard, and you are not keeping it yourself. He says, “for wherein thou judgest...,” or you condemn, “...another, thou condemnest thyself...,” why? “...for thou that judgest doest the same things.” Another phrase that you need to make sure you understand is when it says you’re doing the same things. That phrase means that your sin is just as bad. It doesn’t mean that the moral man is doing all the exact sins the pagan guy is doing, but his sins are just as bad. So lest I forget, let me make it very clear. Adultery is sin. Fornication is sin. Lying is sin. Stealing is sin. Murder is sin. Those are sins. They’re bad sins. But guess what else? Pride is sin, and the Bible says, “The proud God knows afar off.” We have the sins of good standing, pride. It’s interesting that at the end of chapter one, he mentions the sin of covetousness. Do you know that you can be looking at somebody and think, “Wow! They are a good person. Wow! Look at how nice they are. Look at how good they are,” but you can’t see their heart. God can, and God seeing their heart sees their pride and covetousness or maybe sees their rebellion.

In a few moments, I was going to mention...I’ll mention it right now. When you have the parable of the prodigal son, we so often forget that there was an older brother. Did you know the older brother was just as big a sinner as the younger brother was, and he stayed home? He did everything his dad asked him to do. He had a Christian haircut. He was a good kid, got good grades, obeyed his parents, hardworking, but his heart was not right. When his little brother came home, he accused him of wasting the father’s money on prostitutes, harlots and riotous living. He said, “I’ve been with you. I’ve always done what you said. I’ve always been a good boy, and I’ve always done everything right.” On and on the list goes, but guess what? His heart was wrong. He was unforgiving. He was jealous. He was angry. The Bible says, “God looks at our hearts.” Do you know that the whole parable was actually given about the older brother not

about the younger son? The focus of that parable is to reflect upon the pharisees who were self righteous. They were indignant that Jesus would receive sinners and even eat with them, so He told them the story. The parable is reflecting the religious leaders in the life of the older brother. That's the picture.

So, there are sins of good standing as well as sins of the flesh, and this can happen in the church. This can happen in the church, and I'm a bit off script right now, but I want to make sure I share this because we can become self righteous. We can have our little Christian haircuts. We can have our little Christian cars, our little Christian clothes, and our little Christian Bibles, and we come to little Christian church and sing our little Christian songs. Then if somebody that we deem to be really bad comes into church, we look at them and say, "I can't believe there's a sinner here. Look at that wretched, vile sinner, and they're sitting in my pew! Who said they could sit there?" How easily we forget that we were poor, miserable, wretched, naked and blind, and God has forgiven us. When we read the sins listed in chapter 1 last week, that should motivate us to go out into the world and share Jesus Christ with people. These people need the good news. Instead of running from them, pulling up our robes of self righteousness around us and walking away from them, we should run to them. Jesus was a friend of harlots and publicans and sinners. We should reach out to them too.

In verse 1 he says that you are without excuse for "Whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things." Jesus said, "Judge not lest you be judged." When He said that in Matthew 7, He was talking about a critical, censorious, faultfinding, judgmental attitude. We so often become judge, jury and executioner. Jesus is telling us not to judge, but don't misunderstand this whole concept. It is not saying that you can't make moral distinctions, and that you can't say, based on the clear teaching of God's Word, that certain behavior that a person is engaging in is wrong. We've gotten to this politically correct kind of culture today that even in the church, "Don't judge, Brother, don't judge." I wish I had a dime for every time somebody said to me, "Don't judge." I'm not judging. I'm just fruit inspecting, and your fruit is rotten. I've even had people say, "Don't judge me," and I say, "Well, you're judging me that I'm judging you." "Well, you're judging me that I'm judging you that I'm judging you that you're judging me!" I mean it's like this endless cycle that no one can say anything is right or wrong. It's crazy insanity. Based on the clear teaching of God's Word, we can say what that behavior is. I don't know people's motives, and I don't know their hearts. I'll leave that to God, but I can certainly say lying is wrong, stealing is wrong, murder is wrong, adultery is wrong, and pride is wrong. We read the 10 commandments the other day. God says, "Thou shalt not..." ten times, and we can be very certain what is right and what is wrong. It's so easy for us to become judgmental, hypocritical and faultfinding, but we need to be careful.

I think of David. He committed adultery with Bathsheba. That's wrong, by the way. That's bad. That's a violation of God's law. Then he lied, and then he committed murder. David, the king of Israel; the sweet psalmist of Israel, the man after God's own heart, the man who penned Psalm 23, "The Lord is my Shepherd I shall not want," committed adultery. He lied and he murdered and he stole another man's wife. And, by the way, he also coveted. All of the last five

commandments on tablets of stone, David broke. David kept silent for a whole year, and during that time Psalm 32 tells us "...my bones waxed old through my roaring...", he just felt sick. He said, "Day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer," but he was still unrepentant. He did not confess his sin until one day a man by the name of Nathan the prophet came to visit him. The Bible says, "Be sure your sins will find you out." Certainly they found David out, and Nathan told the parable of the man who was very wealthy with lots of flocks and herds. Someone dropped in to visit him and instead of taking one of his sheep, he went down to a poor man and violently stole that little lamb from him. He had only one little lamb, and it was like a pet to the family. It sat in a little highchair with a lamb bib on. It was probably called "Lamby," and he fed the thing, you know. The wealthy man took it out of the house, and he killed and ate it. When David heard that story, which by the way was about him, the veins popped out on his neck and the blood flushed into his face and his fist was clenched. He pounded on his throne and said, "The man who has done this will surely die!" Whoa. I can see Nathan stick his finger out right into David's face. I'm sure all prophets had long bony fingers. I've read the picture storybook Bible. He said, "David, you are the man!" I can almost imagine David saying, "Well, maybe he shouldn't die. Let's think about this for a while." "David, you're the man!"

How bad our sins look on other people, right? We find it easy to pick up sin in other people because we know that's the one that's in our life. It's so easy to condemn other people instead of condemning our own sinful hearts. How can they be moral and do the same things? They were sinning in their spirits. They were good sinners as far as the world is concerned, but as far as God is concerned, we've all fallen short of the glory and the standard of God. Maybe they're self righteous and blind to their own sin and to their own need. Like the religious leaders that brought the woman in John 8 to the feet of Jesus, caught in the very act of adultery. "Moses commands that she should be stoned. What do you say, Jesus?" Jesus said, "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone." No one threw a stone. Jesus wrote in the ground. We don't know what He wrote. The word "write" is the Greek word *katagrapho* which means to write a record against. They didn't have writing paper. They didn't have IPADS. They would write in the dirt, so I believe that Jesus very possibly was writing the sins of the woman's accusers. Rabbi Hillel, adultery. Rabbi Shimei, lying. As they looked down in the dirt and saw their name and their sins they said, "I have a dental appointment I need to get to right now. I'll see you." Gone! When Jesus stood up there was no one accusing the woman. "Where are your accusers? Has no one condemned thee?" "No one, Lord." And He said, "Neither do I. Go and sin no more." You see, we're so ready to condemn someone else, and when we're judged, we are going to be judged by our very own standard.

Let me give you the second basis by which God will judge and condemn the moral man. Moral people, secondly, are condemned according to the truth. When God judges, God who is omniscient and righteous and true, will judge them on truth (verses 2-5). Follow with me as we read them. He says, "But we are sure that the judgement of God is according to truth...", the most repeated word in these first 16 verses is the word "judgment," by the way. The word judgment appears about 19 times in 16 verses. "...against them which commit such things. 3 And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest...", now in verses 3 and 4 he gives two rhetorical

questions that expect a “no” answer. He’s asking them a question knowing what the answer is, verse 3, “...them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?” What’s the answer? The answer is no. If your sins are just as bad as their sins, or you sin and they sin, you’re not going to escape the judgment of God. Notice verse 4, the second rhetorical question. “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering...,” by the way “the goodness” there is a reference to God’s kindness toward us. “...not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? 5 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.” He makes it clear there in verse 2 that the judgment of God is according to truth.

That’s a scary thing to be brought into a courtroom to be accused and to be on trial. Maybe you’re on trial for your life. I can’t imagine how frightening that would be, to be on trial and you run the risk of going to prison. Maybe you’re innocent, or maybe you’re guilty and you’re trying to get out of a trial. How many times people will have committed a crime, gone to trial, and then they’ve been acquitted. How many times people have gone to trial when they haven’t committed a crime, and they have been sentenced. When God tries men, He tries them according to truth. I want you to know something. If you reject Jesus Christ, and you stand before the great white throne, and you stand there in judgment, no lawyer is going to be able to save you from hell. You won’t be able to object or say, “Well, I didn’t know,” or “I couldn’t help it.” God is going to judge according to truth. He knows even the motives and the intentions of your heart. The Bible says, “All things are naked and open before the eyes of him of whom we have to do.” Can you imagine standing before a judge that actually was omniscient and knew all things? What a frightening thing. So, someday those who reject Christ will stand before Him in judgment. It’s called the great white throne judgment. In Psalm 96:13 the psalmist says, “... he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.” Here Paul says in verse 2, “But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth,” not according to man’s judgment but according to truth.

Why would a moral man keep on rejecting Christ and living in his self righteous pride and rebellion against God? Notice three words that explain that question, verse 3. The word is “thinkest.” Notice in verse 3, “And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?” They’re self deceived. You may be here tonight. “I don’t really believe that God will judge me. I believe that I’ll work it out. I’ll figure out a way. I don’t think God is really going to judge me. I think I’m a pretty good guy. God is going to look deep down in my heart, and He knows that I’m a really good guy. I didn’t mean to do those things.” The heart is deceitful, the Bible says. The heart is desperately wicked. No one knows it but God. So, they think that they will escape. “God won’t judge me. It’s not my fault. I can escape the judgment of God.” Their thinking has been clouded. Then in verse 4, it’s the word “despisest.” He says, “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering...,” so His kindness, His patience and His longsuffering, not knowing that God’s goodness or kindness to you is meant to lead you to repentance. “God is good. He won’t judge,” they say. God’s goodness is meant to lead you to repentance, and I believe that the goodness of God should lead us to repentance, but they are

despising God's goodness.

The third word is in verse 5, the word "treasurest." What a graphic picture this is, "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart..." that word "hardness" is where we get our word sclerosis from. That root word in the Greek is where we get our English word sclerosis or hardness of the heart. He says from thy hard hearts, verse 5, and an unrepentant heart you're storing up, treasuring up. That word "treasurest up" has the idea of depositing money in a bank. Because your unrepentant heart is like storing money in a bank, and it's going to come to bring judgment to you. It's going to fill up where God is going to bring judgment against you. So, the picture is that of putting money in a bank, and one day, verse 5, God will judge, Revelation 20.

Let me give you the third reason that moral people will one day be condemned. Moral people thirdly will be condemned according to their very own works. Notice verses 6-10. Now he says God, at the end of verse 5, will "...render to every man..." notice this. God is going to render to every man. That indicates that judgment is universal. No one will escape according to their deeds. He is going to render them according to their knowledge. He's going to render them according to truth, and then He's going to judge them according to their own deeds. In verse 7 it says, "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:" that's a description (verse 7), by the way, of people who are saved. He says, " 8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath." In verse 7, those who follow what is right, honor and seek the Lord, they have eternal life. Verse 8, those who rebel against God will actually have indignation and wrath. I want you to note verse 9, "Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul..." again judgment is universal, "...of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; 10 But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile." Now, some people get confused about what is going on. He is basically saying, first of all in verse 6 that sin is universal, everyone will be judged, and it will be according to their works. God knows all hearts and all lives based on their works. Paul is not saying here that we are saved by our good works. You read these verses and you can almost conclude that if we do good things, live a good life and we follow good works that we get eternal life. If we do bad things and we rebel and we sin against God, then we are going to have eternal judgment. What he is saying is the same thing that the whole New Testament teaches and is clearly taught in the book of James, that the way we live is indication of whether we are saved or not. If you're saved, then you're described there as following the Lord, pursuing the Lord and the things of the Lord, verse 7, and you have eternal life. If you're not saved, then you are living in disobedience and unrighteousness and you will have indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul. The Bible clearly teaches that by grace we have been saved through faith. It is not of ourselves, it is a gift of God not of works lest any man should boast. Scripture is not going to contradict Scripture, but a person that is truly saved, their life will show it. Remember the little song we sang in Sunday school, except for you pagans that didn't go to Sunday school. If you're saved and you know it clap your hands, stomp your feet, say amen, the whole thing, right? If you're saved and you know it, then your life will surely show it. Paul is saying by the way you live is an indication whether you're saved or not. And, whether you're saved or not will determine whether you go to heaven or whether you go to hell. God says in

His Word, you shall know them by their fruits, right? That's why we're fruit inspectors.

How do you tell an apple tree? It gets apples from it. If you come up to a tree and it has oranges on it, most likely it's an orange tree. Apricot? Apricot tree. Peaches? Peach tree. You know a tree by its fruit. So, we can tell whether a person is saved by the way they live. The Greek tense here is talking about an ongoing habitual perpetual lifestyle. It's not talking about a single act. A saved person doesn't live a sinless life, but it is not the pattern of their life. If you have been born again, then sanctification as the process starts, you find that your life starts to change. You're not saved because you changed, you change because you're saved. And change takes place over a long period, and some change quicker than others. Some change very little over a long period, and it's time to get moving. If you've been a Christian a long time and you're still not really living the Christian life, you need to expedite your growth by prayer, surrender and yielding to the Spirit, Christian fellowship, walking in the Spirit not the flesh. One of the best ways for you to grow as a Christian is by reading God's Word every day, spending time in prayer, and getting plugged in to Christian fellowship. You say, "Well, I'm not growing as a Christian. My life hasn't really changed." "Do you read your Bible?" "No, I'm too busy." "Do you pray?" "No, I don't have time to pray." "Have you eaten lately?" "Oh yeah! I got a great appetite!" "Skip a meal and read your Bible, Dodo bird." Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God, right? You can eat and read at the same time. Open your Bible, eat your Cheerios while you're reading your Bible. Spend time in God's Word. Thy Word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee, the psalmist says.

Let me give you the fourth and last point of why the moral man is without excuse. Moral people are condemned without respect of persons or with no partiality. God has no favorites. God has no favorites, and God is going to judge without any partiality. Follow with me in verses 11-15. He says, "For there is no respect of persons with God." Now, God is going to judge according to truth and He is going to judge without respect of persons with no partiality. "For as many as have sinned without law...", or without being under the law. This would be the Gentile world, "... shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law...", these would be the Jews or the religious man. Light brings responsibility, revelation brings responsibility. To whom much is given, much is required. If you are without the law, then you're going to be judged on that standard. If you are under the law; you know the law, you go to church, you know the Scriptures, you're going to be judged by that light which you have received. Verse 13, "(For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified." So, not just being moral, it's not just being religious. It's being justified or declared righteous. "14 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature...", or instinctively, "...the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: 15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)" remember the pagans were guilty because they violated their conscience and they rejected God's revelation in creation.

In conclusion, notice verse 16, " In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel...", or in accordance with the gospel that I preach. Now, what

Paul says here would shock the Jews in verse 11. He says there's no respect of persons with God. When the Jews heard that, they would completely be freaked out because they knew that they were God's chosen. They knew that they were the apple of God's eye. They knew they'd been given special privileges, we're going to talk about that next week, but here Paul says, "Look, when God comes to judge mankind, He's not going to show any favoritism." Do you know that an unregenerated Jew is just as lost as a pagan who has no Judaism? Do you know that sometimes it's harder to reach a religious person than an irreligious person or nonreligious person or a person that never has been to church. "I don't need Jesus, I've been baptized. I don't need Jesus, I am Jew. I don't need Jesus because I'm a Baptist. I don't need Jesus because I'm a Presbyterian. I don't need Jesus, I'm a Methodist. I'm an American. I'm a European." God's not going to show any favoritism. God is not going to show any favorites that might be based on race, religion or on any rite or ritual. God is going to judge every man righteously, with equity, and with truth; and the secrets of men's hearts will be revealed.

So, the idea is you, Mr. Good Guy, Mrs. Good Gal. "Well, I'm a good person. I don't shoot heroin in my eyeballs. I've never robbed a bank. I don't sleep around. I don't cuss. I don't get drunk. I'm a good person." Whatever list you want to give to it. It's so important, if we're going to appreciate the gospel, if we're going to value the gospel, for us to realize everyone needs Jesus Christ. You don't just witness to people that are all messed up. "That dude looks like he's on drugs. Let's go! He needs Jesus." "That guy has a suit and tie and a Rolex watch, and he's driving a nice car. He doesn't need Jesus. He's got lots of money." He needs Jesus just as bad as the guy lying in the gutter, especially if he goes to church and he doesn't have Jesus. He needs Jesus. I think as Christians we need to open our eyes and realize all have sinned, all have come short. There is no one righteous, no not one. If you're here tonight and you think, "Well, I'm a pretty good person. These people are kind of crazy, they're born again. They sing and clap and stuff like that, but I'm going to be okay. I'm going to be fine." God is going to judge you according to even your own standards which you don't keep. Do you know that no one even keeps their own standards? He's going to judge you according to truth. He's going to judge you according to the way you lived, and He's going to look at your heart. He's going to turn on the x-ray of your heart, and He knows your heart. He is also going to judge you without partiality, and He's going to judge you according to the gospel that Paul preached.

There are Jews that have the law, and they are going to be judged by the light they were given in the law. A Gentile had no law but looked up into the sky and understood God was creator, and He listened to his conscience and did his best. He is going to be judged according to that light. This is a Biblical principle, that God will judge according to knowledge. God will judge according to light. Did you know, listen carefully, that if you come to this church and you hear the Bible being taught that you have more light and because of that you're going to come under stricter judgment? "Well, I'm ain't coming no more! This will be my last Wednesday night, Preacher Boy!" Every message you sit and listen to on the Book of Romans only gives you more light, and if you reject that light, there is only one place for you to go and that's in the darkness. This is why the Bible says, "Be not many teachers of the Bible because you're going to be judged by a greater judgment because you know more. You have more information." You say, "Well, I don't want to teach the Bible either then."

So the Jew and the Gentile will be judged by God without partiality. Notice several important things in verse 16. There is a coming date where God will judge, the day when God will judge. It says it right there in verse 16. Don't be deceived into thinking that there is no judgment. Secondly, God's judgment will include the hidden areas of our lives, verse 16. Thirdly, this judgment will take place through and by Jesus Christ. Jesus was risen from the dead, and He sits on the throne and one day He will be the judge of all the earth. Fourthly, God's judgment is part of the gospel. Literally, that should read, "As my gospel declares." The gospel only shines when it is seen against the dark background of sin. On what kind of night do you see the stars most brightly? On a dark night when the moon is gone. Have you ever gone looking for jewelry, and maybe you're looking at a diamond. It is set on the case, usually on black velvet or black cloth. That diamond is set on black velvet cloth so that it contrasts and radiates its shining forth. The gospel only shines in its true brightness against the blackness of man's sin. It's kind of bizarre that last Sunday morning I preached "forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors," and I talked so much about sin, so you're getting a double dose of it. We can't value or appreciate the wow factor of the gospel and the beauty of the gospel if we don't see it against the background of your sin and my sin, and that all the world has sinned and we all stand guilty before the bar of God.

The pagan has been brought into the courtroom, and they are guilty. The moral man has been brought into the courtroom, and he is guilty. Next week the religious man is brought into the courtroom, and he is guilty. I can't leave you condemned and guilty. John 3:16-18, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, what whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The reason I wanted to put it on the screen together was that I want you to see the two other verses that come after it. We always quote verse 16, but I want you to see verses 17 and 18. "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. 18 He that believeth on him...," that is the Son of God, "...is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already...," Jesus didn't come to condemn us, we're already under condemnation, pagan or moralist or religious person, "...because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." So Jesus came to rescue us. Jesus came to save us. We don't get to the gospel until we get to the end of chapter 3, but I don't want to leave you in condemnation tonight. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that if you will believe in Him, you will have everlasting life and you pass from death to life, from condemnation to justification.

There's a big difference between being moral and being righteous. There's going to be a lot of good, moral people going to hell for all eternity because they haven't got the righteousness of God through Jesus Christ. The only thing that will get you into heaven won't be your good works or being a moral person. The only thing that can get you to heaven is the righteousness of Christ being given to you as a free gift. The only way you can get that as a free gift is by believing. It's by believing. What does it mean to believe? It means that you trust Him. It means that you put your faith in Him. It means that you receive Him, and you look to Him and you trust in Him to save you. You don't trust in your goodness. You don't trust in your righteousness. You don't trust in your race or your religion or your rite or your ritual. You don't trust in your good deeds. "My dad was a preacher. My mom and dad were Christians. I went

to Sunday school when I was little.” You must be born again, and if you don’t receive Jesus Christ, you’re already condemned. You’re already lost. Jesus came into the world as a rescue mission. It was a rescue mission. He didn’t come to condemn you, He came to save the condemned. There is only one way to salvation and that’s through Jesus Christ. If you are in this sanctuary tonight, and God is speaking to your heart, you know you’re not saved, you know you’re lost, you know that if you died right now that you would go to hell. If you were to die right now and stand before God, you know that you haven’t trusted Jesus Christ, you know your sins have not been forgiven. I want to give you an opportunity right now before we leave here tonight to say, “Pastor John, I want to accept Jesus Christ as my savior. I want to invite Him into my heart.” Maybe you’ve been coming to church for a long time, but you have not yet been saved. Don’t leave here tonight without Jesus Christ. Don’t leave here tonight without knowing your sins are forgiven, that you are a child of God, that if you died you would go to heaven. Let’s bow our hearts and our heads in a word of prayer.