

ROMANS BIBLE STUDY

Romans 2:1-16

Lesson #4

Introduction

We're moving into chapter two now, and we said last week that Paul makes a transition here, a switch of categories at this point. Now it's very important to rightly understand that category transition. I confess that I myself did not rightly understand it in my earlier years, and it caused me some difficulty of interpretation until it came into proper focus. In chapter one, verses 18-32 Paul was describing that category of humanity that suppresses the obvious truth of God in unrighteousness. These include both atheists and idolaters. This group denies the true God entirely, or makes various substitutes, so that they can escape the moral restraints of the true God. Doing this has predictable repercussions that Paul described in detail, and we covered these in our last lesson.

But just for refresher, we said that it prompts God to gradually ease His restraints of conscience and law enforcement on the innate depravity of fallen humanity, and they begin to do themselves more and more harm and dishonor with their own depraved minds. The relationship that a society has with God can be very accurately assessed by the general morality and laws of that society. The denial of God will be readily seen by a progressive breakdown of both of these. A truth which that society will suppress, and instead declare it to be liberating, and good for them. A break from the oppressive and superstitious rules of the religious fanatics. Their foolish hearts will be darkened, and their ability to discern right from wrong will fade into obscurity, as they further indulge their depraved lusts and passions. This is the inescapable fate of those who suppress the truth of God in unrighteousness. From the times of the Old Testament and now into the New, it can be readily observed that the nations and societies that are the most impoverished and violent are the ones that have the most perverse false gods and bizarre deities and superstitions. There is no denying this obvious historical connection.

But, Paul hasn't finished his assessments just yet. There's still another group to be dealt with. And it is not the true believers, or the church, it is the religious imposters. If you think that Paul is now switching away from atheists and speaking of the church, the true church, then you won't know how to deal with the things he's about to say. No, Paul is switching from those who deny God, to those who don't deny Him, they just don't obey His commandments. These are the religious hypocrites, in those times that was predominantly the Jews, who felt that being a descendent of Abraham, and having received circumcision was a sure pass into the kingdom of God. Today it is predominantly the masses of cultural Christians, who walked down an isle, and said a prayer, and were baptized the next Sunday, and now believe that Jesus paid it all and they're free to live just like before, because they're forgiven by the shed blood of Jesus Christ. This is the exact same thing as the earlier Jews who thought they were secure because they were born Jews, descendants of Abraham.

But even a rudimentary familiarity with Old Testament scriptures clearly refutes this idea, as the vast majority of the Jews were not saved, and being a descendent of Abraham simply in the fleshly lineage was of no benefit at all. It was those who were of the *faith* of Abraham, not the genealogical lineage, who were considered by God as Abraham's descendants of promise. This was the grandiose misconception of the nation of Israel, and resulted in horrendous consequences for that nation.

And in like manner, the concept that simply verbally declaring faith and belief in a man named Jesus, but having no ongoing resultant fruits of that profession, does not make one a Christian. Again it is the *faith* (the resultant actions) of those who profess belief that authenticates the claim, just as Abraham's demonstration with his son Isaac. Multitudes of Jews claimed faith, and multitudes of Gentiles claim faith, but it is only those whose lives demonstrate the truth of that claim who are the children of the promises of God, and who are washed and forgiven by the shed blood of Jesus Christ. (Mat 7:21-23) Now, with this understanding of the background, we can now proceed to examine Paul's next section of verses, as he makes the transition from those who outright deny God, to the religious hypocrites who *profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed*. Titus 1:16 (NASB)

Not the Hearers, But the Doers
(For There is No Partiality with God)

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. 2 And we know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice such things. 3 But do you suppose this, O man, when you pass judgment on those who practice such things and do the same yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God? 4 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? 5 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, 6 who will render to each person according to his deeds: 7 to those who by perseverance in doing good, seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; 8 but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. 9 There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, 10 but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 11 For there is no partiality with God.

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; 13 for it is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified. 14 For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively 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, 16 on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.

Romans 2:1-16 (NASB)

Verses 1-4:

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. 2 And we know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice such things. 3 But do you suppose this, O man, when you pass judgment on those who practice such things and do the same yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God? 4 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?

From these verses we see why we said earlier that it's vital to understand who are the proper objects of this testimony. There's no way to make sense of these verses if they were written about the regenerate church members. And besides, regenerate believers are the very antithesis of this description, as Paul says in verse 4. Paul is speaking to the religious hypocrites, residing both outside and inside the churches. He makes a very simple point. He asks these people if they really honestly believe that they will escape God's judgement for practicing those very same things that they condemn others for doing? Do they think that God will simply overlook their continued practice of the exact same things that they admit are wrong, when they *know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice such things*.

The answer to this question is "Yes" they do actually seem to believe that. The churches of that day, and of this present day, are filled with those who say "*Christians are no different than any other sinners, they're just forgiven.*" If you've been a Christian for very long you've surely heard this statement made by somebody. But I ask you, how does that statement square with Paul's teaching in these four verses, let alone the whole rest of the Bible? The answer is, it doesn't, not even close. First, let's look at verse two, that says that we know that the judgement of God **rightly** falls on those who practice such things. What things? Those things Paul has just described in detail in chapter one, particularly verses 24-27 where he described idolatry and homosexuality, and then in verses 28-31 where he said: (Quoting)

29 being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, 30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, 31 without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful. The idea that these things are only applicable to some people and not to others is insane, and by no means supported by any scriptures, anywhere, *For there is no partiality with God*.

There are those who claim to believe that they can continue to practice these things and still be forgiven and accepted into the kingdom of God. I've heard of churches for practicing homosexuals, where those members claim that either their actions aren't really a sin, or that if they are then they are forgiven. This is suppressing the truth in unrighteousness, and it cannot have a happy ending. The commandments of God that were given to Moses were expressly for those people

who were chosen by God as His own people. Of course they apply to all humanity, but they were given expressly to those whom God wanted to be His own, and were provided as the means to inform those people of how to live in close communion with God. Violating them put the people outside of God's will, and separated them from Him. They couldn't just admire the commandments, they had to obey the commandments. And it wasn't enough to just say they believed the commandments, they had to demonstrate it by their lives of obedience. Later on in this chapter Paul is going to say *for it is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified.* (v.13)

I realize that the idea that faith alone as the means of salvation in God's cosmic economy is sacred. And we are among the most avid preachers of that doctrine. But there's the wrong idea that faith completely replaces works, which is not exactly the case. Faith accomplishes its task through its works. By that I mean that works are those visible things which give tangible expression to faith, which is of itself invisible. (Jas 2:14-18) Just like Jesus Christ gives tangible expression to God his Father, who is an invisible Spirit being. (Jn 1:18, 14:7,9)

Verse four explains this: *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?* Do you see (understand) what Paul is saying? He's saying that the kindness of God is **not** in His perpetual forgiving of sin, but in His leading of His own to repentance **from** that sin. Yes, man sins, and yes God forgives, but there is a vital place in this equation where repentance plays its part. God grants repentance so that He can also grant forgiveness without violating His own righteousness. If forgiveness was without repentance then God would, in essence, be condoning sin. Repentance is a critical component in the forgiveness equation. Remove it and the equation fails entirely. Meaning, that there is no such thing as forgiveness that does not contain repentance, it is an essential element of the process, without which the whole thing falls apart. It is all from God, It is all by His grace alone, but it is also an absolutely vital component for the process to be genuine. This is Paul's point. A profession of faith that is missing the vital element of repentance is not genuine, and it will not produce the expected results of salvation, because it did not contain the essential operative element of repentance.

The kindness of God is that He *leads you to repentance*. There seems to be a lot of people who don't know that the kindness of God is demonstrated by His leading us to repentance. They only see His kindness as forever forgiving our perpetual sins. Now I can predict the critic who wants to suggest that we're teaching that man can perfectly repent and cease to sin, but I hope everyone understands that this is not what Paul is saying, and it's not what we're teaching. But even a child knows the difference between an occasional failure, which we all have, and is forgiven when we confess, and an unbroken pattern of unrepentant disobedience to the word of God. And this difference is the subject of Paul's teaching in these verses. If, and when, anyone thinks that they themselves are not subject to the righteous judgement of God when they choose to continually practice disobedience, because they believe they're exempt, they are sorely mistaken. So says the Apostle Paul. God grants repentance so that He can also grant forgiveness without violating His righteousness. Now, lets look at the next verses, remembering who it is that Paul is describing: (the religious hypocrites)

Verses 5-8:

5 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, 6 who will render to each person according to his deeds: 7 to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; 8 but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation.

There's nothing mysterious in these verses, they're a clear declaration of divine and inescapable truth. Stubborn refusal to repent of disobedience to God will be met with His wrath and righteous judgement on any and all who lived in that fashion. It matters not what family you are descended from or your religious claims of faith, what God judges is deeds, actions, behaviors, and from these He determines the absence or presence of authentic faith. We severely err if we think we're exempt because we claim the title of Christian, or say we believe in Jesus, but then we continue to practice those very same things that we acknowledge that God forbids.

To some there will be glory, and honor, and eternal life; but to others there will be wrath and indignation, and the difference, according to Paul's teaching, is not based on what titles we gave ourselves, or what we said we believed, but on what we actually did. Again, God grants repentance so that He can also grant forgiveness. (Acts 11:18) Now, next verses:

Verses 9-11:

9 There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, 10 but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 11 For there is no partiality with God.

It's verses like these that so often cause confusion and debate. But there's really no reason that they should. We know that salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, and these verses really do not conflict with that fact one bit. In fact they prove it. Just as Abraham's deeds proved his faith, so the deeds of every true regenerated believer will prove their faith. And, the deeds of every unbelieving person, whether they claim to be atheists or Christians, or whatever religion, will prove the veracity of their claims. God the Father is an invisible Spirit being, so He proves His existence by the things that He's made, and by His only beloved Son, who was given a visible body for the purposes He intended. Likewise, belief, genuine faith, is invisible. It can only be seen and examined by the visible effects that it has on the ones in whom it resides. (Repeat)

This is precisely what James, the Lord's half brother was endeavoring to make clear in the second chapter of his epistle. And that epistle has been a difficulty to so many dear brothers who didn't quite understand what he was saying. Works, or deeds, when perceived as the **cause** of salvation are indeed a blasphemous contradiction, but works, and deeds as an **effect** of salvation are described as vital fruits that provide evidence of authenticity. Is that really so hard to understand? I know that there are those who argue that this is simply a distinction without a difference, because it comes down to the same thing in the end, and genuine salvation seems to hinge on deeds. But how else would we, or God, judge authentic faith? Are we to simply take everyone's word for it? And furthermore, God grants the gift of saving faith for a purpose, and much of that purpose is the sanctification and Christlike transformation of those to whom He grants it. God grants the gift of faith as a part of the whole regeneration and sanctification and transformation package. And just like forgiveness requires repentance, in like manner genuine faith demands visible fruits, called deeds, or it's deemed false and thrown into the fire. (Jn 15:1-6) Put very simply, genuine faith causes visible effects, called works or deeds, and it is these effects that God uses as the determination for wrath or glory in every person. It is beyond debate that this is Paul's meaning in these verses.

And furthermore, Paul says that the previous distinctions of ethnic groups, and nationality have all been removed, and the former situation, where the Jews alone were the chosen people of God has passed; and now through Jesus Christ, God has opened the door to all humanity without distinctions or limitations, and issued the universal call of "*whosoever will let them come.*" Tribulation and distress, or, glory and honor and peace, are available to all humanity, based on whether they do evil or they do good, and this is administered across the board, with no partiality on the part of God. We see here why faith **must** produce good deeds, because it's those good deeds themselves that make our faith effective. Doing evil is the natural result of not having genuine faith. So, while it's the visible effects that are being judged, it's the cause of those effects (faith) that's the real issue. Do you understand? Paul is going to continue to make this thought of impartiality clear with the next verses:

Verses 12-13:

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; 13 for it is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified.

If you're familiar with the scriptures you understand that Paul is speaking about the Jews when he talks about having the Law. The Law here is the Law of God, the 10 Commandments, and the many ordinances that Moses recorded from God and presented to the nation of Israel. Of course the Commandments apply to all humanity, but they were first given to one specific nation, the nation that God had chosen as His own people out of all the peoples on the face of the earth. (Deu 7:6, 14:2) One must understand this to understand what Paul is saying. Paul says that those people who had God's Laws, and knew His Commandments, but continued to practice sin anyway would be judged by those Laws that they ignored and disobeyed.

But before that he said that those who sinned without the Law would perish without the law. By which he meant that all the rest, who didn't have the 10 Commandments and the statutes and ordinances, would still perish for sinning against

God. Now I can anticipate an objection here. One might ask - Does that mean that God judges people for breaking laws that they didn't even know about? Before we can answer that question we have to ask if not knowing about a law is an acceptable excuse for breaking it. Maybe it is, or maybe it isn't. When Cain murdered his brother Able the commandment that "you shall not commit murder" had not yet been given. But Cain and his parents knew that he had committed a great sin. Cain had been given a conscience and a set of feelings and emotions that were quite sufficient to instruct him that killing his brother was wrong, very wrong, and Cain was held accountable for his actions. Paul says here that those who have sinned without the Law will perish without the Law. God is altogether quite justified to hold His creatures accountable to the understanding that He **has** provided them with, whether through a set of written Laws or by a conscience, and He will judge every human on what they had. Those who sinned against their conscience and natural understanding will have no excuse, because they knew full well that they were sinning against God.

But Paul goes further here. He again makes the distinction between just knowing the Laws of God and actually obeying those Laws. It was a popular thought then, and is equally popular now, that just knowing God's Laws is somehow enough, especially if you constantly proclaim how much you admire them, and how you wholeheartedly agree with them. But Paul is inflicting mortal damage on the notion that this is all that's necessary. He's making it absolutely clear as a bell that it's *not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified*. That same troublesome issue of faith and works just keeps coming up doesn't it? If it's only the doers of the Law that are justified, and not just those who say they agree, then faith had better produce tangible acts of obedience (works) or else it's dead and useless to effect our salvation. There's no avoiding, or evading this conclusion. If our faith doesn't cause us to obey God, then we aren't justified and we aren't saved from His judgement. Paul is saying this loud and clear. Just as James said it in his epistle "faith without works is dead." **The salvatory effect that the gift of faith has on every recipient is to produce in that person a progressively growing and permanently enduring life of obedience to God.**

What Paul says to the Jews who relied on their religion to save them applies equally to all who rely upon any religion, but especially to the Christian who goes to church, claims the name of Christian, knows the gospel, and the commandments of God, but doesn't live in accordance to those things that he or she professes to believe. Paul says that it's not those who hear, or even those who hear and then claim to believe, and boast about, but those who **do** those things that are written in the scriptures. *It is the doers of the scriptures who are justified in the eyes of God*, not those who simply hear, even if they have great knowledge about them and make much ado over them. It's not uncommon for many of those who are the most vocal to actually be the least authentic. Sometimes an outward show is a means of compensation for an inward lack of authenticity. So, Paul's point is that it isn't the talkers who are just before God but the doers, the ones whose lives demonstrate the Laws of God working from within a regenerate heart and a transformed mind. As Paul explains in the next verses:

Verses 14-15:

*14 For when Gentiles who do not have the Law, do instinctively 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,*

A person must be somewhat familiar with the scriptures, and biblical history to understand what Paul means here. He speaks about Gentiles who do not have the Law. What does he mean, that Gentiles aren't subject to the Laws of God? No that's not what Paul is saying, he's speaking of the Laws that God gave to Moses to take to the nation of Israel. It was Israel alone who got those Laws and commandments, no other people or nation was given those Laws. God had chosen the descendants of Abraham as His particular people out of all those who dwelt on the earth, and only these got those Laws. This is what Paul is speaking about when he says the Gentiles who do not have the Law. No Gentiles had ever been given, nor ever accepted those Laws that God gave to His chosen people. So the Gentiles, all of them, were without the Law. Does this then mean that the Gentiles didn't have to keep those Laws. Absolutely not. So how is it that God requires all mankind to keep Laws that they've never heard, is that fair? Firstly, do we suppose to question the integrity of God, and second the written Laws are not the only means God provided to mankind to regulate his behaviors. The Laws are simply a written manuscript of those things that God has placed in the conscience and understanding of human beings.

We said earlier, that when Cain murdered his brother Able there was no written record of God's Laws, but Cain and his parents all knew that he had committed a great sin. How would they know that? Because they had been given certain inward understandings by God their maker, (created in His image) by which they knew they were bound to live, and murder wasn't one of them. When we understand this we're able to more thoroughly understand Paul's point. No one has to have heard the written Laws of God to know them, they are made an integral part of our mental makeup. Of course, having them written down makes them much more clear and less subjective, and that's what God gave to His chosen people, a very clear and concise record of those things which please, and those things which displease Him, and form both the guideline and the boundaries of living for all humanity.

Now that we're clear on that, we can look at Paul's statement. He says that when the Gentiles **do instinctively** the things of the Law. This "instinctively" is what we just discussed. It's God's work being effectuated from within, as opposed to external words and rules, called Laws. When Gentiles, who never had those written Laws and Commandments, end up **living in accordance to them** anyway, it demonstrates God's working on those persons from within, rather than from without. This is not a work of man, meaning a work done by the simple decision of man, but a work of God, being seen by manifest behaviors of human beings who are being driven by the internal workings of the new heart and mind of those persons. When the Gentiles end up doing all of those things that are written in the Laws, even when they don't have the written account, Paul says that this is a Law unto itself. By which he means that the Law is being fulfilled by the results of the lives of those who are living in keeping with them. The result is the same as though they had the written Laws.

Paul further explains the way this works when he says: *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.* What the written Laws failed to produce in the descendants of Abraham, namely, obedience, God produces from within by way of a better covenant. Because of the weakness of the flesh of man, the written Laws could not produce a nation of people who obey God, so God made another promise:

31 "Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the Lord. 33 "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the Lord, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 "They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the Lord, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

Jer 31:31-34 (NASB)

26 "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 "I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.

Ezek 36:26-27 (NASB)

What Paul is referring to in these verses that he's written to the Romans is the fulfillment of that promise made centuries earlier. It is the new covenant that is inward, written in the heart, and inscribed on a renewed mind, whereby mankind will be both **able**, and perhaps even more importantly, **willing** to obey God's Laws, from an inward desire to do so. The written Law has great value for sure, but it's of little benefit when the hearers of it don't have the desire or capability to fulfill it. In fact, when this is the case, the Law ends up being a curse to those who know it and then don't choose to keep it. Paul is going to discuss this again in this same epistle and in others. That which was intended by God for our good, actually became a curse, because of the weakness of our flesh. Hence the promised New Covenant that we just quoted from the Old Testament.

It is the desire and ability that are the heart and soul of the new covenant gift. This is what is meant by being doers and not just hearers, it is what makes the new covenant effectual where the old one was not. It **produces results** in the ones whom God chooses to give His gift of saving faith, and that faith is not dead, but alive and active and visibly effectual in all who have received it. This is what James wanted to make sure we understood in chapter two of his epistle.

And I have confidence that we do understand, and recognize the infinite value of this indescribable gift of saving faith that is bestowed by the grace of God to whomever He chooses, and is 100% effectual (meaning salvatory) in all who receive it. And we need not be deceived or in doubt as to our condition, because we know our own hearts, we know whether or not we've been made to desire the things of God, and the desire to keep His Laws, even though our flesh continues to tempt us to seek the forbidden things of the world. True believers are not left in the dark to guess whether they are or they aren't children of God, because they've received His gift of faith that regenerates the heart and mind and now *their conscience bears witness and their thoughts alternately accuse or else defend them* in their affections, and desires, and behaviors. Believers are always doers, because God has enabled them to do so, and put the desire inside them Himself. Now, our last verse of this lesson:

Verse 16:

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

This is what it all comes down to isn't it? Is there really and truly a day when all humanity will stand before an all knowing and all powerful creator and have every secret of their lives judged? I can't help but recall the popular verses from Hebrews that says:

12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

Heb 4:12-13 (NASB)

These verses should either be very comforting or very troubling to everyone who hears them. To the regenerated believers, who were doers of the Law, it should be very comforting. But to both the religious imposters and the atheists it should be very unsettling. It says, in no uncertain terms, that there is both a day and a person before whom every human who ever lived must stand and be judged, and that Judge knows every little secret of the hearts of every human. There is nothing that can be kept hidden, there is nothing that can be swept under the rug or go unnoticed, but every offence, every thought and every word, either uttered in public or in private, will be called specifically into view of Jesus Christ. Every human who hears this, whether professing believer or professing atheist, can't help but cringe a little at the thought that it just might really be true. What if it is, what will become of us if this is true? Even the staunchest disavowers of God have had this thought, and it haunts them to their grave, and not just to their grave but beyond, and therein lies the horror. Unlike a final earthly exam, that when failed can be taken over, this final exam is once and for all, and the results are forever.

Every unbeliever hopes they're right, and that there is no God, and there is no accountability, and there is no day of judgment after this earthly life; but the word of God says differently. The divine scriptures declare that there is a God, and there is a day set when all living beings will stand before Him and give an accounting of their lives, and their deepest and darkest secrets will be openly revealed and examined by a divine person named Jesus, who is the Son of God, and through whom God created all things, (Jn 1:1-3; Col 1:15-16) and through whom God will judge all things. (Jn 5:22, 27; Rom 2:16; Heb 4:12-13; and many, many others) This is the greatest fear of the religious hypocrites and the professing atheists, but it's the inescapable declaration of the word of God in His divine scriptures.

The truth is, this is exactly what the earlier verses from chapter 1, verses 18-23 were talking about, where Paul spoke of suppressing the truth in unrighteousness, because the truth of God's existence is evident to all by virtue of His visible creation, and mankind is without excuse for denying God. But, they deny Him anyway, because they don't want to obey His commandments, but at the same time they don't want to admit that they'll have to eventually answer to Him and face the consequences of their actions. So, they deny His existence, or make other gods as substitutes, but it's all done as a means to convince themselves that they won't have to face the wrath of God's eventual judgment. They claim that it's based on science, or philosophy, or other religions, but in fact it's nothing whatsoever more than a feeble attempt to deny the obvious. You can call it anything you want, but in the end it is what it is.

The scriptures declare emphatically that there is a day of judgment, a final accounting performed by God through Jesus Christ, where everything (and everyone) is evaluated and eternally placed in its proper place according to the eternal plan of God. You can try to refute this or you can deny this, but you cannot change it, and you cannot prevent it or escape it.

Conclusion:

There are basic questions that all humans ask themselves sometime in their lives. One of which is “what is life all about” and another is “is there another life after this one?” There’s no end to the answers that man has concocted and devised and theorized to soothe his conscience and still his fears, but there’s very credible evidence, in the form of written scriptures that answer these questions, both clearly and conclusively. The one and only problem is that mankind doesn’t like the answers that the scriptures provide, even though they are logical, sensible, understandable, and all the evidence supports them. So they look for some alternatives anywhere they can find them.

But, Like it or not, believe it or not, understand it or not, agree with it or not, nevertheless, and irregardless of the ideas and alternatives concocted by mankind, God says that **He is**, and that He has created all things, and that He will judge all things according to their deeds and actions, when the allotted time has finally come, and He will do this through His beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to whom has been granted all judgment, and to whom is prescribed all glory and honor, for now and forevermore. Amen.

Narrow Gate Baptist Church, Miami
Robert Andrews, Pastor
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