

REMNANT CHURCH SERMON NOTES – ROMANS 2: 1-5
PREACHED ON NOVEMBER 2, 2025, BY REV. B.B. ANUM-HIGHER

You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge another, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things. 2 Now we know that God's judgment against those who do such things is based on truth. 3 So when you, a mere human being, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God's judgment? 4 Or do you show contempt for the riches of His kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance? 5 But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when His righteous judgment will be revealed.

➤ **INTRODUCTION**

- Last week, we considered Romans 1:18-32, and I mentioned that Paul was addressing the immoral pagan world, the godless. He was addressing the man and woman who had made a willful decision to live their lives as if there is no God. Paul explained to us that there is no excuse on the Day of Judgment for such people that they didn't know that there is a God, or because no one told them about God. God has revealed Himself to all mankind in His creation and in human conscience because every man and woman knows that there is a supreme being who governs the universe. God has also made Himself known in human history and His providence for His creation by giving us food, causing the rain to fall, etc. This is what we refer to as natural or general revelation.
- Today, we will consider the first part of Romans 2, where Paul begins to address the morally upright Jew, in particular, and by extension, all self-righteous people. Paul devoted chapter 2 to showing us what God's judgment looks like. He understood that mankind must first discover his real plight before he could discover the glory, the blessings, and the salvation power of the gospel.
- Receiving the gospel without first realizing who you are in God's eyes often leads to a false conversion. We must understand the bad news about ourselves before the gospel can make sense. A good physician or medical doctor must conduct a thorough diagnosis of the problem before initiating treatment. We need to hear the bad news about ourselves first.

➤ **WHY WAS PAUL CONCERNED ABOUT THE JUDGMENT OF GOD?**

- Paul didn't originate the concept of God's judgment. It is a doctrine that can be found throughout the Holy Bible. The Bible tells us at several places that there is a day coming when all the nations will stand before God to be judged, and that day will coincide with the second coming of Jesus Christ. Paul tells us further that the day of judgment has begun, even in this present world, and will come to its

climax with the return of Christ. God is judging sinners now by handing them over to do the desires of their hearts until they are destroyed.

- So, when we hear people make fun of God, despise the gospel, persecute believers, and boast about their actions by saying, if there is a God, why did I engage in sexual sin, homosexuality, steal, etc., and still escape His judgment? If there is a God, why do I continue to profit from evil practices and see no signs of His judgment?
- Well, Paul answers by saying that the very sign that God is judging these people is the fact that they persist and even succeed in sinning. The worst judgment anyone could face is when God allows you to continue pursuing the desires of your heart, to despise the gospel, and undermine His judgment, yet He doesn't intervene to restrain you.
- God judges because He is not complacent about sin. Sin is what brings down God's judgment because He views sin as a serious issue. He has promised throughout the Bible to judge sin and the sinner, and He has placed the death penalty on sin. The wages of sin is death; eternal death. No one who keeps sinning till the end of their life will escape the judgment of God. So, God judges sin to preserve His moral integrity. He is a just God.
- What would happen if there were no judgment for crimes in our land or in any part of the world? What would happen if a nation didn't have law enforcement officers, courts, and prisons? There will be chaos. There was a time in the history of Israel when there was no central governing authority to maintain discipline and order in Israel, and the result was lawlessness. We are told in Judges 17:6 that "In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes". Judgment, therefore, preserves the moral foundation of the universe.

➤ **EVEN THE RELIGIOUS UPRIGHT JEWS HAD NO EXCUSE.**

- Paul concluded his letter in chapter 1 by telling us that the godless men and women have no excuse on the Day of Judgment because they not only engage in sinful activities but they approve of them.

28 And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. 29 They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, 30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, 31 foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. 32 Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

- They advertise sin, promote it, defend those involved in it, and stand in solidarity with the sinners. Recently, a US governor signed new laws meant to protect what

they call reproductive freedom, which makes abortion legal in his state. This is an illustration of what Paul is telling us: the promotion of sin as a sign of God's judgment on a society. God is not restraining the governor and his people from evil. This is not a victory for the abortionist but God's wrath on them.

- I read later on Facebook a condemnation of the governor by several believers for encouraging the murder of babies. Some were on the streets to strike against child sacrifice, the murdering of the babies, and they rained curses on the governor.
- In today's text, Paul addresses these people, who the morally upright Jews represented in Paul's day. This is what Paul tells such people in verse 1:

Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things.

- The opening word "Therefore" indicates that Paul is continuing his argument from Romans 1. The morally upright Jew, the morally upright Christian, the morally upright reformed believer has no excuse either on the Day of Judgment when they disapproved of an evil action in public, but in the secret places of their lives do the same things. Such people will also face God's judgment.
- The Jews listened to Paul preach, but thought he was only condemning the Gentiles, to which Paul declared that they were missing the whole point. The Jews thought they were already saved based on their works and religious privileges. We learn from this that the Christian should never become so engrossed in knowledge and the study of theology that they overlook the repentance at the heart of the gospel.
- The Jews who said Amen to the apostle Paul for condemning the sinners, the Gentiles, described at the end of chapter 1, the person who verbally condemns, criticizes, and judges sin, but does the same things in secret, does not have any excuse before God. God does not have any interest in public appearances to display our religiosity when our hearts are far from what we profess.
- Paul is telling the religious person, particularly the religious upright Jews of his time, that being verbally critical of other people, but doing the same things in our hearts or in secret, is equally sinful before God. He judges our behavior, not our profession of faith, nor our reputation, nor the image we present to others.
- Sin deceives us into clearly seeing faults in others while being blind to the same flaws in ourselves. We can see evil things so clearly in others, yet we struggle to recognize the same things in ourselves.

➤ THE DECEITFULNESS OF BEING RELIGIOUS WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE.

- When the Israelites returned from their captivity in Babylon, the Pharisees and Scribes did not encourage the study of the Old Testament, so the people relied on what their teachers told them. This was a way to control them. This approach to religion could produce zealous religious people, but it often leads to hypocrisy

(Romans 10:2). The Roman Catholic church adopted such a strategy, so most devout Catholics do not know what is in the Bible and only rely on what their priests tell them. That is also how the cults operate.

- Most of the religiously upright Jews of Paul's time believed that outward appearances of religiosity were enough. They relied on their self-righteousness and often condemned others for their sins. Listen to what Jesus said about the thoughts of the Jew with a parable:

9 To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: 10 "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.' Luke 18:9-12.

- The religious Jew didn't see that he was in the same category as sinners and that he needed to flee to Jesus Christ for His salvation. He saw the sins of others but was blind to his own. Paul says that the religious person condemns himself whenever he does the same things he condemns others for. So how were the Jews blinded to their own sinfulness?
- Their teachers have told them that sin is what you do outwardly or physically; therefore, so long as they did not physically murder, commit adultery, or steal, they thought that they had kept faithfully the Ten Commandments. However, sin starts from the heart, before it shows itself outward. In other words, we fall into sin privately or secretly in our hearts and minds before we fall publicly.
- Let's listen to Jesus on the proper interpretation of murder.

21 "You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' 22 But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, 'Raca,' is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell. Matthew 5: 21-22.

- Murder includes a jealous anger towards someone, and it consists of an attempt to damage the reputation of others. It includes calling someone empty-headed or foolish because the hatred that prompts insults is the same as that which leads to murder.
- On adultery, fornication, and sexual sins, Jesus says:

27 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' 28 But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. Matthew 5: 27-28.

- Looking at a woman who is not your spouse lustfully, having a desire to be intimate with someone who is not your spouse, is the beginning of adultery.
- God never judges merely by outward appearance, but sees both the inside and the outside. Paul, therefore, tells this religious Jew and all of us who profess to

be religious and verbally criticize others that we should watch out that we do not do the same things we condemn others for. We should be cautious because it doesn't matter even when we do it in our hearts or minds or in private; God sees, and we have no excuse. Our heart is the very seat, center, and throne of our personality, and God sees what goes on there. Paul writes:

Therefore, you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things. Romans 2:1.

➤ VERSE 2

2 Now we know that God's judgment against those who do such things is based on truth.

- Why should we not be like the religious, upright Jew who condemns the sins of others but is blind to his own? Paul tells us that God's judgment always reflects the reality of the situation. God judges everyone not only based on the external sinful acts or the appearances, but also on the condition of our hearts and minds, on the reality of the situation, or according to truth. We may deceive others with our words and actions and put up great public appearances, but He sees beyond our words and outward appearances, and He judges accordingly based on the bigger picture before Him about us. He knows all of the secrets of men.
- Imagine this religious Jew saying, hey, Apostle Paul, I have never committed murder and Paul responding to him, did you ever damage the reputation of others with your gossip, jealousy, and envy? If yes, then you have committed murder. Then he says to Paul, I have never committed adultery, never in my life. Paul responds to him; have you ever had even a little lust for a woman? If yes, you have committed adultery. No one would have noticed your lust for a woman and your jealousy towards others, but God does. God judges the heart.
- If we are to view sin the same way God does, we will immediately recognize our desperate situation and flee to Jesus Christ for His salvation. We would love to sing the hymn, "Just as I am, without one plea". None of us can stand before God and claim to be righteous or without any sins. We all have many things to plead to God for, and many sins to confess to Him. Even though those around us might not notice those sins because they can't see our hearts, God does.
- Believers, we were therefore by nature under the wrath of God (Ephesians 2:3). Unbelievers, you are under the wrath of God as I speak to you now because of your many sins – both inwardly and outwardly.
- I worked with a pastor who always assumed that all the members were God's elect, and because of that, they believed they were all saved, regardless of their actions. This is a form of Antinomianism. Antinomianism is the dangerous belief that because we are God's people, it doesn't matter what we do, we don't have to obey God's moral law. It sets the grace and love of God against the law, justice,

and righteousness of God. However, Paul says that God's judgment is always according to truth, meaning it doesn't matter to God whether you are His child or not. If you sin against Him, it's sin, and He will punish it. Instead of condemning others and their sins, each person should turn their own eyes to the truth of the Lord and ensure they are always aligning their truth with God's truth.

- God's judgment is according to truth. It is not like man's judgment, which varies and is fallible. God's judgment is eternal and unchanging. Though the Jews were God's chosen people, He still judged them for their sins. God has no favorites or respect for persons. Sin is sin. The lifelessness of the Christian church today may be partly due to an unconscious antinomianism - thinking that because we are saved, it doesn't matter how we live. However, God's judgment is always based on truth. In fact, the elect are known by their obedience and holiness to God. They are chosen to be holy and blameless. Ephesians 1:4.

➤ VERSE 3

3 So when you, a mere human being, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God's judgment?

- Paul makes the same point again: there is no exception for anyone when it comes to God's judgment. This Jew might think that with his religious privileges, such as coming from the line of Abraham, being an Israelite, having the Old Testament, and being the chosen of God, he could be exempted from God's judgment. The Jews argued that they were right with God simply by being Jews (Romans 2: 1-16), they had the Law (verses 17-24), and they had circumcision (verses 25-29). Paul says, it is not like that with God; it is an error on their part.
- It doesn't matter how vocal we are against sin and how respected we are in society; if we sin, He will judge us with no exception. It doesn't matter where we came from, what organizations we belong to; being a Roman Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian, SDA, etc, comes with no exceptions if we do not see our sins and flee to Jesus, but deceive ourselves that someone else is worse than us, so we are better off and an exception.
- Those of us in the Reformed faith are always in this danger of thinking we are an exception. We have and know the Truth; we have the catechisms, creeds, and confessions, which are biblical. However, more often than not, our knowledge of the Truth or special revelation hinders many from understanding the depth of their sins, thereby hindering their ability to flee to Jesus Christ. Many reformed believers are active on social media, engaging in daily arguments primarily to demonstrate their own biblical knowledge and condemn others. If care is not taken, such people might think all is well with their souls, even when in fact, the fruit of the gospel – obedience is not evident in their lives. Learning the Scriptures should draw the Christian closer to Christ, so that their daily practice aligns with their position as a child of God.

➤ **VERSE 4**

4 Or do you presume or show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?

- One of the elders I worked with in my previous church shocked me when he said that a believer's family to a thousand generations will be saved because that is what the Bible teaches (Deuteronomy 7:9). In his submission, it really didn't matter how the generation to the thousand lived; they are already covered. He was presuming that having a father or a grandfather who is a believer automatically shields the future generations from God's judgment. Paul says God's judgment unmasks all presumptions. The Jews thought they were exempt from condemnation simply because they were Jews, regardless of their own behavior, and Christians can easily fall into this trap.
- You can't also presume that because God's judgment does not fall on the sinner immediately, it is an indication that they have escaped from His judgment. Paul says that there is a reason for God's kindness, patience, and tolerance, and it is meant to lead us to repentance. God's delay in bringing judgment is not a sign of weakness, but an expression of His mercy and compassion. He gives the sinner enough time to repent. Judgment is not His favorite action.
- Repentance is the first thing the Holy Spirit does to the sinner, and it is the radical turning away from one pattern of life and embracing another. It is when you turn away from trusting in yourself, others, material things, and so on, and totally trust in God for your salvation and everything else. It is the initial response that must occur before one can properly exercise faith in Christ because you don't see the need for a savior unless you've seen yourself as a sinner and in the wrong relationship to God.
- The first thing that happens when a person repents is that they begin to think differently about God. The repented sinner becomes exclusively attached to His Person, exclusively devoted to His purpose, and exclusively obeys His will. The repentant person also sees himself differently, no longer as a good person, but as vile and full of sin, like other sinners. He also views life as a pilgrimage and stops making worldly things the center of his or her life.
- A belief that is not characterized by true heart repentance from sin, and a profession of faith that is not based on repentance, leads to a false conversion. Without repentance, the so-called believer is ignorantly presuming that they are saved, and he is the elect of God.
- But is God not loving, merciful, and gracious, so why would He send anyone to hell? Paul says stop presuming, stop being ignorant, because God's grace is not meant to be abused; it is not a license to do as you please, but to lead you to a genuine conversion.
- Paul writes, **11 For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. 12 It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to**

live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, Titus 2: 11-12.

Later, he would say to us in our study in Romans 6:15 that "What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? By no means!"

➤ VERSE 5

5 But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed.

- Paul tells us that the unbeliever, the self-righteous person, and anyone who lives as if there is no God works against themselves. They are storing up wrath for the Day of Judgment. This means every time people abuse the goodness of God and see it as a license to sin, they are in fact accumulating divine wrath through their continued rejection of God's goodness.
- Are you storing up wrath for yourself by the way you live your life, even though you are a member of the professing church? Is the wrath of God something to joke with? This is the vision John had of how people would react to the wrath of God on the Day of Judgment. He wrote: **They called to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! Revelation 6:16.**

➤ APPLICATION

God has spoken through Paul to us. The question we should ask ourselves is this: What does this say to me? Where do I come in here? What is God telling me this morning?

We must examine ourselves in light of this passage to see if we make similar mistakes the Jews made by ignorantly presuming that because they were God's chosen people, they could live as they pleased. Sin can introduce prejudice, causing us to categorize ourselves as Reformed, Methodist, Presbyterian, etc., and apply truth to others but not to ourselves. It can also lead to unconscious denial of justification by faith alone, as we rely on other things, such as birth, Christian education, ancestry, moralism, and ritualism.

Sin can separate doctrine and life; believing we are right with God, regardless of how we live. How do you know if you are God's elect? What makes you God's elect is how you live, your obedience to God as a fruit, having a true saving faith, and having a genuine heart repentance. By your fruit, you will know your position with God, and others can notice too. Matthew 7:20-23.

Sin makes us defend ourselves and study Scripture academically rather than applying it. We must apply Scripture to ourselves, not just analyze it. To Timothy, Paul wrote: 16

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God[a] may be complete, equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16-17. We should ask what it says to us and about us, not just what it says about others.

So far, Paul has informed us that the atheist or the immoral pagan has no excuse on the Day of Judgment because God has revealed Himself to them in creation, conscience, history, and providence, or the general revelation. He has also told us that the religiously upright Jew has no excuse. They had the privilege of receiving the Old Testament.

This should prompt us to reflect on ourselves, the men and women of the 21st century. We are in great danger and have no excuse, either, because we not only see God in general revelation, but we also have both the Old and New Testaments revealing God to us in a special way. It poses a greater danger for those who grew up in a Christian home, attended church their entire lives, and even attended a Christian school. What excuse will such people give on the Day of Judgment for being godless, wicked, and unrepentant?

It poses an even greater danger for some of us who preach the gospel to others, teach others about God, and serve in church leadership. What would be my excuse if Jesus tells me on the Day of Judgment that I never knew you, Benjamin, because your zeal for me was not based on knowledge, you separated doctrine and life, you publicly professed your faith in me, but never possessed the faith? I would have no excuse if that were to happen, and the same with you.

Paul, even though he knew he was saved, kept pressing on to avoid all forms of sin because he had set his eyes on the highest prize in heaven. He wrote: **But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified. 1 Corinthians 9:27.**

We can learn from Paul not to presume that because we are believers, we are at liberty to live any type of way. The elect are known by their holiness, not by a mere profession of faith. Paul wrote: **For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. Ephesians 1:4.** The gospel gives the elect the power to say no to sin. The believer is no longer a slave to sin. Romans 6:1-7. You can be a member of a church all your life, serve in church leadership, preach the gospel, but when you don't repent and flee from sin, you are not God's elect.

The judgment of God is already in action and will come to its climax when Jesus returns. There is no way to escape God's judgment except through Christ. The whole of mankind is under God's judgment with no escape apart from the way that God Himself has provided through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Is Christ your only hope in life?