



Pastor Steve Holt  
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**All of Us are Guilty**  
**Romans 2:12-29**

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## All of us are Guilty

### Romans 2:12-29

In chapter 1 and 2 we observe a downward spiral from God's witness, as man has chosen: ignorance, to idolatry to indulgence.

This spiral eventually leads to a debased mind.

Paul is not just talking about the unrighteous, but the self righteous.

God has revealed Himself to man through:

- Creation: His signature is written upon nature.
- Conscience: if you have judged others, you reveal that you have a moral standard within your heart.
- Because we always break the very standards that we criticize in others.
- Paul's point: you can't get into heaven, you can't have a relationship with the Living God through your own righteousness.
- We are all going to stand before God's judgment seat! A day is coming when we have an appointed time to meet our God.

#### Vs. 4

- And yet God has shown us His mercy, His Trinitarian love:
  - Goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering
- He gives all people the opportunity to repent and come to Him.

#### Vs. 12

- If you have not had the Word of God, you will perish without it.
- If you have been privileged enough to have had the Word of God, you will be judged by the law.

## Vs. 13

- It isn't just those who are instructed in God's Word, but those who are doers of the Word.
- We are saved by faith alone, but not faith that is alone.
- It is not just those who hear God's Word but those who really act upon it, for that is the evidence that they have heard the Word.
- Salvation means a changed life because of the "implanted word"!

### James 1:21-25

*Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. 22 *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.* 23 *For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; 24 for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. 25 But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Century glass was not like our glass today, but rather metallic, made of bronze, silver or gold for the wealthy. The metals were beaten flat and polished to a high gloss and the image they reflected was adequate, but not perfect.
- The point is that the image we had when we first got saved, the changes that were happening, can be so easily forgotten as we go back to our old ways.
- We must intentionally and regularly look into God's Word and grow into maturity as we do God's Word.
- Familiarity breeds contempt. We can become so familiar because we know so much.
- The Pharisee's had the first 5 books of Moses memorized! But it's not those who are instructed, but those who actually live out the Word that are justified.
- The key to growth: Do what you hear! Do what you study!
- Ex. I don't lack for knowing, I lack for doing! In my marriage, I don't need to read another book on marriage, I need to do what I know!

- Inspiration must lead to examination, which leads to application.
- We are justified before God by living God's Word.

#### **Vs. 14-15**

- Even the person in the far outreaches, on some deserted island does have a law written on his heart.
- They have a consciousness of right and wrong, and they cannot even live up to that moral law within.
- All tribes have their own laws that even they cannot uphold.
- Even before you were a believer, your conscience bothered you about certain things: either accusing or excusing.

#### **Vs. 16**

- This is the Great White Throne.
- If you have been justified in Christ through faith, you will not have to be judged; you will enter immediately into the presence of the Lord.
- But if you have rejected Christ, if you have only been a "hearer" and not a "doer" of the Word, you will stand before the Great White Throne and then be cast into the lake of fire.

#### **Revelation 20:11-15**

*Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. 14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.*

- Is your name written in the Book of Life? It is either in there or not in there.
- You have an appointment with God! You didn't set up this appointment, God has set it up.

- God even knows our thoughts.
- God knew the thoughts of the priests in Ezekiel's time.

Ezekiel 8:12

*Then He said to me, "Son of man, have you seen what the elders of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the room of his idols? For they say, 'The LORD does not see us, the LORD has forsaken the land.' "*

- Am I glad you don't know all my thoughts? Absolutely!
- But don't look at me so funny; you know your own secret thoughts! No one will be righteous.
- But, praise be the Lord, that we are forgiven!
- Now Paul goes after the self righteous Jew.

**Vs. 17**

- Paul is discussing the Jewish person and the Law. There hasn't been a blood sacrifice since 70 AD and paraphrased, Leviticus 17:11 says, "without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sin."
- For the Jew, there is not forgiveness of sin without the Messiah Jesus.
- They can't keep the law, even the 10 Commandments. Paul said he knew he especially broke the commandment, "Thou shall not covet."
- All the other laws were ok, but when considering, "Thou shall not covet," we realize we move from actions to our thoughts! Our thoughts slay us.
- Jesus said it was not the act of adultery, but just the thoughts of it.
- The heart of the problem is the problem of the heart!
- Ex. If you have any doubts about this, just look at children:
  - The learn "No" before they can say anything else!
  - Or "Mine"
  - They embarrass you in public places.
  - They whack each other and you never taught them how to do that.

- They lie and steal.

Psalm 51:5

*Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,  
And in sin my mother conceived me.*

- The heart of the problem is the problem of the heart.

**Vs. 16-24**

- Jesus said, “You choke at a gnat and swallow a camel.” A religious Jew would choke on a gnat if it went down their throat because they didn’t know if that gnat had been on a Gentile and so that blood might be on them now. But you swallow a camel.
- In other words, you focus on the outward but forget the inward character of love, compassion, and grace.
- A Jewish woman couldn’t look in a mirror on the Sabbath because she might find a white hair and pluck it out and that was considered harvesting on the Sabbath.
- A Jewish man could spit on a rock, but not the dirt because it might roll off and make a furrow, and that was considered plowing.
- This is all in the Talmud.
- They had turned the Law into such a ridiculous thing because the Jews were teaching the people that they could somehow keep the law, and the point of the Law was to show man that he can’t keep the Law.
- The Law is just a Thermometer, but it doesn’t take the fever away.
- The Law is a mirror, and it shows you that you have dirt on your face, but it doesn’t clean the dirt off.
- So, are you making your boast in the Law?

**Vs. 25**

- Circumcision was a sign of a Covenant, of separation.
- So if you get circumcised, but don’t keep the Law, then what good is it?
- But then he flips the whole thing over.

## Vs. 26

- Deuteronomy 10 and 30 and Jeremiah 4 and 6 all say that circumcision was of the heart.
- To the Jew: you are using circumcision to justify yourself, but your heart is not changed.

## Vs. 27-29

- It is important to know that in chapters 9-11 Paul will affirm that God is not done with the Jews yet.
- Many believe that these verses mean that God is done with the ethnic Jews. I don't believe that.
- This is a challenge to the Jews, who are ethnic Jews.
- The main point: Ritual without reality is unrighteousness!
- Many of us grow up with religious rituals, and without the reality of a personal relationship, it doesn't make us any more righteous.
- It is the very thing that people use to blaspheme the Jews and now, Christianity: *they just use the outward as a big show; they are not righteous!*
- Even the world sees a phony!
- But now Paul says the opposite.

## Vs. 29

- Reality without ritual is righteousness!
- The reality is the attitude of the heart by the Spirit.
- Human beings look at ritual: the outward.
- God looks at the inward reality: the motivations of the heart!