

Romans 2:1-16

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[0 : 00] Take your Bibles and turn with me to the book of Romans, Romans chapter 2, Romans chapter 2. Several weeks ago we started this study going through the book of Romans and I have every week just expressed to you how excited I am for us to be in the book of Romans. This is the book while reading it in personal study several years ago, let's see, I'm trying to do the math in my head, about 18 years ago that I came to Christ through personal study of the book of Romans. It is a book that has impacted Christianity throughout the ages great men and women have come to Christ through studying its pages and just about every foundational doctrine of the church, of what we claim to believe, finds its root and its base in the book of Romans. The gospel is great because it tells us about our Savior, tells us about the life of Christ as He walked among men. And it is always wonderful to go to Matthew, Mark,

Luke, and John and to stand amazed at what happens when God became a man and dwelt among us. The book of Acts is amazing because we can read in the book of Acts really God's blueprint for the church. The things we see the church doing in the book of Acts are the things we should still see the church doing today. It is not like that's what He did in the past with His church, but today He has a different plan. It is amazing to read the book of Acts and to see how God works and moves in His church. Starting in 1 Corinthians all the way to the end of the Bible. In the Bible in the Bible in the Bible, we find a number of letters written to churches.

And those letters address issues in churches, in local churches, and also in the universal church. We cannot read the majority of the New Testament starting in 1 Corinthians and going to the end of the Bible without coming across an issue that we find in our own lives and our own churches. But the book of Romans stands alone. It is very uniquely theological. It talks about who God is, what we believe because of who He is, how we behave because of what He has done, and how it shapes our lives moving forward. It deals in the first eight chapters with the issue of salvation. How can a man be saved? It deals in verses 9, in chapters 9 through 11 with the issue of the nation of Israel. Now that God has offered salvation to all men, as we find in the first eight chapters, what about the nation of Israel? And then in chapters 12 through 16, it deals with, since this is who God is, how do we live our daily lives? The book of Romans is an amazing book. And I say all that so that you will understand you have to take it in its context. Because this morning we're in Romans chapter 2 verses 1 through 16.

And we're going to read that. And as we get into it, you may be tempted to check out on me, to get upset at the word of God. And I won't say you're going to get upset at me, to be offended at what it may say, to be pushed back.

[3 : 19] But understand this, Paul takes three chapters telling us who we really are, so that he can take the next five chapters to tell us who we can become in Christ. But until we know who we really are, we will never become who we need to be and who we can be. So these first three chapters of the book of Romans can break you down, they can offend you, they can hurt your feelings, they can jump on your toes more than any hellfire and brimstone preacher ever has. And they can punch you in the gut. But you cannot argue with what the word of God says. So I'm not trying to push back, I'm not trying to cover it up, but I just want us to be real and understand the word of God is good. So if you're physically able and desire to do so, I'm going to ask if you'll join with me as we stand together and we read the word of God in Romans chapter 2, starting at verse 1 and going to verse 16. Paul writes to the church at Rome. We will pick up what he wrote just a little bit at the end of chapter 1.

It says, Therefore, you have no excuse, every one of you who passes judgment. For in that which you judge another, you can deal from yourself. For you who judge practice the same things. And we know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice such things. But do you suppose this, oh man, when you pass judgment on those who practice such things and do the same yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God? Or do you think lightly of the riches of his kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to

repentance? 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, who will render to each person according to his deeds. Verse 7. To those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life. But to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek. But glory and honor and peace to everyone 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 it is not the hearers of the law who are just before God, but the doers of the law will be justified. For when Gentiles, that is everyone that's not a Jew, who do not have the law do instinctively the things of the law, these not having the law are a law to themselves, in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts of God's grace. And that's why they're not a law to us. And that's why they're not a law to us.

God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus. Let's pray. Oh God, our desire this morning is to come and to hear your word, to see what it has to say to us.

But we pray that your word would speak to us, that it would penetrate the very depths of our being, Lord, and in penetrating us, that it would draw us closer to you. We pray that it would be a true revelation of who we are, oh Lord, so that we may understand more of who you are.

We thank you for the opportunity you have given us. And God, we stand ready to hear from you and you alone. And we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated. We have been looking at this great book of the foundations of our faith, the foundational doctrines of our faith.

[7 : 00] And Paul is showing us here in chapters 1 through 8 how a man can be saved. And I have shared the story with you before how someone once asked a very great and very popular evangelical pastor, if you had an hour on a train or a bus to witness to someone, if you had one hour to talk to someone about the gospel, how would you do it?

This individual responded back and he said, by the way, his name is John Piper. John Piper responded back and said, I would take 50 minutes talking to that individual about the Old Testament law.

I would take 50 minutes showing that individual how he has fallen short of every standard God has set. I would take 50 minutes telling that individual that God expects perfection and you're not perfect.

And then I would take 10 minutes and introduce him to the grace of God that covers up every bit of that imperfection. And we see here, this is exactly what Paul does. He first introduces us to who we are and the problem of man.

Because until we understand our problem, until we understand our fallacy, until we understand we have fallen short, then we are not ready to hear about grace and mercy and forgiveness.

[8 : 14] Grace has no impact on those who think they have it all together. Mercy has no power with those who think they do not need it. It is only for those who understand their own unworthiness.

So Paul takes the first few chapters of this great book. It is a book of salvation. But it doesn't sound like it at the first. This morning, I want you to see in these 16 verses, if you remember last week, for those who haven't been here, if you want to go back our sermons, I try to get them up online, wartracebaptist.org.

You can go to sermons, and I know last week's on there. You can go listen to past sermons on there. Some of you say, I've only heard it once, I don't want to hear it again. That's fine. If you ever want to put your kids to sleep, put me on and let them sleep to me.

That's fine. Because I know some of the kids get the best sleep. But we looked at last week the great tragedy of mankind. We saw how God has clearly defined us, that we have rejected God. We have pushed down the revelation of God to all of us. We looked at that great tragedy. Paul here begins to make this transition in what we have labeled as chapter 2.

[9 : 24] And now he's going to tell us about the fair judgment of a good man. The fair judgment of a good man. I spent the biggest portion of my life trying to be good.

I lived more of my life as an unbeliever than I have lived it as a believer. I have not yet reached that pinnacle point. I have two more years, or about two and a half more years, before I can finally say I have lived just as long as a believer as I did as an unbeliever.

But the first half of my life, I spent it trying to be good. All how I desired to be good. And I did not want to be bad, and I wanted to be the best person that I could, and I wanted to look good to those around me.

I wanted everyone to think that I was a good old boy, or a good man. And we hear that description all the time. Well, he is a good man, or that is a good lady. And is it wrong to live with a desire to be good?

Absolutely not. None of us, I think, inherently want to be bad. We all have that desire to be pleasing to those around us. Even the worst of mankind had to suppress that. But we understand, too, that the Bible is very clearly that tells us that our goodness, if that is a word, our goodness, or how good we are, really does not affect our eternity.

[10:38] Because the danger in trying to be good, the danger that I faced, and the danger that God broke me of when I opened up the book of Romans, was that while I might have been a good man, I could never be good enough.

And that while I may be a good man, and I may be a good individual, and I may not be bad by most people's standards, God is still absolutely fair in judging me, even though I'm a good man.

And for many of us, and for many people in the world, that is a hard thing to acknowledge and a hard pill to swallow. You will often hear that surely God will not cast the good person, the good man, or the good woman, that God would not cast the good person into an everlasting hell.

That God cannot be a God of love, because He would never let the good go to the same place as the bad. The problem is, we are trying to define what is good and what is bad.

And we need to also understand that while the Bible very clearly says that they are on their way to a Christless eternity, there is only one created thing, only one group of created things that it says God cast into the lake of fire, and that is Satan and his demons.

[11:52] The Bible tells us in the book of Revelations that God created the lake of fire for Satan and his demons, and He cast them into it. Everyone else that goes to a Christless eternity, friend, listen to me, they choose it. He does not throw them there.

He does not cast them there. It is a choice of theirs to be there. You say, oh, God cannot be loving. God cannot be good. God cannot be right if He would allow the good to go to the same place as the wicked.

But the problem with that is, we are not good. And we are not God. And we are often trying to define both. I want you to see this morning, the fair judgment of a good man.

Now you understand why I said, stay with me. Because it can get very uncomfortable. We do not want to rely upon our goodness. I am by no means saying, now when you leave here today, go out there and live bad.

Live dangerously. Do everything you want to do. Just live wickedly. I always joke with my boys. You guys know mamas all real well. Carrie always looks at them and says, now you be careful. And don't go too fast.

[12:52] Be careful. Don't get hurt from anything. Give me a call. And then the boys come to tell me about it. I'm like, look, drive fast. Live dangerously. Take risks. Do everything unnecessary. Just go have, and of course they know I'm joking. But none of us want to inherently just go out and be bad.

But we must avoid the danger of trusting in how good we are. And I want you to see this morning that God is absolutely fair in judging the good.

Number one, we see the unavoidable truth. The unavoidable truth. Paul writes here in the first verse, Now that is directly connected to what he has just said in Romans chapter 1.

As he comes into what God gave man over to. You remember that list of things. I'm not going to ask you to go back and to rehash those with this. But it says that since man has suppressed the knowledge of God and desired to worship man rather than the creator, he desired to worship the creation rather than that which created it.

God gave them over to a debased mind. And they did this. And God gave them over to the desires of the heart. And they did this. And God gave them over to what they wanted. The most dangerous thing God can ever do for us would be to give us over to what we want.

[14:05] And then he connects it in chapter 2 verse 1. Therefore, you have no excuse, every one of you who passes judgment. For in that which you judge another, you condemn yourself.

For you who judge practice the same things. See, Paul was very aware, just as we are today, of the reality that some people would read what he wrote in chapter 1.

And they would read that list. And our tendency is to pick out the things in that list which we think are wrong. And he would see that the readers of that list would come across those things that are wrong and say, Yep, see, now God needs to judge that person.

Look, that person, I know so-and-so who does this. And I know so-and-so who's doing that. And I know so-and-so, yeah, I knew God was going to judge them because they're doing this, they're doing that. But Paul says, but wait a minute.

Wait a minute. Who are we to pass judgment? I'm not going to ask you to read that list again, but go back and read the list at the end of chapter 1. The third time it says that God gave them over, in that list are contained things that we accept most very comfortably.

[15:12] The third time that God gave them over, which is considered to be the last time that God gave them over, where they did the worst things in that list. You don't find the murderers.

You don't find the haters. You find the gossips, the busybodies, the lack of love, the lack of compassion, the lack of concern, the enviousness, the strife. You find all these things that we seem to push down and say they're not that important.

Why are they in that list? The same reason that when we go to the book of Revelations and we open up the book of Revelations and John writes for us a list of individuals that are in the lake of fire.

And in this list we find the fornicators, the adulterers, the murderers, the idolaters. And we're like, yes, yes, yes, God needs to judge those. And then it says, and the unbelieving. And we go, what? You mean the only thing they did was not believe? Well, what did they not believe? Well, my friend, to not believe any portion of the scripture is to be unbelieving. To come across any part of the Bible and you say, well, I just can't believe that.

[16:15] Well, that all of a sudden includes you in that list. And what Paul is saying here is there is this unavoidable truth that when you read scripture, when you read the Bible, that it is very hard to judge those around you because in judging them you are passing judgment upon yourself.

And it is very hard and it is very difficult to read the entirety of scripture and to say, see, I knew they were wrong because the very next verse may prove to us and it always proves to us that we are wrong.

I have a very hard time reading the Old Testament, especially getting into the book of Leviticus and reading the book of Leviticus. And I began to see what God's standard is. And while reading the book of Leviticus, I never read the standard of holiness which God put forward for his people and think, yes, look at everybody that's falling short.

Every time I read the book of Leviticus, I go, oh me. By the Old Testament standard, I would have been dead by the time I was five. Because it says those who are disobedient to parents need to be stoned.

Now, have any of you ever been disobedient to your parents? Have you ever been disrespectful to an individual? The standard of holiness is honor your father and mother just by simply not obeying.

[17:28] God says you are to be holy. Stone them. And you say, wow, which, by the way, is the same punishment for the murderer, same punishment for the adulterer, the same punishment for the fornicator.

See, we cannot pass judgment because there is the unavoidable truth that the very judgment which we are proclaiming is the very judgment upon ourself. I think it was Lecrae who said in one of his Christian rap songs, and yes, I like Christian rap songs, is that when we try to determine what the truth is, who are we to say what is right and what is wrong?

Who are we to attribute that God can only do this and God cannot do that? And he needs to judge the ones who do this, this, and this, but he cannot judge that, that, and that. Because the standard is perfection and the standard is holiness.

And Paul writes for us, oh, how we good people long to see that list and say, oh, I know a lot of people doing that. I know a lot of people who fall short of that standard.

And Paul says we can't do that. Because the very reason that we read this list is that God shows us where we fall short, he says in verse 2, and we know that the judgment of God rightly falls, or is correct in coming to, or is absolutely perfect in those who practice such things.

[18:41] The judgment of God is right. He says, but do you suppose this, oh man, now he is writing to the religious here, which is kind of dangerous because we may consider ourselves

religious. He is writing to the religious here who would say, well, I know God is pleased with me because this seems to be going okay.

My life is not the same. I don't have the same problems. See, the tendency is to look at those who are living openly in sin, who are making a display of their sin, and to see how things are falling apart and see, see, the judgment of God is upon them, and they deserve everything coming to them.

Oh, how they deserve to do that. And the religious would be like, but see, God is pleased with me because everything in my life is going okay. But he writes for you, he says, but do you suppose, oh man, when you pass judgment on those who practice such things and do the same yourself that you escape the judgment of God?

And they're like, well, wait a minute. Everything in my life is okay. He says, or do you think lightly of the riches of his kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?

What is this? The lack of visible judgment upon an individual's life is not a sure sign of acceptance before a holy God. In much the same way that the lack, that the presence of visible judgment is not a sure sign of the displeasure of God.

[19:59] Sometimes God is graciously withholding the judgment we deserve because in his kindness and patience and tolerance, he's calling us to repentance.

As a matter of fact, the Bible tells us, if we want to speak on this level, the Bible tells us in the book of Hebrews, Hebrews chapter 12, He whom God loves, he chastises. Which means that if there is not a present judgment upon an individual's life, it is because God is allowing them the opportunity to come back to him, but it is those people whom he loved that typically have the most visible judgment upon their life.

Because God is molding them and shaping them and calling them to himself, and he is transforming them more and more into his image. But we look at it the other way, he said, everything's going well for me. Paul says, be careful, because the reason it is going well for you is because God is being patient with you.

But he says, but because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart, you're restoring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. We have, first of all, the unavoidable truth.

We have all fallen short of the standard. Secondly, we have the unattainable standard. We have the unattainable standard that we have fallen short of.

[21:12] He says in verse 6, that the righteous judgment of God is this, who will, and he's quoting an Old Testament verse here, who will render to each person according to his deeds.

Oh, this is a, actually it is an Ezekiel principle, because prior to the writing of Ezekiel, it used to be said in the nation of Israel that the judgment of God for the fathers would fall upon the sons.

And God tells Ezekiel, he says, no, that's not the way it's going to happen. Each man will bear the judgment for his own sins. He will pay the penalty for his own deeds. And we see here, he says that God will render judgment according to each individual's deeds.

Now all of a sudden we're getting to the standard. God is not rendering judgment upon my life based upon how good I am compared to you, or based upon how good I am compared to others.

We like to find someone who is worse than us and say, well, I'm not as bad as that person.

And since I'm not as bad as them, surely God is pleased with me. The problem is, is God's not judging you according to that person's deeds. He's judging you according to your deeds.

[22:17] And now all of a sudden we are faced with the reality of looking at our deeds. Well then what must my deeds look like in order to appease a holy God? He goes on with this.

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 do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation.

Some may be tempted to say, well, there you go. Verses 7 and verse 8 tell us that we can be good enough to have eternal life. As a matter of fact, verse 7 says, to those who by perseverance and doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life.

That's the standard. To persevere in doing good and to seek for glory and honor and immortality, and then God will give you eternal life. Verse 8 tells us how we can't do that, but those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation.

We say, see, there the standard is, and there it is very much attainable. But friend, listen to me. Can we really persevere? Can we really persevere? It was a couple of months ago, I came under great conviction about the way I had been eating.

[23 : 25] I began to change my diet. I didn't really go on any kind of standard diet because there are some things I like, some things I don't like, but I just really began to understand the scripture teaching that my body is not my own, but it belongs to my wife. And I also began to understand, my wife said I had some medical issues and I couldn't die on her with four kids.

That's what she told me. She said in the middle of the night, I might stop breathing. So she said she would just punch me and caused my breathing to come back. She said, you ain't dying on me now because I have too many kids in the house. I said, okay, maybe I need to be healthier.

So I began to persevere in the way I'm eating, began to persevere. Well, a friend listened to me. Thursday night, I walked in the house or Thursday afternoon, been doing really good, okay, doing really good. I got off the bus Thursday afternoon.

I come into the house. I tell Carrie hi. As soon as I walk in the house, there's this smell of fresh baked chocolate chip cookies. Now, I can persevere until I smell fresh baked chocolate chip cookies.

Then the doing good is out the window because I went over there and ate about four of those fresh baked. They were still hot. I mean, you know, when you get them off the pan, they start folding in half hot, that type of stuff. I mean, I can go, a cold chocolate chip cookie, I can bypass, but a hot one, I can't bypass.

[24 : 31] I don't care how much perseverance I have. I don't care how strong I am. There are some things I thought I would miss, I don't miss, but the smell of that chocolate chip cookie got me. And I said, forget it.

I'm eating it. I'll do more sit-ups and more push-ups and do more. I'll do more something else later, right? All of a sudden, I was worried about me wanting that cookie. That's called selfish ambition. Here's the problem. When we try to live by the standard of verse 7, persevering, doing good, seeking after immortality and eternal life, we always run into verse 8. But those who are selfishly ambitious, do you know every sin finds its root in selfishness?

Every sin of mankind finds its root in selfishness. God told Adam, do not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The Bible says, Eve looked upon the tree and saw that it was good for food and took it and then gave it to Adam.

In all that discussion, we have no picture of God. It is always them. It is selfishness. The problem is, it doesn't matter how persevering we are. There is always a time when self takes over.

[25 : 34] And all it takes is one time of selfishness. All it takes is one moment of falling. All it takes is one instant of lack of perseverance.

Because it doesn't say those who always sin. Look at what it says. It says in verse 9, there will be tribulation and distress. Look at this.

For every soul of man who does evil. It does not say who is an evil person. It does not say who continuously is doing evil. It says to every soul of man who does evil.

It only takes one evil. Of the Jew first and also of the Greek. But glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good. To the Jew first and also to the Greek. By the way, verses 7 and 10 are a sure picture of those who have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.

Not those who are doing it in their own work. Look at verse 11. For there is no partiality with God. Friend, listen to me. It is an unattainable standard. We're going to fall.

[26 : 38] I don't care how good we are. I don't care how right we can be. I don't care how much we persevere. I tried for over half of my life at being a good person. But the standard was too high.

The cookie smelled too good. I always found myself going back to myself. In selfishness. And in weakness. And falling. And to every soul that does evil.

There is tribulation. And judgment. And all these right judgments of God. Number three. Not only is there the unavoidable truth. The unattainable standard.

Number three. There is the undeniable conviction. Paul is about to make a transition. The latter part of chapter 2. As he begins to go from. In chapter 1. He speaks about all men in general.

He is the great tragedy of man. In the first 16 verses of chapter 2. He begins to speak about the religious man. The good man. Okay. In chapter 2 verse 17. He speaks of the Jewish man.

[27 : 36] He is going to speak of those who have set themselves up beyond just being good. Now they are Jews. They are God's chosen people. We would call those the church members of today. But he is making a transition here.

Starting in verse 12. And he begins to introduce this thing called the law. Now the law to the Jew. And even to the early church. Would be the entirety of the Old Testament. It is not just the Ten Commandments.

The law proper would be the first five books of the Bible. Genesis to Deuteronomy. Called the Pentateuch. It is also referred to as the oral tradition of the law. Known as the Mishnah. There were over 634 very clearly defined laws for the Jew.

They could tell you how heavy of an object you could carry on the Sabbath. How far you could walk with it. And when you must stop. They could tell you every detail of your life. The oral tradition was so legalistic.

And they saw themselves as being good individuals. Because they lived by this great standard. But Paul here begins to introduce that. 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.

[28 : 38] For it is not the hearers of the law who are just before God. But the doers of the law will be justified. The same thing we see in the book of James. For when Gentiles. Here it is. Verses 14 through 16.

We begin to speak about this undeniable conviction. For when the Gentiles who do not have the law do instinctively the things of the law. Those not having the law are a law to themselves.

What is he saying? Here he is. He is justifying the judgment of God. He is very clearly telling us here that God has implanted within the soul of every man.

What is referred to as the moral standard. There is something inside of every individual. Of every man. Of every tribe. Of every nation. Of every clan.

Of every people group. Something within them. Of right and wrong. God has implanted this thing within man. This desire to do right.

[29 : 35] This desire not to do wrong. This desire to be good. This desire not to be bad. Now it is defined kind of by a wavy line. But something within man is there. He says it is a law within themselves.

What God embodied in the Old Testament. Has been implanted within all mankind. Everywhere to say. See something inside of you. Wants to be good. He says it is a law to themselves.

And it says in verse 15. And that they show the work of God written in their hearts. Their conscience bearing witness. And their thoughts alternately accusing. Or else defending them. On the day when according to my gospel. God would judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.

We are speaking here of an undeniable conviction. Friend I want to tell you a secret you have. I want to tell one of your secrets. Carrie and my kids always get a little nervous when I preach.

Because they know I am a very transparent preacher. And sometimes I say things. As a matter of fact. There are things that happen in my life. And things that happen in our family's life. Carrie looks at me. She says don't say that from the bullpen. Don't say that.

[30 : 39] Don't do that. Don't use that illustration if you don't mind. Don't do that. That's just too real. So I always get a little nervous. And people get nervous. Have people come up to me and say. Preacher you just preach. I feel like God was talking to me.

And God was doing this. And that's great. And I've said in services where it felt like somebody knew my secrets. Right? Like they took out my thought life. It was written down. And they read it word for word. And began to preach to me.

We don't ever like it. It makes us uncomfortable. As a matter of fact. When somebody says I know a secret you have. There's this feeling that comes upon us. And we're like what does he know? But I know a secret that every one of you have. It's a secret I have.

Something inside of you tells you you've messed up. Something inside of you tells you you're not good enough. That no matter how good you try to be. There's something inside of you that says you've still messed up.

You've still fallen short. And you hope you're good enough. And you desire to be good enough. And you want to be good enough. But there's something inside of you saying. But I don't know if I'm good enough.

[31 : 37] You know what that is? That is the undeniable conviction. That you can't be good enough. There is something within every man and every individual that tells them.

But I don't know if I'm perfect. I know I'm not perfect. I know I've messed up. There's something within each one of us that says. I want to go to heaven. I long to live forever.

There might be a God or there may not be a God. And what we do is we spend our life trying to cover up that secret. We try to find things that would occupy our minds.

Try to find things that would occupy our thoughts. Or find another belief that would take us away from this very clear and present voice inside of us. Saying there's more to life than what you see. But you're not there yet.

The secret of all men, of all women, of all individuals, of all people, of all times. Is that they instinctively know within themselves they are to be better than they are.

[32 : 33] But they don't know how to be that. So they turn to religion or they turn to occupation. Or some people turn to atheism to claim there is no God. Or agnostic to say there is nothing.

And the whole time they're just trying to cover up this feeling inside of them that says. I don't think I'm good enough. And what that is is that's the undeniable conviction.

That God is very fair in judging the good man. And that when God judges me he will be fair. And that without Christ.

Because here's the good news. I've taken this whole time talking about who we are. Without Christ. When I stand before the judgment seat of Christ. And he looks on me.

There is something deep within me even to this day that says no matter how good I am. He will still be very fair. In allowing me to go where I have chosen. And that is a Christless eternity.

[33 : 29] But praise be to God. When I go before that judgment seat. I'm not claiming my goodness. I'm claiming the perfection of Jesus Christ my Lord and Savior.

And when I stand before my holy God. I will not say God I'm here because I'm a good man. I will not say God I'm here because I did what is right. I will not say God I'm here because I was better than someone else.

No rather I will say God I'm here because your son is perfect. He died for me. Because see God is very fair. In judging the good man. But he is also very fair.

In allowing the good man. To get rid of his goodness. And to trust in Christ's perfection. Paul shows us that we may be good. But we're not good enough.

Only so we can look to someone who is better than us. And my friend listen to me. That someone is Jesus Christ. Who died on that cross of Calvary. For our goodness.

[34 : 30] He died as much for our badness. As he did for our goodness. He died as much for the bad that we were. Because as much as we think we are good. And he did it so that we would not try to enter eternity.

Because we're good. But because we would enter eternity. Because he's perfect. And he's worthy. And he's sufficient. God is fair. And when he judges the good man.

He's very fair. But he's also fair because he says. I'm going to go ahead and tell you. You're not good enough. But you can come through the blood of Jesus Christ.

I don't mean to preach this message to make us feel bad. I don't mean to preach this message to make us walk out of here with our heads held down. I don't mean for us to walk around in doom and gloom.

Friend listen to me. In Jesus Christ there is no doom and gloom. I want to be good. I long to be good. I want for people to like me. And I want to be a good citizen of the country that I live in.

[35 : 28] I want to be a good person upon the world that he has planted me in. But listen to me. In eternity it doesn't matter how good I am. And praise be to God because of that.

Because deep within me something tells me I'm not good. Something in me tells me I fall short. Something in me tells me I smelled too many chocolate chip cookies. And I couldn't resist the urge. Right? Something in me tells me that though I want to be good. There is always this thing called self that gets in the way. I may try to blame other people. I may try. I could have said. Carrie you shouldn't have cooked those cookies.

I could have said that but I didn't. I said Carrie thank you for cooking those cookies baby. Those things look good. I mean that's what I said because I wanted those cookies. There's something within me that says that though I may try to be good.

I always get in the way. And Jesus is the answer for that. Because I can't get in the way of his perfection. I can't get in the way of his standard.

[36 : 26] And I'm trusting in the price he paid. Not in the life I live. I don't know what you're trusting in today. I don't know where you're at. I know I may be preaching to the choir but that's okay. But isn't it good to be reminded over and over again or maybe even introduced for the first time.

That God is fair in judging the good. But he's also equally fair in offering us the perfect. That is Jesus Christ. I don't know where you're at. But I hope you're trusting in his perfection not your goodness.

Let's pray. Oh God thank you so much. I thank you for this day. I thank you for this time. Lord I pray now as you speak to our hearts and minds you would take these words Lord that you would allow them to say in each and every one of us whatever it is you want them to say.

God I pray that they have not been hindered by my actions. They have not been hindered by my words. Lord we pray that you would speak very clearly to our hearts. Lord you would show us how much you love us.

How much you care for us. Lord the thing you have offered us. So that we could be pleasing in your sight. We thank you for the sacrifice you've paid. We come rejoicing in it.

[37 : 33] Asking that you would move. And we ask it all in Jesus name. Amen. Amen.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[40 : 22] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[42 : 52] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[45 : 22] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.