

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

SPREADING THE SOUL-SAVING MESSAGE OF JESUS

ROMANS LESSON 2 (Chapters 2-3)

Introduction by narrator accompanied by a cappella singing:

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST. Spreading the soul-saving message of Jesus. And now, Timothy Sparks and Ben Bailey.

Timothy Sparks:

“Therefore, you are inexcusable old man, whoever you are who judge. For whatever you judge another, you condemn yourself. For you who judge, practice the same things” (Rom. 2:1). I’m Timothy Sparks.

Ben Bailey:

And I’m Ben Bailey. Welcome to our study of the Book of Romans. Today’s broadcast is being brought to you by members and congregations of the church of Christ. These congregations of the church of Christ would be happy for you to stop by and visit them, and show your appreciation for these broadcasts. We’re so thankful that you joined us in our broadcast today. If this is your first time to view one of our broadcasts, we hope that you’ll have your Bible ready and that you will be ready to study the Word of God with us.

In Romans 1, Paul discussed how the Gospel is God’s power to save. He also discussed the sins of the Gentiles, and how they had committed sins ranging from homosexuality to murder, and things of that nature. Paul said in Romans 2:2 that “the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things.” The Jewish person, as he read this, might be standing in the background applauding Paul for condemning the Gentiles. However, if was to turn to Romans 2, he would see how he, too, is inexcusable, because he thinks that just being a Jew is enough in and of itself to get him to Heaven. Many of the Jewish people of Paul’s time lived their lives according to Jewish ceremonial laws, but when it came to practical living, they were doing all kinds of ungodly things—just like the pagans. Paul’s point to those Jews was that God’s judgment, which is according to truth, is going to be expressed against those who do evil things. There appear to be many people in our world today who think they are going to be “excused” on the Day of Judgment. In Luke 14:18, however, we find a good example of how excuses will not work. A man had prepared a sumptuous supper. The meal was ready. So he sent a worker to invite those in the streets to join him at his feast. However, they, with one accord, began to make excuses. Not only did they make excuses, but as Luke 14:18 explains, they made horrible excuses. One of those who had been invited said, “I’ve bought a piece of land, and I’ve got to go see it.” How many people do you know will buy a piece of property before they look at it?” It was a pitiful excuse. Another man said, “I’ve bought a team of oxen, and I’ve got to go and test them.” Again this is before modern-day lighting. How is he going to test the oxen at suppertime? Another man said, “I’ve just married a wife, and want to be with her. I can’t come to the supper.” How many young married couples do you know that can afford to turn down a free meal? These were all terrible excuses. The people really hadn’t given much thought to their excuses.

The Jews may have felt that they could offer excuses, but the simple fact is that those excuses aren't acceptable to God. So in Romans 2, Paul is presenting a discussion about the hypocritical nature of the Jews.

Timothy Sparks:

As we look at Romans 2:1, I'm reminded of Matthew 7:1 where Jesus said, "Judge not that you be not judged for with what judgment you judge, you will be judged, and with what measure you measure, it will be measured to you again." As we look at the context of this passage, we learn that what Jesus is condemning is **hypocritical** judgment. Look specifically at Matthew 7:5, "Hypocrite first remove the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye." Matthew 7:1 and Romans 2:1 are dealing with a specific **type** of judgment—**hypocritical judgment**. The point that Jesus and Paul were making was this: the Jews did not have any place to judge other people because they were guilty of some of the same sins the Gentiles had committed. The very sins of which the Jews had condemned the Gentiles, the Jews themselves stood condemned for having committed. So while in Romans 1 the Gentiles were condemned because of their sins, in Romans 2 the Jews also were condemned because of their sins. When we examine Romans 2, we learn that the Jews didn't have any reason to boast, since they were just as lost as the Gentiles. We learn from Romans 1 and 2 that the Gospel is the means of salvation, not only for the Gentiles, but also for the Jews.

Ben Bailey:

In Romans 2:4, we're going to see God's goodness, and all the many wonderful things God had done for the Jews. God's actions were intended to lead the Jews to righteousness and repentance. The goodness of God should lead us all to repentance. All the privileges and blessings the Jews received were intended to promote repentance and to help them live a righteous life. We learn in Romans 2:5-6 that God is a **just** God. Although the Jews had been living under the Old Law, their lives really weren't what they should have been. Paul reminds them that their ungodliness is going to be revealed on the Day of Judgment. Romans 2:6 makes it clear that God is going to render to each one according to his deeds. I'm not going to give an account for what others do. You're not going to give an account for what your family did, or what someone did 100 years ago. I'm going to give an account for what **I** do. As I sin, so will I be judged! As I do righteousness, so will I be pleasing in God's sight. It's not by proxy that we're condemned. It's what we do individually that causes problems in our life. The Jew needed to be reminded that his daily walk had to be pleasing to God. Think for a moment about all the good things God gives us. James 1:15-17 says, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning." All the blessings we enjoy—the food we eat, our houses, our jobs, our families, our friends—come from a loving God. Ephesians 1:3 tells us that spiritual blessings from God are available only to those who are "in Christ." As we think about all that God has done for us, especially in regard to the scheme of redemption, it should cause us to want to repent. We should be reminded of the great love that God had in sending His Son to die on Calvary—to go to that old rugged cross and to bear the our sins. As I think about that in my own mind, it should promote me to repent and to live a life of righteousness in God's sight. Think of all that God gives you.

Timothy Sparks:

We must remember, too, that God is an impartial Judge (Rom. 2:11). Jew and Gentile alike will be judged by the same standard—the Gospel, the Word of God. In John 12:48, Jesus said, “The words that I spoken will judge him in the last day.” We will be judged by the Word of God, whether we are Jew or Gentile. We’re all going to be judged by the same standard. While the Gospel, the Word of God, is our judge, we’re also told that we have to make proper discernment—a proper determination and distinction—between right and wrong. When it comes to the concept of judging, people usually are quick to quote Matthew 7:1. If they don’t know any other verse in the Sermon on the Mount, they know Matthew 7:1, “Judge not, that you be not judged.” We need to understand that this is a verse that is telling us not to judge **hypocritically**. We should not take it to mean that we’re not to do **any** kind of judging. We must make proper decisions. We have to judge between right and wrong, and between truth and error. We know that to be the case because of what Jesus said in John 7:24, “Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.” Christians are commanded to judge “with righteous judgment.” When you come to a stop sign, do you make a decision to stop, or do you go through the stop sign? It is important, is it not, that you make the right judgment? Otherwise, you’re going to run through the stop sign and you might get hit by somebody (or hit someone else). Even if you don’t have an accident, if there’s a policeman around, then at the very least will pull you over and give you a ticket because **he** made the judgment that you **didn’t** make the proper judgment. So, we shouldn’t come to Romans 2 or Matthew 7 and suggest that we’re not supposed to do **any** type of judging. We learn from Amos 5:15 that we are to hate the evil and love the good. We’re going to learn later in the Book of Romans (12:9) that we are to abhor what is evil and cling to what is good. So when we come to Romans 2, we need to be sure we understand that it’s dealing with hypocritical judgment, and that we are going to be judged by the Word of God. We cannot live lives of hypocrisy, and still be pleasing to God.

Romans 2 also teaches us that the Jews could not rely upon their genetics. Paul is going to deal with this at the very end of Romans 2 (vss. 28-29) when he points out that the Jews’ genetics (i.e., their bloodline through their connection to Abraham) would not save them. “For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.” Jews today, of course, are unable to establish their bloodline back to Abraham because the records were destroyed in the destruction of Jerusalem. Paul’s point is that, although he himself was a “Hebrew of Hebrews” (i.e., being of the tribe of Benjamin, and having an impeccable pedigree), that alone wouldn’t be enough to save him. Salvation is not based on a merit system. Rather, it’s based on **our** faith and **God’s** grace. We must obey; we’re not going to be saved by some type of genetics or bloodline.

Ben Bailey:

In Romans 2:12-16, Paul is going to show the Jews very clearly that those who sin without the law are going to perish without the law. Those who sinned in the law are going to perish in the law. Paul’s point to the Jews is that they shouldn’t condemn the Gentiles (who were outside the Law of Moses) as being ungodly, yet think that because they (the Jews) lived under the law, they were going to be all right. Paul says, in fact, in verses 13 and 14, that even the Gentiles **showed** the law in their own lives. This is a painful accusation against the Jews. Paul said, in essence, “The Gentiles, who don’t have the law, are probably in some ways living closer to the law than you are!” The Jew’ genetics were

not going to make them right in God's sight. Paul brings his argument to a climax in verse 16 when he says that "God will judge the secrets of men according to the gospel." It's not the **law** that is going to be the basis of our judgment. It's the **Gospel!** So whether one was a Gentile or a Jew, he still had to live up to God's standard during those times. The same is true for us today. We're all going to stand in judgment before God. He is going to judge the secret things that we may think no one else sees. Maybe you have something in your life that is amiss. Maybe there's something that nobody but you knows. Realize this, **God knows**. Proverbs 15:3 says, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the good and the evil." God knows all and sees all. Hebrews 4:13 makes it clear that "there is no creature hidden from God's sight; all things are open and naked before the eyes of Him with whom we must give an account." We cannot hide from God. As the psalmist points out in Psalm 139:1-12, we can't go high enough, we can't go low enough, we can't find a place dark enough so that God doesn't know where we are and what we are doing. God knows our sins, and will judge us by His Word, the Gospel. There's that word "Gospel" again. It is God's power to save. Jesus said in John 12:48 "He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him--the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day." Paul said (2 Cor. 5:10-11) that there is going to come a day when we're all judged by the deeds we've done. If you had to stand before God right now, would your life be right? Would you be right in God's sight? Have you become a child of God so that you are living the way God wants you to? If not, the goodness of God should lead you to repentance.

As Paul continues in Romans 2:17ff., we're going to see that he shows very clearly that merely being a Jew was not going to guarantee the people a "right status" with God. Paul says in verses 28 and 29, "For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God." The one who is the "chosen of God" today, the one who's God's child, has been changed in an inward way, not in a fleshly way. It has nothing to do with circumcision of anything else of that nature. Rather, God is concerned about matters of the heart. There is so much said in the media today about the world's not going to be right, and how the kingdom isn't going to come, until the Jews are once again reigning in Jerusalem as God's chosen people. That's not at all the case. **Christians** are God's chosen people today. God's not waiting for something to happen on the Dome of the Rock. God's not waiting for something to happen in physical Israel. God is waiting for people to change their hearts. In 2 Peter 3:9, the apostle Peter tells us about God and His longsuffering nature. "God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." God has chosen a day, we learn from Acts 17:30-31, in which He will judge the world in righteousness. Being a Jew or the Gentile is not what matters to God. Being a Christian is what matters. Someone has rightly said, "All men stand on level ground at the foot of the cross."

Timothy Sparks:

In Romans 1, we learn that the Gentiles were lost as a result of their sins. In Romans 2, we learn that the Jews were also lost due to their own sins. In Romans 3, we learn that **everyone** is now lost due to sin. Romans 3:10 teaches us, "There is none righteous, no, not one." Romans 3:23 says, "All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." Why is there "none righteous"? It is because **all** have sinned, and **all** have fallen short of God's glory. Chapter 1 explains that the Gentiles are lost. Chapter 2 explains that the Jews are lost. Chapter 3 explains that everyone is lost. But, thanks be to God, we also

learn from Romans 3 that the Gospel is God's saving power, and that Jesus Christ is the propitiation for our sins. This means that Christ appeased the judicial wrath of God, and satisfied divine justice, by becoming a substitutionary sacrifice for our sins. By doing so, He therefore was able to make us righteous and able to receive grace and mercy from God. Here, we have the Gospel, the good news, the glad tidings, and the soul-saving message of Jesus Christ! But where the Gospel does not go, it cannot save. That's the importance of the Great Commission. Jesus said, "Go!" He promised that He would go with us. "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to all creation. He who believes and is baptized will be saved. He who does not believe will be condemned. So those who believe the Gospel and are baptized will be saved. Those who do not believe to Gospel will be lost" (Mk. 16:15-16). In Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus gave the Great Commission, in which He said, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." That's the importance of the Commission. It's an urgent message. That's why Paul told Timothy, "Preach the word. Be urgent in season and out of season" (2 Tim. 4:2). We have an urgent message because of the urgency of the "sin problem." People are lost in sin without the Gospel.

If you do not obey the Gospel, then you, too, will be lost. God is not a respecter of persons. Peter said, "Of the truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34). God doesn't show any partiality. "In every nation, He who fears Him and works righteousness will be accepted with Him" (Acts 10:35). So those who obey the Gospel will be accepted with God and will be saved. But what about those who refuse to obey the Gospel? Recall the message of 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10—those who do not know God and do not obey the Gospel "will be punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power." The Gospel is God's saving power. Those who do not know God, and who do not obey the Gospel, have nothing but the wrath of God left at the end of this life. Yes, God is a God of mercy, patience, and love. But He is also a God of justice, and His wrath will be vented on all unrighteousness. His nature requires that He punish sin, which requires punishment of the sinner, unless the blood of Christ is applied (as it is when people obey the Gospel).

Ben Bailey:

We, like Abraham, can live by faith if we come to the point that we understand it's not what we **do** that is going to save us, but rather **our trust in God**. Some people today apparently think that their status in society, the amount of money they have, or the power they wield, is going to save them. Others think that the good works they do will earn them salvation. This was very likely the mindset of the Jew. He thought that because he sacrificed, because he had been circumcised, because he had kept the Passover, or because he kept the law, those things were going to earn him salvation. But in the case of Abraham—the greatest hero of the faith of the Jew—Paul shows that it's not what you do or who you are, but instead it's your obedient faith that counts. Abraham, when he was put to the test, was willing to sacrifice even his own son. God told Abraham in Genesis 12:1, "Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you." Abraham did that. But was it what Abraham did, or was it the fact that he was willing to trust God, that made him righteous? The Bible says that it's righteousness by faith—i.e., obedient trust in God. We are not saved by works, but by faith (the obedient faith of Romans 1:5 and Romans 16:20). This means that there are certain things we **must do**. Abraham would not have been righteous, had he not

done the things God commanded. He acted by faith—obedient faith. On the Day of Judgment, it wouldn't surprise me if there are some who try to offer excuses to God. Someone might say, "Based on the amount of money I have, I think you ought to save me." You may have heard the joke about the man who was on his deathbed, and told his wife to put the money jar up in the attic so that when he died he could pass by and pick it up on the way to Heaven and maybe buy his way in. After he died, his wife looked in the attic, and the money jar was still there. She said, "I knew I should have put that in the basement." Others might think that their social status will get them into Heaven. "I'm a Jew" or "I'm important in society" still will not get you in. If you have sinned, you need the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Romans 3:23 makes it clear that all have sinned. But the gift of God is that we can be justified by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. We never pay anything for our salvation. We couldn't, even if we wanted to. Isaiah 64:6 says that all our righteous deeds are like filthy rags in God's sight. The gift is free. That gift can be yours—if you are willing to accept the grace of God by an obedient faith. Ephesians 2:8 says, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." It is **God's** grace, combined with **my** faith. This is the message of the Bible. When I see what God has done, that is God's **grace**. What I must do relates to my **faith**.

Timothy Sparks:

By accepting the grace of God, we do not mean that people simply have to say, "Jesus come into my heart." We have to come to the Bible, the Word of God, which is able to show to us what we must do in order to comply with the Word and will of God. As we consider how we receive the grace of God. We have to think about God's terms for giving us grace. Suppose I were to tell you that I wanted to give you a vehicle, but that there were certain stipulations with which you had to comply (such as filling out a form, registering the vehicle in your name, come pick up the keys, etc.) in order to receive it? Even though you met those requirements, you would not feel like you had earned or merited the vehicle, would you? Of course not! So it is with salvation. God says, "I want to extend My grace, My love, My mercy to you, but here are the stipulations. You must believe in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God." God has told us that we must believe in His son, Jesus. Upon that belief, then we must repent. Belief that will not obey is an inactive and dead faith. We must repent—via a genuine heart change. If we really repent, we can get everything else straight, because once we make that decision, we then will confess Christ as the Son of God. And we will gladly be immersed into Christ for the forgiveness of our sins, so that we might be washed by the blood of Jesus Christ. And we will live for Jesus—the Savior who gave Himself for us. Then we will not only gladly live the Christian life, but we also will want to tell other people about Jesus, too. We will want to tell them about the Gospel, the soul-saving message from God. We will then also be willing to "spend and be spent" for the sake of saving souls. As we consider the Book of Romans, we need to be so grateful and so thankful that God has loved us. He has given us a message. He asks us to comply with His will. It is something that you and I can do. God does not ask us to be rich, popular, or famous, but He **has** asked us to be **faithful**. That is something else we can do. Thanks be to God, Who loves us and has given us a plan for our salvation. We hope that you will visit the church of Christ in your area. Tell the individual members how much you appreciate their support of this broadcast. We hope you will continue to study with us as we endeavor to discover more of "the unsearchable riches of Christ."

Narrator accompanied by a cappella singing:

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STUDY QUESTIONS FOR ROMANS LESSON 2 (CHAPTERS 2-3)

1. In Luke 14, Christ told a story about a man who had prepared a feast, yet had trouble getting people to attend. What was the real purpose of this story?
2. Paul wrote in Romans 2: “Therefore, you are inexcusable old man, whoever you are who judge. For whatever you judge another, you condemn yourself. For you who judge, practice the same things.” To whom was he speaking, and what was his point?
3. Explain how Matthew 7:1 and Romans 2:1 fit together.
4. From Romans 2, we learn that salvation is available to **two** groups of people. Name those two groups.
5. According to Romans 2:6, what is going to happen on the Day of Judgment?
6. Name the only group of people who, according to Paul’s teaching in Ephesians 1:3, is the recipient of spiritual blessings.
7. On the Day of Judgment, what will be the standard against which everyone will be judged? Support your answer with Scripture.
8. What does John 7:24 mean?
9. What was Paul’s point when he said: “For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God” (Rom. 2:28-29)?
10. According to Paul, it doesn’t matter whether one is a Jew or a Gentile. It matters if a person is “something else.” What is that something else?
11. According to Romans 3:25, Christ is the propitiation for our sins. What is a propitiation?
12. What is the meaning of this statement from Acts 10:35? “But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.”
13. According to Romans 1:5 and 16:20, what type of faith saves us?
14. In Isaiah 64:6, the prophet said: “But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags.” What was his point?
15. Paul taught in 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10 that something will happen to those who refuse to obey the Gospel? What, according to the apostle, will happen?
16. How does 2 Peter 3:9 relate to God’s longsuffering nature?
17. Explain how Romans 3:23 and Romans 6:23 relate to teach other.