

Romans 2:4-29

False Security

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Romans 2:4-29. "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? 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; who will render every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man thou doest evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without the law shall also perish without the law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; (for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: 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; [cf. Hebrews 8:6-13]) in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent,

being instructed out of the law; and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast a form of knowledge and of the truth in the law. Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written. For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. Therefore if the uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfill the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law? For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

The False Security Of The Religious Person

"This morning I'd like us to open our Bibles to Romans chapter 2, and I've entitled my message "false security". We've seen in Romans 1 that the pagan person is lost, he needs the Savior, and is without an excuse, able to look at nature and know there is a Creator [see <https://UNITYINCHRIST.COM/dinosaurs/dinosaurs.htm>]. The pagan person has turned his back on God. We looked last week at the moral person, how moral people need a Savior

too. Just because they're moral doesn't mean they're perfect, and to be saved you must have a perfect life-but it can be either your perfect life or Jesus' perfect life credited to you. Most of us would not offer God a perfect life, we've already ruined that opportunity. In fact, the Bible says **'All of us have missed the mark, we all have sinned and fall short of God's glory and God's will.'** So the moral person is in trouble. And the Bible warns us not to harden our hearts. If you look at **verse 4** now of **chapter 2**, it says **'Don't look down your nose at the riches of God's kindness and forbearance and patience.'** And then he warns, in **verse 5**, about a stubborn heart. **"But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God."** The word **stubbornness** there is the Greek word sclerotes. We get the word sclerosis from it, which means a hardening, like arterial sclerosis. Well, people spiritually have a hardening of the heart, and hard heartedness. And we've got to not allow that to happen. In the Bible there are many examples recorded for us so that we would learn, examples of men and women who hardened their hearts against God. Somebody, I can't remember who, said that our hearts are sort of like this, it's dependent on what your heart is made of which will determine what the sun does to you. The same sun that melts the wax, hardens the clay. **And we want to pray to God that we have soft wax-like hearts, and that we worship God not in a formal way, but in a real spiritual way.** Beware of the stubborn heart, the hard heart. Don't harden your heart.

Now in the next verses after this, probably verses 6 to verse 13 are some verses often misunderstood by people. And we're going to see a lesson here in the importance of how to study the Bible. **One of the reasons why I am so absolutely convinced that we should study the Bible book by book, chapter by chapter, and verse by verse is because when we do that we get the whole context of what is being taught.** Every cult that

I'm aware of, every false teacher that I'm aware of takes verses from the Bible and uses them. I mean, I don't know a cult or a false teacher who doesn't hold this book [the Bible] in his hand, you take any cultic group around, they'll all have a Bible in their hand. But the problem is that they take a verse or verses out of context. They pull it out and they chain it together with some other verses out of context, and they build their false doctrines. [There is a biblical way of putting together a Bible doctrine, letting the Bible interpret itself. It is based on Isaiah 28:9-10, which states "For whom shall he teach knowledge?. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, here a little, and there a little." Using a Strong's concordance and taking related words like "fatherless", "widow" and "poor" and looking up each passage Strong's lists them in throughout the Bible will reveal God's teaching about how we should feel and act toward this group of people. It will yield the Bible doctrine on "fatherless, widows and the poor". Looking up every passage that deals with a resurrection of the dead will yield what the Bible has to teach about how and when God is going to, or has resurrected people in the past. But as you use this method, be sure to read the whole paragraph in context with the surrounding Scriptures or page this word appears in to gain its proper contextual meaning in the passage. This method of learning to add like Scripture to like Scripture can be a valuable tool for properly discerning Bible teachings. But it must be used wisely. **No Bible doctrine should ever be based solely on one Bible verse or passage.** And sadly, many mainstream Christian denominations base some pretty universally accepted doctrines solely based upon one or two tiny Scriptures. Also one Scripture should **never** be used to subtract from the meaning of another. It's not like algebra where say one verse has a negative value and another a positive value, so one subtracts from or cancels the meaning of the other out. It doesn't work that way. All Scriptures are additive in value-they all add to the meaning of other related Scriptures. Say you're doing a study on healing and look

up all the passages where the word "heal, healed" are used. Be sure to look up other passages showing where God didn't heal. Get the whole truth on the subject or else you may be led to a false conclusion that it's God's will to heal everyone who asks him--as some groups erroneously teach (health & wealth "Faith Christian Churches"). Get the whole truth on a matter, then your doctrinal understanding of God's Word will be sound.] Now false doctrine will lead to false living, which you'll believe, and this will be lived out in your life. And that's why it's so important that we teach the Word of God, all of the Word of God, and we see it in its context. And so you can't take the verses, these next few verses that we're going to read, pull them out of chapter two. You've got to leave chapter 1 tied to chapter 2 and chapter 3 in order to rightly understand it. [And that's all well and good until you get to OT books on prophecy, where various prophecies pertaining to different times can all be found in one chapter, then this interpretive style goes out the window, and the "here a little, there a little" interpretive method takes over. Use wisdom. And realize, in the area of prophecy to apply Paul's statement, **"we're looking through a darkened glass"**, so no one should get too dogmatic on any pet interpretation. I.e. on most prophecies yet to be fulfilled, we won't know for sure how or when it's all going to come to pass until it happens. Much egg on many faces has been splattered by taking too dogmatic and rigid an approach on interpretation--this applies to Dispensational pre-Millennialists as well as Classic pre-Millennialists.] And so the Scripture has to be taken in its context. [A little more on the other method I mentioned, which goes somewhat against that last sentence, and I will explain just how this can be so and still yield accurate Bible discernment. Take all the OT Messianic prophecies. All the Messiah's prophecies about his first and 2nd coming are mixed and intermingled together throughout the major and minor prophets, as well as Psalms, many right within the same passages. We can see by hindsight which verses apply to Jesus' first coming,

and which are yet to be fulfilled at his second coming. But the poor Jews from 4BCE to 30AD lumped them all together, and thought Jesus was coming in great supernatural power to overthrow the existing Roman government from off their backs and establish the Millennial Kingdom of God over the entire world. Can you see how caution has to be used in discerning the Word of God, especially in the area of prophecy? Dogmatic approaches don't cut it in the area of prophecy, and events that are very far away in the prophetic future should be dealt with using utmost caution, and a very un-dogmatic approach. Sometimes, for those faraway events, it's better to say "Jesus knows, we'll find out later." But with the Jews of the first century AD, that was a clear example of the need to add like Scripture to like Scripture, and then they would have been better able to discern that the Messiah was going to have two separate comings, one in humility as a human, who was to die to atone for the sins of the world, and at his second coming, to save the world from annihilation and establish the Kingdom of God to rule over mankind from then on. Again be cautious of basing a doctrine on one or two tiny passages in the Bible. If not sure, shy away from any dogmatic approach or teaching on such passages.]

The Meaning Of Verses 6-13

Now let's look at these. Maybe you've taken them out of context before. I don't know. It says in verses **6-13**, "**God will render to every man according to his deeds. To those who by perseverance and doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life. But to those who are selfishly ambitious and who do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. There will be tribulation and stress for**

every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Greek. But glory and honor and peace to every man who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek, for there is no partiality with God. 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, for not the hearers of the law will be justified before God, but the doers of the law will be justified." Now verses you can understand.

There's some verses there that-'Oh, wait a minute, I thought we were saved by grace through faith?!-he's saying here 'It's not the hearers of the law, but the doers who'll be justified.' It says, 'Those who do good, they will be given eternal life. But I thought it was a gift.' Hey, hey, calm down. Don't you understand? I've been telling you, the first chapter of Romans was to show the whole pagan world is lost. Now he's talking to the moral people--talking to people who think that by their 'law keeping' they have a pretty good chance of heaven. 'Hey, I'm a moral man, I've never stepped out on my wife, I've never cheated on my taxes, I've never told a white lie, I'm a pretty good guy, I'm not worried about heaven. I believe the good man upstairs knows who his men are here on earth [chuckle].'

Romans chapter 3, verses 10-12, "As it is written there is"--how many righteous gang?--"none righteous, not even one. There is none who seeks for God." What's the next three letter word?

"ALL have turned aside, together they've become useless. There is NONE who does good, NOT EVEN ONE." Now in chapter 2 he's talking about good people there. [This statement by Paul is talking about everyone Paul has talked about in chapters 1-2, the pagan, the moral both with and without the law.]

But God looks for perfection, and we're talking about salvation. And really, to be able to be saved, you've first got to understand the bad news. And as you witness to people and you share with people, you need to be able to give them the bad news first, and don't be embarrassed about it at all. Don't be embarrassed to tell somebody, 'You've missed the mark.' That's what "sinning" means,

the word "sin" is an old English word "sinne" and it was a game, a bow and arrow game. And when you played with a bow and arrow you put a big target up and then you would shoot at that with your bow and arrow and you would try to hit the bull's eye, and if you hit the bulls eyes, you were "on mark." But if you're like me, when you have missed the mark, you have "sinned", it was called a "sinne". And it sort of hung on, and people began to talk about it, and people understood that when you sinned, you missed the target--and we all have missed the targets. [1 John 3:4 **"Sin is the transgression of the law."** That's the Bible's definition of "sin".] The best of us have missed. But God requires perfect accuracy, all the time. But you say "Oh, but I'm not perfect!" Good! You've got to come to that realization. Now you understand that the wage, the pay of 'missing the mark' is death. God says death, hell, is what you deserve because of this. But, Jesus has taken your place. He experienced the punishment for your sin, and traded places with you, and if you will accept him by faith, God will credit all of Jesus' goodness and perfection and accuracy to your account. And you will be looked upon in God's sight as being perfect because the righteousness of Jesus Christ will cover you. That's the gospel. ***But why do I need a savior unless I first realize I'm a sinner. So his whole point here in the first three chapters is to show "Hey, world, shut your mouth. There's nothing that you can say that will make you right before God except "Jesus save me.". There's nothing you can do that will make you right before God except believing on Jesus Christ. And so when he says that God is going to judge us according to our works, that's true if you're outside of Christ, and he's talking about people who are not saved, you will be judged by what you do. If you are not a Christian you will be judged by your performance.*** Yikes! That's dangerous, isn't it? The big video screen comes down, you see all of the things you've done in the dark, the things you've done in secret, your thoughts, your motives, your intentions, will all be flashed before the whole watching

world. I'm glad I'm in Christ, all of my life has been swallowed up by his life. And if my life would come on the screen you'd see--Jesus walking on water, you'd see Jesus healing people, you'd see Jesus worshipping his Father perfectly, you'd see Jesus' life, because that's what God sees. It's Christ's life, covering a Christians' life. Well, "not the hearers of the law" he says in verse 13, "but the doers of the law are just before God." In other words, if you're going to try to be saved by law, you'd better not just say "Oh yes, I believe in the 10 Commandments, Oh I live by the Golden Rule, I believe that we ought to turn the other cheek." You hear people like this, you know. the problem is, why don't you do it then? God's not going to judge you someday--if you're outside of Christ--he's not going to judge you someday on what you say you believe. He's going to judge you by **what you do**. Talk's cheap, God knows that. God thinks your actions speak louder than your words. That's why the beautiful thing about the Christian faith is that **when Jesus comes into a person's life, there is a change of life, a change of nature**. There will be evidence in your life that you are a new person. I'm very concerned about Christians who say they are Christians, but they aren't living any different a life than somebody in the world. And they say, "Well, I believe 'once saved, always saved.'" Well, I know there will be people in hell who believe that. "What do you mean?" Well, I know there are people who **think** they are saved because they 'got baptized', or 'confirmed', or went to church or said a little prayer [at the altar call even], they think they're saved, but they're not. And someone gave them a slogan "Once saved, always saved". I guess I do believe that once you are "born-again, you can't get "unborn-again." But are you born-again? Are you really a child of God? [cf. II Corinthians 13:5-read it.] You need to examine yourself. If you're living a life that is contrary to God's will and God's Word and you know it, how can you say you're a child of God??? I don't understand that. Because your walk doesn't match your talk, and Jesus is not a savior who just, you know, is a savior in word only.

He's a savior who comes into a life in power. And you need to know, maybe, Christians, that you have to say "**No**" to your fleshly desires. You might have to say **no** to a relationship, you might have to say **no** to a job. **Following Christ might cost you something. It cost Him everything to save you.** And it might cost me a little to follow him. But Jesus says there isn't anybody who has left houses, lands or family or friends that won't receive 10 times, I mean many times more not only in this life, but in the life to come. [transcript of a connective expository sermon on Romans 2:4-29 (page 1), given by Pastor J. Mark Martin, Calvary Community Church, P.O. Box 39607, Phoenix, Arizona 85069]