

Introduction:

Good Morning...It is great to be here with you today...If you are interested in becoming a member here at Calvary or if you are interested in joining one of Sunday school classes such as the college and career or young couples or mid-life or Ladies classes...I'd love to see you after the service today...

It is great to be here with you...

Thank you to all those who came out for the National Day of Prayer on Thursday evening...We had a great turnout (we had a bigger turn out than First Baptist) and thank you to all those that put it together. It was very well organized and advertised. And no I didn't do it..... so I am not bragging on myself...

Before we begin let us bow with a Word of Prayer...

ME:

Today, I'd like to talk to you about the Law...Specifically the principle of the Old Testament Law and the instinctiveness of the Law...

Clement of Alexandria, "If ... the Law of Moses had been sufficient to confer eternal life, then there would have been no purpose for the Savior himself to come and suffer for us and to live the whole course of human life from his birth to his cross."

Ignatius said, "Do not be deceived by strange teachings, nor with old fables, which are unprofitable. For if we still live according to Jewish Law, we acknowledge that we have not received grace."

In its simplest idea...The Old Testament Law and even our laws today are a list of rules...or you could say boundaries to govern how we live or how we "Play the game" of life...

To illustrate the principle of the Law and also its instinctiveness...Allow me to illustrate with something many of us miss around here...

Football:

I don't know about you...But I miss football season...

I enjoy vegging in front of the TV... Turning off my mind as I watch giant gross Ork like men slam away...

But...I want you to think about something...What makes football, football? The main thing that

distinguishes football from soccer or baseball is not just the football itself but also mainly that they each have different rules...These rules direct the goals and the principles on how to play...

Football is governed by a long list of rules...But many of these rules and even the penalties for breaking the rules are actually quite instinctual...

Let's say you sit down to watch a football game with someone who has never even seen a football game before...

Can they still tell a penalty or foul? Sure...They know instinctively that you can't grab someone's jersey or trip someone...Even though one may not all know the rules...One can still understand some of the rules, boundaries and penalties...

Transition: But ya know...one of the most interesting aspects of a football game is to watch the individual athletes themselves...Because they themselves display the depravity of man...

All athletes KNOW the rules yet no athlete abides by them 100% of the time... How do I know this? It's called a foul or penalty...

Yet I also find something else very interesting... Athletes do not always play by the rules...But they always love pointing the finger at others when another athlete breaks the rules...

When an offensive linemen jumps off side...Who always points them out? The defense....However...If that same defensive linemen jumps off side...They deny wrongdoing...

WE:

Ya know if we aren't careful...We can end up just like those linemen...Quick to point the finger out...And not in...

In an effort to prove one's own law abiding, God-following life...We can be all too quick to point out the mistakes of others...And ignore the penalties of our own...

But let us go a bit deeper...Why is it tempting to point out other's mistakes? When we consistently point to the mistakes and penalties of others...I believe that behavior is deeply rooted in a lie that...That many Christians and even non-Christians believe even today...

And that Lie is rooted directly in the heart of the Gospel...And it is the same lie that even the Jews believed in the first century...**The lie is exposed** when we answer the question, "How are we saved? How are we justified before God?"

Transition: And this is the very question that the Roman Jews are struggling with in Romans 2...So, come with me to Romans 2...And due to the depth of the discussion today, we will only have time to cover verses 12-16...

To set the stage for today's discussion let us quickly review the audience of Chapter 2...

GOD:

Review Last Week:

Notice once again verse 1 of Chapter 2... Read Verse 1, *"Therefore you have no excuse, everyone of you who passes judgment, for in that which you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things."*

As we discussed last week... Who is the "You" in Chapter 2? Paul's audience is the Jewish Christians living in the city of Rome...Notice the "you" is officially identified in Chapter 2 verse 17...

And what did Paul warn the Jews last week? To not hypothetically and unnecessarily judge others...**AND That if they did...** Then they would store up God's wrath higher and higher to be reckoned in the final judgment...

Transition: But I also mentioned something last week... I mentioned that if any people on earth had the right to hypocritically and unnecessarily judge others...it was the Jews...

Why? Because the Jews are special...

* **They are special because of #1: Their Status...** They are the chosen people of God...They were set aside by God through Abraham to be God's chosen people...

* **#2: They are special because of their responsibility...** They held the keys to the Word of God for millennia...They were responsible for preserving it...even influencing us today...

* **#3: They are special because of their ancestors...** Their ancestors are Abraham, Isaac and Jacob...David, Solomon, Elijah, Jonathan, Deborah, Ruth, Boaz...And their names are immortalized forever in the very Book which we read today...

Transition: However... They are special for one more reason...Notice Romans 2 verse 12...

Read verses 12, *"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;*

* **Why else are the Jews special? #4:** Because of the Law...The Jews are special because they were given the Old Testament Law...

But I want you to notice a very important exegetical insight...Notice the first part of verse 12... “*For all who have sinned^awithout the Law will also perish without the Law,*” this phrase is related to verses 14-15....**And the second part** of verse 12... “*and all who have sinned under the Law will be judged by the Law;*” **is related to verse 13...**

Notice friends what it says in verse 13... “For (Greek word “gar”- signaling to me an explanatory clause is coming)... “*For it is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified.*””

It is not the hearers of the Law that are justified...but the **DOERS** of the Law will be justified...So those Jews who “do” the Law will be JUSTIFIED...If you have a pen...or a highlighter...I want you to circle the word “Justified...”

This is the first of many times in Romans Paul uses the term “justified”...What does it Paul mean by justified?

Justified is a legal term...That one has been declared “righteous” or “Guiltless” before God... That one has innocent standing before God... We call this today being “saved”...

* Justified = (Greek Word) = Saved (vs 13)

But notice friends who are the ones declared righteous before God? “For *it is not the hearers of the Law *who* are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified.*” The “doers” of the law are justified or saved...WOAH...Wait...a second...The “doers” of the law are saved...

Problem...Wait a second...If red flags aren’t flying off in your head then you aren’t paying attention...” I can just imagine the robot in Lost in Space... Danger, Will Robinson...Danger...”

What’s the danger here? Verse 13...Totally blows up our idea our salvation, right?...

My theology, our theology...Good Theology is that we are saved by Grace through faith APART from works.....My understanding of the Gospel is found in Ephesians 2:8-9. “For by grace I have been saved through faith and that not of yourselves it is a gift of God...Not by works so that no one can boast...”

Romans 2:13 seems to smash that to smithereens...And then we also have another problem

...Notice what Paul says one chapter later... Romans 3:28, “*For we maintain that a man is justified by faith...apart from works of the Law*” So we have one verse that says those who do the Law are justified and another that says that we are not justified by the Law...

How do we reconcile these two verses?

Listen to a comment from a notable scholar, He adds this, “Paul explains in verses 12-13, why even those who possess the law will nevertheless be condemned when they sin...It is because the law can *justify only* when it is obeyed; reading it, hearing it taught and preached, studying it- none of these nor all of them together can justify...”

In other words...YES...the law “can” technically justify you...But realistically...no one can “do” the law... Why? Because doing the law requires doing it perfectly...It requires “perfection...”

Since no one is perfect (Romans 3:11 & 3:23), therefore the Law cannot save...Hence the only way to be saved is through faith...

It is pretty blatant here that Paul’s Jewish audience had the wrong view of justification... They thought *sincerity* toward the law was enough...But the standard of justification through the Law is not *sincerity but perfection...*

It seems that Paul is shaking them up a bit...Pouring cold water on their face...Trying to get them to realize that they cannot be saved through the Law because none of them are perfect followers of the Law...

What is Paul’s point in verses 12-13? Point #1: The Old Testament Law Requires Perfection to Justify...

Allow me to Illustrate a Jewish Understanding of the Law...

A Jew trying to earn his salvation is like trying to swim from Los Angeles, California to Australia...It is logically possible but realistically impossible...

For the Jews, it is logically possible to be saved by the Law for that is what Paul says in Romans 2:13... but it is realistically and totally impossible...Because none of us and none of them CAN keep the Law perfectly...

Transition: If the Law is not meant to justify a Jew or us today...Then what is the point or purpose in the Law? Good Question..The Purpose of the Law is something we will talk about more next week...Come back...

PRACTICAL: THE LIE...

But Can I take a time out for just a second? What is the Lie at the heart of verse 13? The same lie floats around throughout churches in America today...It is lie that no one admits to believe but many actually do...

*** The Lie = Sincerity gets your to heaven...**

The lie floating around in churches and in most of society...is that sincerity gets you to heaven....Some “Christians” perhaps “know” that they are saved by grace through faith...But many “Christians” do not really believe it...

How do I know this? Because look how people live...Earning one’s way to heaven is really at the heart of legalism...That If I am good enough...Then God will approve of me...Then God will love me...Accept me...

That if you are a “good” person or “sincere” person...then you get to heaven...This is complete garbage...A “good” person getting to heaven is a load of horse manure...

And even Society says that if you don’t murder people, that if you are a “good person” by society’s standard then you get to heaven...Or...That if your good outweighs your bad then you make it to heaven...

Oh friends, let me set the record straight...Allow me to be abundantly and painfully clear...Sincerity does not save you...Being a “good person” does not save you...Perfection does...

And SINCE none of you are perfect, then you are in desperate need for help...And the only help..... the only hope we have to get to heaven is through faith in our Savior...Jesus Christ...

*** What is Paul’s point in verses 12-13? Point #1:** The Old Testament Law Requires Perfection to Justify...

Transition: But Paul then flips the page over...Paul goes from discussing the Old Testament Law of the Jews to the instinctive Moral Law to the Gentiles...

Read verses 14-15, *“For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do “instinctively (meaning?) the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves. 15 in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them,”*

Notice again...What does it say? Not only is God evident to all in Romans 1:20 through His

divine nature and eternal power... But also His moral Law is evident to everyone...

Notice what Paul says in verse 15, *“In that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them,”*

Friends, in other words, everyone who has ever walked the earth has a conscience which verifies the moral requirement of God...Even if someone lives in the Jungles of Brazil...It is instinctive to know that there is a God and He distinguishes between right and wrong...

The indigenous unreached Indians in Indonesia with no prior knowledge of our God...Can deduce right and wrong...All people can actually deduce four things as they look around and view General Revelation...

They know that there is a God...Romans 1:20

That there is right and wrong...Romans 2:14

That the existing God desires to be obeyed...Romans 2:13

That everyone is completely broken in need of salvation...(Romans 3)

Illustration: Personal Story:

But is it true that the existence of right and wrong is instinctive as is mentioned in verse 15?

Perhaps there is no more clear example of the instinctiveness of right and wrong than in little children...It is a tremendous honor and privilege to watch my daughter grow up...

And even my 20 months old my daughter knows to some degree the differences between right and wrong...It is in her nature...My daughter really has little idea of what the Bible is...of who Jesus is...of what the Old Testament Law is...

She doesn't even know the definition of justification...I mean come on she's a preacher's daughter...I hope by her second birthday she knows...She doesn't know all this stuff but OOOHHH she knows the difference between right and wrong is...It is written on her heart...

How do I know this? Her knowledge of right and wrong is clearly displayed over something called “toys”.....Brynn has cousin her age named Adeline...And they are like peas and carrots...They naturally play together and love each other...

It is truly fun watching them play together...Until....

Adeline steals Brynn's toy... or vice versa...When another kid steals a toy...What is the

natural reaction? Hysteria...Right? Crying...Boo hoing...Why do they get upset? Because they realize even at 20 months old that it is wrong to steal...It is wrong to take what is not yours...

Brynn even at her young age has the moral law of God written on her heart...Without a prior or profound knowledge of the Old Testament Law, of justification, or of the Bible... She still knows what right and wrong is...

Back to Verse 14-15...

Similarly the Gentiles...do not need the Old Testament Law to realize there is a God, He demands to be obeyed, and there is right and wrong...It is written on their conscience from the moment of their birth...The existence of God and His moral Law is clearly seen by all...

* **Paul's second point: Point #2:** God's Moral Law is Instinctual vs 15

Transition: But then notice Paul's third point in verse 16...

Read 2:16, *"16 on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus."*

What is the meaning here? God will judge not only according to one's external works... Romans 2:6... But also He will judge all the way down to the very secrets of men's hearts...

Now imagine something for just a second...imagine you are a Jew in the first century...Imagine the jolt of shock coming from Paul's letter to this point...

There are 3 Shocks so far in Chapter 2...

Shock #1: Paul says in 2:1- that even though they are special...They cannot hypocritically or unnecessarily judge another...

Shock #2: Their deeds are judged just like those of the Gentiles...Romans 2:11

But then Shock #3 here in 2:16..... Shock #3: God judges for deeds and secrets...Paul is saying to the Jews...That God does not just judge you for your deeds but also for your secrets...That being a follower of God is more than right actions but also right thoughts and motives...

I mean think about the Pharisees themselves...What did Jesus call them? Whitewashed tombs...Sparkly clean on the outside but dead on the inside...

That was the Jewish mentality...That spirituality is about external behavior...That judgment before God is all about what I do... But Spirituality then...AND Spirituality NOW...Is not just

about what you do...But goes all the way down to the secrets you have in the deepest recesses...

Practically:

Ladies and Gentlemen, True spirituality...True Godliness is not just what we do...But is also lies in our secrets...It is in the thoughts that no one else sees...True spirituality is not a white-washed tomb...But rather a light bulb...Bright Light on the inside glowing brightness to all on the outside...

*** What is Paul's third point? In verse 16... Point #3: Both Deed and Secrets bring judgment...**

Transition: Before I head to application, I want to take a step back for just a second and answer a very important question...What is Paul really doing in Chapter 1 and 2? Before Paul jumps into the Saved by Grace Through Faith in Chapter 3...What is Paul first doing in Chapters 1 & 2?

I've heard a phrase over the years...In order to get someone saved...You must get them lost...

Paul is trying to first get the Gentile readers to realize that they are lost and sinful... in Romans 1:18-31... And that their sin causes death...Romans 1:32...

Paul is then trying to get His Jewish Audience in 2:1-29...To realize that...Being a Jew doesn't save them (2:1-11), Having and "obeying" the law doesn't save them (2:12-24), and being circumcised doesn't save them...2:25-29...Nothing that they can do...Saves Them...They do not measure up to the requirement of justification...And since they do not measure up...They need "good news"...

Practical:

Listen friends...None of us measure up...We are all Broken...Our hearts are impure, Our minds are depraved and our souls are worthy of Death...And because of that...We can't earn our way into heaven...

It is futile to attempt it...However.....

YOU:

I imagine some of you here today...Think you can swim across the chasm of sin...That you CAN live a good enough life to make it to heaven...Being "good enough" is a lie...It is a lie from the pit of hell...

Listen, the chasm between you and God is infinitely distant...Listen, you are imperfect...

Therefore, you have no HOPE...I mean NO hope of EVER EARNING your way into the presence of a perfect God...

We all need Help...The help came in the form of Jesus the Christ...The only perfect person who died an unjust death to pay for your and my wretched sin so that by faith in Him you can cross over the chasm through His blood...

If you have never believed then why delay? Believe in Jesus Christ and you shall be saved...

Transition: The second group I wish to talk to today are those that seek to apply this passage to their life...And for you I seek to answer the question, "So What?" How does this passage apply to my life?

YOU:

This passage in its simplest idea and application...It simplest idea if for each of us to walk away from this passage with at least the thought and belief...To

Step #1: Realize that You are Not Good Enough...If you gain nothing else from the past three sermons...If you walk away with nothing else...Walk away with this thought...That you are not Good enough and You will never Be Good Enough to Earn Your way to Heaven...

And Because of this...Let us Embrace Step #2...

Step #2: Embrace God's Grace to Live: If you are a Christian, then you realize you are broken and sinful and so.....is everyone else...Let us embrace God's Grace in our lives for Salvation but also in our life for obedience...

Let Grace motivate us to obedience; rather than, being motivated by fear and legalism...

Step #3: Embrace God's Grace for Others: As mentioned last week, let us not slam people's head in a wall if they don't measure up...None of us measure up...Rather, let us love one another...Let us forgive one another, Let us not embrace judging one another but rather let us embrace loving one another...

WE:

Quote from Billy Graham, "When granted man years of life, growing old in age is natural, but growing old with grace is a choice. Growing older with grace is possible for all who will set their hearts and minds on the Giver of grace, the Lord Jesus Christ..."

