

Week 2: God's righteous judgment and justification by faith in Him

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- **Brief introduction about St. Paul**

- **St. Paul wrote 14 epistles** out of the 27 books in the New Testament.
- **Known as the Apostle of the Gentiles**
 - The Lord said to him: "I will send you far from here to the Gentiles" (Acts 22:21)
- **Received 4 crowns:** martyrdom, purity, apostleship, and righteousness.
 - Unmarried: "For I wish that all men were even as I myself. But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that." 1 Corinth 7:7
- **His early preparation for ministry**
 - Roman Citizen: Born a Roman citizen, enabling safe travel and legal protection.
 - Greek education: Born in Tarsus, major center of Greek learning, exposure to Greek philosophy.
 - Jewish heritage: Adhering to Jewish law and traditions and studied under Rabbi Gamaliel in Jerusalem
- **Missionary trips:**
 - 1st Journey (44 AD, 2 years):
 - Asia Minor (Turkey), with Barnabus and St. Mark.
 - After this journey, a council is held among the apostles and elders of the church in Jerusalem to determine that the gentile converts need not submit to the Law of Moses regarding circumcision.
 - 2nd Journey (51 AD, 3 years):
 - Mainly in Macedonia (Greece), with Silas and Luke.
 - 2 Epistles: 1 & 2 Thessalonians.
 - 3rd Journey (54 AD, 4 years):
 - Asia minor and Macedonia
 - 4 Epistles: **Romans**, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians.
 - 4th Journey (Rome):
 - 8 Epistles: 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians, Hebrews.

1. Introduction:

1. **Author:** St. Paul
2. **Written to:** believers in Rome
3. **Time of writing:**
 1. 58 AD in Corinth, before Paul's visit to Rome in 62 AD
4. **Purpose of the book**
 1. The need for all people, Jews or Gentiles, to be justified by Christ.
 2. How a person can obtain justification and its blessings in life.
 3. The rejection of faith by many Jews is temporary, but some will return to faith in Christ after the Gentiles accept the faith.
 4. Basic teachings for practical Christian living.
 5. Care for those weak in faith and encourage them

2. Outline

1. The apostolic blessing and encouragement of the believers (Chapter 1).
2. The need for all humanity to be justified by Christ, how they can receive it, and its blessings (Chapters 2–8).
3. God chose the Gentiles just as He did to the Jews, who rejected Him but they will repent at the end of days (Chapters 9–11).
4. Practical commandments for Christian behavior (Chapters 12–15).
5. Paul's fatherly care and his greetings to his beloved friends (Chapter 16).

3. Reading:

1. Chapters 2&3

4. Resources:

1. Bible Explanation of the Epistle to Romans - Fr. Daoud Lamei English
2. The Epistle to Romans by Fr. Tadros Yacoub Malaty- English

5. Key verse:

1. *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23*

6. Comments: Chapters 2&3

1. Judging Others (Chapter 2: 1-3)

1. St. Paul begins by warning anyone who believes that their knowledge and understanding of God's law places them above others, leading them to judge others. He also reminds us that God's judgment is according to truth—not based on outward appearances but by examining the heart as well.

2. God's Judgment (Chapter 2: 4-11)

1. Do you take lightly the riches of God's kindness and patience for your sins?. God will judge everyone based on his/her deeds.
2. Verse 6: This verse strongly declares that faith alone is not enough for salvation. Good works are essential (the doctrine of faith and works), which is a clear response to certain heresies that claim faith alone is sufficient for salvation.
 1. *Matthew 16:27 "For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works."*

3. Conscience and the Law (Chapter 2: 12-16)

1. How will God judge the Gentiles, even though they did not receive the Law of Moses like the Jews? What about children born to Gentile parents, who grew up without knowledge of Moses' law?
 1. The answer is that God has given the Gentiles a *natural law*, which is the conscience.
2. Conscience is the voice of God within a person, a moral compass, engraved on the hearts of all people.

4. Judgment of the Jews (Chapter 2: 17-24)

1. St. Paul criticizes the hypocrisy of believers from a Jewish background. They teach one thing but do another.
2. They tell people to avoid sins like theft and adultery, and you preach against idolatry, yet they fall into the sin of stealing, committing adultery, etc.
 1. **Contemplation:** *Examine yourself, so you do not become a stumbling block for others. Make sure that what you teach others, you first apply in your own life. This will make your teaching more powerful.*

5. Circumcision Does Not Justify (Chapter 2: 25-29)

1. Circumcision is the act of purification for male infants, according to the Law of Moses, where the foreskin is removed on the eighth day after birth. God commanded Abraham, his descendants, and all the people of Israel to practice circumcision as a physical sign distinguishing them as God's chosen people, set apart from the Gentiles.
2. However, the one praised by God is not merely the one circumcised in body but the one with a circumcised heart—free from sin and iniquity

6. Chapter 3: What is the Benefit of Circumcision? (Chapter 3: 1-4)

1. St. Paul begins this chapter with a question: If following the law and being circumcised doesn't guarantee justification and salvation, why did God command them in the first place?
 1. **God's Trust in the Jewish People:** God entrusted the Jewish people with His commandments and promises.
 2. **Human Failure Doesn't Cancel God's Truth:** Even if some people are unfaithful and fail to live according to God's commandments, that doesn't make God's law wrong.
 3. **God's Words Are Always True:** God's truth remains constant and powerful, no matter what people think.

7. Does doing evil glorify God? (Chapter 3:5-8)

1. St. Paul addresses a false argument ““If my sins show God’s righteousness and mercy more clearly, isn’t my sin a good thing?”
 1. **The answer to this argument:** Just because God can bring good out of evil doesn’t mean the evil itself is good. Sin is still sin and deserves judgment.
8. **The Sins of the Jews before Christ (Chapter 3: 9-20):**
 1. *"There is none who does good, no, not one"* Before Christ's coming and crucifixion, no one was truly perfect or able to achieve full righteousness on their own. Even the righteous people of the Old Testament, despite their good deeds.
 2. When righteous individuals died before Christ’s crucifixion, they went to Hades. They were in a temporary state of waiting, not yet experiencing the fullness of salvation. Paradise was not available to them until Christ’s death and resurrection.
 3. This part shows the importance of Christ’s sacrifice in completing the work of salvation.
9. **Justification by God's Grace (Chapter 3:21-31)**
 1. The righteousness of God revealed through the redemption of humanity, which occurred through the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ on the cross.
 2. Before Christ, people relied on the law, including practices like circumcision and animal sacrifices, to try to achieve righteousness and favor with God. However, with Christ’s work, established a new way of salvation based on faith in Him.
7. **Review/recap questions**

** Servant may add more questions

 1. 1. What warning does St. Paul give about judging others?
 2. How will God judge the Gentiles who do not have the Law of Moses?
 3. What is true circumcision according to St. Paul?
 4. How are people justified and saved after Christ's resurrection—through the law or by grace?
8. **Homework**

** Servant may add more questions

 1. 1. Who does the Lord Jesus Christ favor the most among nations?
a) Jews b) Greeks c) Romans d) none of these
 2. What are the rewards for everyone who does GOOD work? a) glory b) honor c) peace d) all of these
 3. God is the God of whom? a) Jews only b) Gentiles only c) sinners only d) everyone
 4. What is God’s judgment based on—outward appearances or the heart?
 5. What law do Gentiles have in place of the Law of Moses?
 6. What is more important: physical circumcision or circumcision of the heart?
 7. Is faith alone enough for salvation?