

Romans 2:1-4

The Goodness of God

Romans 2:1-4, "Therefore thou art inexcusable O man, whomsoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. 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? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"

[The following is a sermon given by Pastor J. Mark Martin of Calvary Community Church, P.O. Box 39607, Phoenix, Arizona, 85069.] "This is Romans chapter 2, as we get back on track in the book of Romans. Romans chapter 2. We begin with the very first verse of Romans 2. I've entitled the message this morning "The Goodness of God." **Verse 1, "Therefore you are without excuse, every man of you who passes judgment for in that you judge another, you condemn yourself; for thou that judgest doest the same things."** Now to get the hang of what he's saying (we've been out of this for a few weeks), he's reflecting on what he's said already in chapter 1. ***Remember the purpose of the first three chapters of Romans is to bring the whole world into accountability to God. And there's three kinds of people, there are pagan people, there are moral people and there are religious people in the world.*** Those three categories have always been. Today you're either a pagan, a moral person or a religious person. And then, there are saved people. ***I guess there's four real categories.*** [Paul was addressing saved people in the Church of God in Rome, and even though we're

saved, we all come from one of these three categories mentioned, and carry into the body of Christ the mental attitudes of these three categories found in the world. I personally think that's what Paul's getting at. But he's also addressing these three categories in the world, because some of each are sitting in this congregation, warming seats, like a percentage found in any congregation. So he's also addressing these unsaved people right within our midst.] But Paul addresses each of these.

The first category we already talked about, the pagans, who lived like the devil. And they, they're going to hell. They got a foot on a banana peel and it's an icy road they're walking on, they are going to hell. And he describes their actions. At the end of chapter 1, it's shocking as he describes their 'homosexuality and their wickedness and greed and malice and envy and strife, gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful--and although they know the ordinance of God that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same but they give their hearty approval to everybody else to do it.' And now the context of chapter 2, he turns to the moral crowd who are looking down their noses and saying 'These people should go to hell, they're immoral. They're not like us, we're good people.' Paul now addresses that crowd in chapter 2. OK, what about moral people? Do they have a little closer, are they closer to God than immoral people? Let's see. **Chapter 2, verse 1, "Therefore you are without excuse every man of you"**--every moral man of you, is what he's talking about--**"who passes judgment, for in that you judge another, you condemn yourself, for you who judge practice the same things."** 'And we know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice such things.' In other words, the moral crowd was saying, "Yes! Those perverts, those criminals, those no-goods, they should have the judgment of God on

them, yeah!' And the apostle Paul says, 'Wait a minute! You judgmental people, you. You are guilty of the same.' Shock city, 'No way!' 'Yes, you are!' Jesus said this, he said, "You have heard it said that thou shalt not commit adultery." That is the act of adultery, right? "But I say to you"--he's talking to the men--"if you lust in your heart towards another woman, you've already committed adultery" in your heart. Well there goes the moral man, right? Because you know, a lot of guys, right up to the line, you know--"But we didn't **do** it." Did everything but that. And Jesus, you know, he hit it right on the head. It's not a legalistic thing of just the act of adultery. He says it's a heart problem. He said if you've got that wrong desire in your heart, man, you've already committed that sin. And he said in another example "You've heard it said "Thou shalt not kill" or commit murder, is what that means. "But I tell you that if you have even hated your brother, you've already committed murder." [cf. Matthew 5] Oh brother, who of us hasn't hated somebody? Maybe not within the last five minutes, but who of us hasn't hated somebody once in awhile? Jesus says you're a murderer and you can go through the list of the Big Ten, you know, and every one of those, Jesus magnified. He's saying, "Look, moral people, you're not so moral after all." Everybody's heart is alike. You cut us open, we're all alike. "The heart is deceitful above all things, desperately wicked, who can know it" (Jeremiah 17:9). Can the Ethiopian change the color of his skin, the prophet asks? Could the leopard get rid of his spots? No. Then neither can you who are accustomed to doing evil do good. Just after we are born the sinful nature of Satan's wavelength enters into all of us--no one is exempt. That is why we need salvation, because of this sinful nature broadcast into all of our minds [Satan is the prince of the power of the air-he supercharges the very atmosphere of earth with his sinful, wrathful, lustful attitudes-and these "broadcasts" infect all of our minds.] My sin isn't just because of the wrong things I do, my sin is my being. You see I do sinful things because I am a sinner. [The sinful nature is programmed

into us by Satan's invisible inaudible yet powerful broadcasts.] Doing sinful things didn't make me a sinner, they proved I was a sinner. We all have our blind spots, and moral people have their blind spots too. Some people really think they are much better than they are. Good old Al Capone, the people who really knew him heard him say over and over again about what a good guy he was. Now Al Capone was a murderer, and he was a mobster, a killer. He had no conscience whatsoever. And yet this is what he had to say about himself. "I spent the best years of my life giving people the lighter pleasures, helping them to have a good time, and all I get is abuse, the existence of a hunted man." That's what his friends said he said a lot. "All I get is abuse." "All I do is try to give people a light time." Of course he meant lighting a match, and you've got gasoline all over you, you know probably. But killer Capone, Old Dirty Al, you know, he thought he was such a great guy. "And why are these police and F.B.I. agents all over me all the time?" But it's not just the picture we have of ourselves that's sometimes way off. It can be of our condition, you know, it can be of our condition. And we can think we're safe when we're not at all safe.