

The True Diagnosis

God's wrath: *His invisible resistance to man's sin.*

1. **Romans 1:18 2** – Condemnation and Sin
 - The cause: *willful ignorance.*
2. **Romans 1:24 2** – Condemnation and Sin
 - The Consequence: *divine abandonment.*



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Rom. 5:9; Col. 3:3

The Moralist and Religious

- I. Righteousness Needed Because of Sin and Condemnation
 - A. The Condemnation of the Gentile (1:18-32)
 1. The Cause of Condemnation: willful ignorance (1:18-23)
 2. The Consequence of Condemnation: divine abandonment (1:24-32)
 - B. **The Condemnation of the Moral PreChristian (2:1-11)**
 - C. The Condemnation of the Unenlightened PreChristian (2:12-16)
 - D. The Condemnation of the Jew (2:17-3:8)

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- **Romans 1** is a penetrating analysis of the human condition.
 - When God, who is clearly knowable from general revelation, is rejected, men search desperately to replace the inner vacuum with false gods. (*ungodliness*)
 - This then leads to sexual immorality, violence, and deep darkness. (*unrighteousness*)
- This immediately sets up an “us—they” division.
 - “I’m so thankful I’m not as bad as “them””
 - “I don’t do those kinds of things, so I’m not so bad”

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- In **Romans 2**, Paul says in essence, hold on, not so fast! Let’s take a look at YOU. (*Mt 16:15*)
 - Paul now deals with those stuck in self-righteous denial.
 - I’m not so bad... I do my best... Good, clean livin’
 - If this group could be truly exposed for what they are, they would not be as innocent and good as they suppose – God’s judgment falls on them as well.
- Let’s examine Paul’s argument for the condemnation of the moral PreChristian step by step.

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Step 1: You are guilty because your own judgment condemns you.

- **v. 1** – “you who judge *practice* the same thing”
 - **Point 1.** When one judges others, they are demonstrating clearly that they know right from wrong.
 - Their conscience condemns them.
 - **Point 2.** When one judges others, they are guilty because they do the same evil things
 - **Matt. 25:31-46** – the sheep and the goats
 - **Litmus test:** you will be judged based on how you treat others.
 - Both the sheep and goats will be surprised!

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- **Point 2.** When one judges others, they are guilty because they do the same evil things (cont.)
 - But I don’t do *those* things in Romans 1!
 - Maybe not outwardly, but certainly inwardly (**Matt. 5:28**)

Step 2: You are guilty because God judges truthfully.

- **vv. 2-4** – “rightly” “according to truth” “based on truth”
 - God sees everything – the heart and motives
 - Therefore God’s judgment is perfect
 - Why would a loving God permit such an evil person to...
 - Why would a loving God permit what I do...

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Step 3: You are guilty because God does not show favoritism.

- vv.5-11 – “no partiality” “favoritism”

“God lovingly seeks to move us toward a recognition of our sinfulness. Once we recognize our hopeless condition, we can accept the fact that God has dealt with our sinfulness in Christ.” (Stedman)

- “...you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (John 8:32)

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What will God do with those who have not heard the

He will say in effect, “What did you think was right and what did you think was wrong?”

When the individual answers, God will then ask, “Okay, according to your own standard, did you do the right—or the wrong?”

And in so doing, all humanity will stand condemned. Guilty, because we don't obey our own standards of right and wrong.

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- D. **The Condemnation of the Jew (church member) (2:17-3:8)**

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D. The Condemnation of the Jew (church member)

Paul list *four areas in which the Jews* (and many church goers today) *prided themselves*. (vv. 2:17-18)

1. Possessing the Law of Moses.

- Many today also pride themselves in a particular translation.
 - “Why, if the King James Version was good enough for the Apostle Paul, then it's good enough for me.”
- In the church today, people often brag about their understanding of God's truth, while putting down anyone who differs from their doctrinal point.
- This is precisely the attitude of the deeply religious Jew of Paul's day.
- “Bible Thumper”

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2. On having a special, unique relationship with God.

- They were God's chosen people.
 - Instead of using this special choosing as a light to those in darkness, they used it to look down on others.
 - This is rampant in the church today!
 - “Holier than thou”

3. In knowing the will of God.

- They had the TaNaKh (Torah, Nevi'im, Ketuvim)
 - Today, it's “the only God-approved view” of worship, eschatology, election, sovereignty, etc...
 - “Fundamentalist”

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4. On their moral superiority.

- They had long lists of things that no “good” Jew would ever do.
 - Today, many Christians practice a negative religion of restrictions and prohibitions and they think their rigid observance of these restrictions makes them morally superior
 - Or worse, they think these restrictions make them more acceptable in God’s eyes.
 - Alcohol, tobacco, movies, dancing, etc...
 - “Good, clean livin’”

The Moralist and Religious

D. The Condemnation of the Jew (church member)

Paul now lists *four privileges* that the Jews (and many church goers today) claimed because of these advantages. (vv. 2:19-24)

1. Guides to the spiritually blind.

- Today, many Christians seem to feel entitled to go around correcting anyone who isn’t like them.
- They make it their mission in life to impart the truth of God to their, “poor, ignorant brethren.”
 - “It’s a good thing I’m in your life, or you’d be completely lost...”

2. A light to those in darkness.

- This assessment deals with those who think they have it all figured out—the Antichrist, the time of the Lord’s return, etc...
- Ever tried to dazzle someone with your knowledge of the Bible?
 - “You need to come to my church, because...”

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3. Correctors of the foolish.

- Many Christians today take the same position. Without any consideration for the feelings of others, they set those around them straight with vitriolic truth. (Eph. 4:15)

4. Teachers of the immature.

- Many in the church today teach others with an attitude of superiority.
- “I’m just helping to ‘straighten out’ these children in the faith...”

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- You are outwardly righteous and correct, but inwardly you are doing the wrong thing.
- You are dangerous people.
- v.24 – The ultimate judgment upon the Jew: “the name of God is blasphemed”
- How are we through our actions hurting the Name of Christ?

The Moralist and Religious

What is a “Real” Christian?

Paul concludes with a brief discussion concerning what makes a true Jew (for us, what makes a true follower of Jesus). vv. 2:25-29

- Being a true Jew is a heart position.
- Being a true Christian is a heart position, not external.
- Outward rites and rituals have no value if there is not an inward transformation on the basis of an authentic relationship with the Lord Jesus.
- This, and this alone, makes one a “Christian”

Making it Real

How are you doing with speaking the truth in love?

Are there areas of your life that have a false veil of piety?

Are your actions or words hurting the cause of Christ?