***Privilege Doesn't Count, No. 2  
RO14-02***

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Romans 2:12 has declared to us that God is impartial, and that He is revealing it in that He judges people on the basis of their spiritual enlightenment: "For as many as have sinned without Law shall also perish without Law, and as many as have sinned in the Law shall be judged by the Law."

Romans 2:12 is followed, then, we have pointed out, by a parenthetical statement in verse 13-15. What was begun in verse 12 is completed in verse 16. Verse 13 declares that mere knowledge of the Mosaic Law will not result in salvation. It actually explains the last part of verse 12, which says, "And as many as have sinned under the Law shall be judged by the Law." Verse 13 then goes on to explain that: "It's not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law that shall be justified." And that doing is doing through receiving of Christ as Savior.

So, salvation is the result of doing the standard of righteousness which was reflected in the Law; that is, a standard which he has to achieve (the standard of law righteousness) through the imputation of absolute righteousness from Jesus Christ.

So, looking at verses 12-16 once more, we have this relationship. Verse 12 begins a statement which is concluded in verse 16. Verse 13-15 are a parenthetical explanation. Verse 12b (the latter part of verse 12) is explained in verses 13. Verse 121 (the first part of verse 12) is explained in verse 14-15. All this passage, verses 12-16, is Paul's explanation of the statement that he made in verse 11: that God is not a respecter persons.

So, we now pick up the study at verse 14. It begins with the word "For." This is the Greek word "gar." This word introduces an explanation of what he said at the beginning of verse 12. Verses 14-15 are going to explain this statement: "For as many as have sinned without Law shall also perish without law." That statement applies to gentiles – gentiles who are not under the Mosaic Law. They are going to be judged as those who have sinned apart from the Mosaic Law. And they will perish as those who have been judged apart from the Mosaic Law.

**Gentiles**

Verse 14, in explaining that, says, "For (introducing the explanation) when. And this is the Greek word "hotan." We would translate this as "whenever." This word is used to refer to things which have regularly occurred. The word "hotan" speaks of things that just keep reoccurring. So, he says, "Whenever a certain thing occurs." And that certain thing is that, throughout history, mankind has observed that gentiles, living anywhere: in any tribe; and, in any nation, are seen to conform to certain standards of right and wrong. Within any society (with any group of people) there is a concept of certain things that are right to do, and certain things that are wrong to do. The gentiles have this. The question is: where did the gentiles get this? They don't have the Mosaic Law. We know where the Jews got these concepts of right and wrong. They had the thing all spelled out for them in the Mosaic Law, and all they had to do was read the Law, and then permit that to guide them.

However, in the case of the gentiles, they did not have the Law. Yet somehow, as we look at these things within a gentile society, they are declared to be right and wrong. Strangely enough, they reflect the very same things that the Mosaic Law said was right and wrong. There is not a society on the face of the earth, no matter how primitive or how civilized it is, which does not have certain rules. They will vary from one to another, but there are certain concepts that are understood. These very often are conforming to the very concepts that you find in Scripture.

So, the gentiles have shown that they do have some standards of righteousness. The thing that we also observe about all gentiles through history is that their standards are higher than their performance. Gentiles themselves are not able to live up to the very things that they establish a rights and wrongs. The unsaved gentile may have correct ideals of morality, but he can generally not live up to them. In a wide scale, as a matter of fact, he fails to do so. In the United States of America we have a population, the overwhelming majority of which is unsaved. We have a nation which is basically made up of unbelievers. Yet, this nation operates on certain concepts of things that are right and things that are wrong. And it makes laws accordingly; it makes regulations accordingly; and, it speaks in terms of observing certain standards of morality.

So, Paul is explaining the condition of gentiles without the Law in verse 12. In verse 14, he says, "For when the gentiles." "The gentiles" is the Greek word "ethnos," from which, you can see, we get our English word "ethnic," which refers to racial features. Here, the word "ethnos" actually means "nation," and it is used in the Bible to distinguish nations from the nation of Israel. This word is in the plural in the Greek, so that it is actually "nations," and from the concept of nations, distinguished from the Jewish people (from the nation of Israel), we get the concept of gentiles. So, this word can be (and is) translated as "gentiles."

**The Mosaic Law**

So, what Paul is speaking about in verse 14 is the gentile nations (the non-Jewish people). Periodically and regularly, these people do something. Then it tells us something about the gentiles, showing that he is talking about the first part of verse 12. He says, "Who have not the Law. The word "have" is the Greek word "echo." "Echo" is a present active participle. Present tense means that these people continually did not have something, because it also has the negative that the "have." That is, they did not have certain things, namely the Law. This was generally the case with the gentiles. Furthermore, it is active. It was true of the gentiles personally. It was a participle – a statement of principle. And it is stated in the participle form, so it carries the idea of "the one not having." And what they do not have access to he calls the Law, which is the Greek word "nomos." This, of course, is the Mosaic code. The Mosaic Law was given to Moses on Mount Sinai, and it was delivered to be applied to the Jewish people. The Mosaic Law was never delivered to be used by gentiles. It was only given for the Jewish nation.

However, the Law did tell us something about God. The Jewish Law expressed an absolute righteousness. It was revealing the standard of righteousness that a person has to have in order to come to eternal life. God's judgment is going to be according to the standard of righteousness reflected in His "nomos" (in His Law – as expressed in the Mosaic Law). God is not going to judge on man's standards. He is going to judge on His own absolute standards. And it will be applied to Jew and gentile alike. But the Mosaic Law was a specific expression of God's absolute righteousness on the Jewish people.

Some of the Jews made a very bad mistake as they read the various regulations in the Mosaic Law, because they failed to realize that all righteousness begins in the mind. First of all, it is what you think that determines what you are and how you act. The Jews eventually lost sight of that fact. So, they thought that if they just performed the outward functions of the Law, and just were faithful in performing the letter of the Law, that they would have this absolute righteousness. That was a very bad mistake.

When Jesus came on the scene, as you read through the gospels, you are aware many times that the Lord is constantly calling their attention to the fact that the Law is a matter of what you think. So, a Jew, for example, who thought that he was fulfilling the Law concerning adultery very, very creditably, because he never performed the overt act of immorality of infidelity, found that his thinking had made him an adulterer many times over. And all the way down the Ministry of Jesus Christ, He was trying to call these people back to the fact that the Law represented a standard of righteousness that was more than the external things that it had called upon a person to do. And if you were going to be able to enter God's heaven, you had to have what that standard represented of absolute righteousness.

So, Paul says, "These gentiles who do not have the Law, do the Law by nature." The word "do" is the Greek word "poieo." This is a word that denotes an action which is complete in itself. It doesn't refer to a habit or something that's developing. It's just the fact that the gentiles do certain things. The doing here has reference to the moral standards of the Law. It is present, so continually in the world someplace, gentiles are performing some parts of the moral standards of the Mosaic Law. They do this by their choice. They do it because they want to do it. But it is in the subjunctive mood, and that indicates to us that a gentile potentially can fulfill the righteousness of the Law. A gentile can potentially perform these right acts. It depends on whether he wants to or whether he does not want to.

How does he perform potentially these acts of divine righteousness? Mind you that Paul is trying to establish, in the first part of the book of Romans, that everybody is a sinner. We've already established in the first that immoral people are sinners, and they're doomed. Now we are dealing, in this particular section, with the good citizen, the moral person, and we are seeking to establish now that the moral person is in very great trouble also with God, and he's under the condemnation of God. When we get a little further, we are going to take up one more type of person, and that's the very religious person who also thinks that he has it made with God. Paul is going to show that that person is in a lot of trouble.

Having done that, he will then begin, in Romans 3:21, to really begin to explain to us how God has provided justification – how God has really provided the absolute righteousness that we need. That portion of the book of Romans is really the heart of the book. That's the point where Paul's formal dissertation begins. But right now, Paul is trying to show that, potentially, a gentile who is headed for hell can perform certain parts of the righteousness of the law.

How does he do this? Well, it says that he does this "by nature." He does this despicable acts "phusis." "Phusis" refers to the natural human capacities. This is the normal order of nature. We would translate this as "instinctively." There is somehow, someway something within human nature that instinctively gives it an understanding concerning things that are right and things that are wrong. It is the nature of man to perform certain things which the Mosaic Law says that he should do. It is the nature of man to avoid certain things that the Mosaic Law happens to say are wrong to do. So somehow, there is within the gentile a capacity to understand matters of right and wrong. Now, of course, when he does do these things that are right, they are a mere human good. They are not divine good. They're being produced by these "phusis" – these natural capacities.

**Animals**

Animals, obviously, have no such sense. You cannot say about an animal that he has a natural sense over what is right and wrong. All an animal has is an instinct to defend himself. So, a cat knows how to act in the presence of a dog in order to keep from being eaten up. But a cat does not have a sense of right and wrong as to whether it is all right for him to go and steal the dog's food on him so that he makes the dog mad, and so that the dog attacks him. There is no instinct of the fact that it is wrong to steal other people's food. So, the cat will eat anything he can. If the dog is not around, he'll help himself.

There is in man something that is not an animals, totally apart from anything that we find any place else in nature. It is a strange quality of a sense of what is right and what is wrong. And the thing, specifically, Paul says, that he is talking about other things that are contained in the Law – the moral standards of the Law: lying; stealing; adultery; the divine institutions of the Law; the attitude toward volition (freedom); the attitude toward marriage; and, the attitude toward family. Every society has certain regulations concerning families. Every society has a viewpoint as to what is right and wrong for children to do in relation to their parents. There is the divine institution of nations (nationalism). The gentiles everywhere have certain basic understandings and attitudes toward their nation (toward nationalism). There are certain ideas concerning helping the poor. There are ideas among gentiles about justice: justice on the part of rulers; and, justice on the part of governments.

There is, in fact, among gentiles, the innate sense of recognizing that there is a Supreme Being out there someplace. And because he recognizes that fact, Romans 1 tells us, he is under the condemnation of God. "For when the gentiles, who do not have the Law, do by nature the things contained in the Law, these (these unsaved moral gentiles) having not the Law." Again, the word here is "echo" like we had before. They do not possess this. Again, it is with the word "may," because some of them do. It reiterates for emphasis here what it has previously just said – The fact that the gentiles lack an external written law such as the Jews had. It is present tense. That's the continual state – gentiles without the written Law. It is active. The gentiles do not possess it. It is participle – a principle. Again, what they are referring to is the Law, the Law of Moses. These who do not have this end up being something, and they are declared: "They are." The word "are" is "eimi." That indicates the status of the gentiles. It is present tense. The gentiles are continually this. It is actively true of them. It is indicative – a statement of fact.

"They are a law unto themselves." This time, the word "law" does not refer to the Mosaic Law, but the gentiles have a certain standard of right and wrong. That's what he means by the word "law." And it is "unto themselves." That is the Greek word "heautou." We would translate "heautou" as "of their own" or "to themselves." The gentile unbeliever has an instinctive sense of the righteousness which is declared in the Mosaic Law, even though he never sees a written copy of the Mosaic Law.

So, the gentiles do have a code of righteousness which is binding on themselves. He is thereby declared to be a law unto himself. They are a law to themselves. They get this sense of right and wrong from within their own souls.

The possession of such an instinctive sense of right and wrong will not secure eternal life. Because the moral gentile has an instinctive sense of certain things that are right and wrong, and then he obeys that instinctive knowledge of right and wrong, he believes that somehow he will now pass judgment with God. The reason he thinks this is because his righteousness is so much better than somebody else's righteousness. He is so superior to other people around him that he believes that he will be under God's blessing and approval just because he has a sense of what is right and wrong, and just because he does not violate his standards.

**Standards of Morality among Gentiles**

So, let's sum up what verse 14 says. Point number one: historically, it has been observed that a number of gentiles achieve the same standards of morality as the Jews without having the Mosaic Law to guide them. They are instinctively guided. The importance of that point is that the Jews were equating practicing the moral precepts of the Law with justification. When they saw that gentiles also practice those same precepts, they could not thereby say that the more gentile was not saved. The Jews actually dismissed the gentiles as being candidates for justification by the sheer fact that they didn't have the Mosaic Law.

**Justification**

So, now here's the smug Jew who has the Law. You remember that in this passage, we're comparing moral Jews and gentiles, both of whom are unsaved. The moral Jew thinks he has it made with God. Why? Well, he says, "Because I keep these principles of right and wrong." But you say, "So does this gentile over here. How is he any worse than you are then? How can you say that he is not going to heaven if you say you're going to heaven because you keep these moral principles?" The fact of the matter is that both Jew and gentile were lost because justification is not secured on the basis of morality. Justification is not a matter of whether you obey a certain set of rules: whether they come from the Mosaic Law; or, whether they come instinctively from within your own nature. No one is saved by keeping the Law. The Bible is clear about that (Romans 3:20, Galatians 2:16, and Romans 3:28.

Then Paul goes on in verse 15 to tell us about the gentiles' use of righteousness. We have established that the gentiles somehow instinctively have a set of standards of right and wrong. These same concepts are reflected in the Mosaic Law. So, in verse 15, he says, "Who." This again is the word "hostis." It means "people who have such a quality." The word "hostis" must be thought of in the terms of the word "quality." "People who are such as this kind." What kind? Gentiles. They have no Mosaic Law, and yet doing the things of the Law. It introduces an explanation of the statement which was made at the end of verse 14: that these gentiles are "a law unto themselves." Well, the idea is: how are they a law unto themselves?

So, he uses the word "hostis:" "Seeing that they are such kind of people." What kind? "As those who show," and the word "show" is "endeiknumi." "Endeiknumi" means "to prove" or "to show forth" or "to demonstrate." It is in the present sense. Gentiles constantly demonstrate this. It is middle. They do it unto themselves. It is indicative – a statement of fact. And what they demonstrate is a work (an "ergon"). That's simply the word for something you do. And what is it that they're going to do? They demonstrate a work of the Law. Again, the Mosaic Law is in mind here. Gentiles are doing it without possessing it.

**Written in their Hearts**

But they do it because, while they don't have it written down on parchment, as the Jews did, they do have it "written." That's the word "graptos." The gentiles did have a written revelation of God's moral standards. Where? It says they had it written in a certain place, and that is "their hearts" ("kardia"). The "kardia" refers in the mentality. We have the perceptive mind and the directive mind. It refers to the directive mind – that part of one's thinking where you make your decisions. Here, on the mind of an unbelieving gentile, something is written which is perfectly compatible to these two codes of Law that are known as the Mosaic standard. What is in the directive, decision-making side of the unbelieving gentiles mind is a standard of right and wrong that is reflected in the Mosaic order. It is written there, so it is there instinctively.

This is reflected many times when people who are complete unbelievers, and people who do not pretend to be Christian or church folks or anything of that nature, very readily would use the expression, "Oh, that's not right," or "That's right to do that." What are they saying? On what basis are they making these judgments, many times of a moral nature? They may say, "Oh, what that person is doing, that's not right." Well, they're doing it on the basis of something that is written within themselves on the deciding part of their thinking (in their hearts). The unbelieving gentile acts upon a certain morality which he has instinctively placed within him.

He has really received this, which is written here, from various sources. He was brought up in the home that respected principles of patriotism. Therefore, he understands the divine laws of establishment, and he believes there are certain things that are right concerning your attitude toward your nation, and certain things that are wrong. He came from a home that reflected certain principles of personal conduct. He was taught these as a child. Therefore, he grows up with certain concepts of what is right and what is wrong for a person to do. He saw these reflected in his parents, so he picked up those principles. In one way or another, his mind has been filled directly with these concepts (these standards) of right and wrong.

**The Conscience**

So, Paul says, "These people showed the work of the Law (the expression of the Law) in its moral qualities in their minds." And he says, "In their minds," meaning in they themselves – this instinctive quality in the minds of the gentiles themselves. He says that this results in their conscience now making a declaration. The word "conscience" is "suneidesis."

What is the conscience? The conscience is a very significant part of a person's being. The conscience rests right up in the mentality part of your soul; in the directive mind; in the "kardia." The "kardia" holds the conscience. The conscience is a quality that is in man that evaluates the conduct of a person. It contains certain standards. It is not right, and it is not safe, to say to a person, "Let your conscience be your guide." A person can get into an awful lot of trouble on that basis, because the conscience is filled with certain values and certain standards. Whatever the values and whatever the standards are that are here in your heart are the things that are going to be the basis upon which you act. If these have come from human viewpoint of the world, you will act in a certain way. If these standards and values of conscience have come from the Word of God (from doctrine), then you will act in another way totally different.

Proverbs 23:7 says, "That as a man thinks, so he is." A man acts according to the way he thinks. This is the Hebrew word "shar." "Shar" means "to cut" or "to divide." That word gives us a very significant concept concerning conscience. There is in the mentality of man, Proverbs 23:7 says, a dividing quality. This is a separating quality. There is in man's thinking the capacity to divide. Or we would say, "How a person looks at things." The way a person looks at things is the way he decides on his conduct. And these things govern his action. This is what "suneidesis" does. It looks at things and then determines how you should act. The word "suneidesis" in the Greek itself means "joint knowledge." It comes from this word "sun," Which means "with;" and, this word "eidesis" comes from "oida," which means "to know." So, the idea is "joint knowledge." A person's sense of ethics is the result of information that has been joined in his mind. It is knowledge which has been brought into his thinking, which is joined now in his soul to guide his decisions.

So, good conscience results from the fact that your mind (your heart) has been programed with doctrine. A bad conscience is a result of your mind being programed with false things. How a Christian divides (or how he looks at things) is going to determine how he acts. All of this is a matter of joint knowledge – knowledge that is joined to his thinking.

The unsaved conscience simply comes, as we said, from various things that he learns. Consequently, he lacks divine viewpoint to guide him in his conscience. He has to act on mere animal instincts. But a person acts according to what he has done. A Christian who is out of fellowship will short-circuit this conscience operating here so that, instead of his conscience being free to guide him, it will actually possibly lead him astray. In the believer who has a living human spirit, the information to the conscience is being constantly fed up, so his conscience is good. His conscience is being properly guided. So, if you join your conscience to right knowledge, then the directive side of your mind will be able to act properly.

This is what Paul is actually saying in verse 17. He's saying that in the mind of the gentile, there is an instinctive sense of right and wrong. This has produced some values and standards within him. Now his conscience is taking those values and standards, and it is passing judgment upon what the gentile is doing. The work of the Law written in the gentile's heart is not the same as conscience. On the one side, he has the work of the Law, but he also has a conscience that's working from that work which is written there. The very fact of conscience, however, does show us that there is something instinctively in man that has an understanding of right and wrong.

The result of this conscience, he says, "Is that it bears witness." The Greek word is "sunmartureo." "Sunmartureo" means "to bear witness with." Along with the instruction that the innate sense of right and wrong gives him is the conscience, which now bears witness with this person concerning his conduct. It is present tense. It's continually doing this. It is active. It is the unbelieving gentile's own conscience. It is a participles. It is a principle stated.

This in the Greek happens to be in a construction called a genitive absolute. A genitive absolute as a construction where all of a sudden you have two words: a participle; and. then you have a noun, which in this case is the word "conscience." The two just sit together. They're joined together, and they're totally separated from everything else in the sentence. But they stand in such a way that they give an emphatic declaration (an emphatic emphasis). So, what he is saying is that conscience, in the unbelieving gentile, is there to declare something very strongly to him – speaking to him from the frame of reference of his instinctive morality.

What does it speak to? The result of this speaking is that: "The thoughts," and here's an important word. It's the "logismos." The "logismos" is the reasoning. Here, this word refers to contemplating an action as the result of your conscience. So, what Paul is saying is that here is the unbelieving gentile. He has an instinctive sense of moral conduct which is compatible with the Mosaic Law, though he doesn't have the Mosaic Law. His conscience now takes this innate sense of right and wrong, and it passes judgment. It gives thoughts of judgment concerning what he does; what he says; and, what he thinks. Constantly there is coming to the mind of the unbelieving gentile these judgments on the basis of conscience – on the basis of his innate sense of what's right and wrong.

**Accusing**

The word "thought" is tied to two participles, creating again the condition of that genitive absolute, so that these two are strongly opposed, one against another. One of them is "accusing." The conscience makes a decision. It thinks; it looks at something that's done; it passes a judgment; and, then it makes an accusation on the one side. That's the "kategoreo." The word "kategoreo" means "to speak against," and thus "to reproach;" "to accuse;" or, to condemn. It is in the present tense. The conscience is constantly accusing. It is active. The gentile is doing this himself. It is participle – a principle.

**Excusing**

It says, "Or else." He's doing something else, and that something else is "excusing." "Excusing" is "apologeomai." "Apologeomai" means "to speak oneself off" – "to talk yourself out" is the idea, or consequently, "to defend." Again it is present. This is constantly happening in the minds of the gentiles. It is middle (to themselves.) It's a principle.

**Passing Judgment**

Then you have this word "meanwhile," which is not really "meanwhile." That is really a pretty bad translation there. The word is the Greek word "metaxu." "Metaxu" means "between." Between what? It is not between one thought and another thought that comes to a gentile. But it means between the gentiles themselves. It means that the unsaved gentiles are looking at one another. They have an instinctive sense of what is right and wrong. They have a conscience now; a moral sense; and, a reasoning factor – a factor that passes judgments upon the conduct of each other.

So, between themselves, the gentiles are passing judgment. They look at each other on the basis of their instinctive sense of a law that they never read. They pass judgment. It says that they do it to one another. That is the Greek word "allelon," and that means "mutually." The word "allelon" means "to one another of the same kind." So, here is one gentile unbeliever with another gentile unbeliever, passing judgment on what they're doing. They're saying, "That's good what you do. I commend that." Or they're saying, "That's bad what you do, and I condemn that."

Our whole society is built upon this factor that Paul is observing to us here. All of our society today, in the United States, is built upon the fact that a bunch of unsaved gentiles have within them this "logismos" taking place (this quality of reasoning) that's enabling one person between another person to pass judgment on the basis of their instinctive sense of right and wrong.

The result of this is to make the unbelieving gentile feel very superior. It makes him feel extremely qualified to face God. Just think how many senators feel, without putting it in so many words, that they have taken three or four giant steps forward toward heaven for having deposed Nixon, and for having taken care of someone who was doing such terrible things. What were they doing? They're probably unsaved gentiles themselves, operating on a sense of morality that they've accepted from society, but which the Mosaic Code reflects. They're passing judgments. They're accusing; or, they're excusing. They're condemning; or, they're defending. And they think that because, as a result of this action (because they have this sensitivity of conscience), that somehow they have passed the line into eternal life.

So, that closes the parenthesis in verse 13-15. Then, in verse 16, Paul completes the sentence. So, let's go back to verse 12 so that we get the flow here: "For as many as have sinned without the Law shall also perish without the Law." That is the gentiles, and we've just explain how the gentiles operate without the Law, and yet have a sense of morality. But God is going to judge them on that very basis. And the one thing that God is going to point out is that you gentiles have an innate sense of morality, but you didn't live up to what you knew yourself about yourself.

Secondly: "And as many as have sinned in the Law shall be judged by the Law." This is the moral, unbelieving Jew. Verse 16 says, "It's going to be done in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to My gospel." It's going to be the day when God (that is, God the Father) judges, and the word "judges" is the Greek word "krino." "Krino" is in the present tense, but it is in the Greek language what is called a futuristic present. We would say, "When God is going to judge." But the apostle Paul knows that the gentile unbeliever is not going to escape judgment. Therefore, he speaks of it as if it had already taken place there in the future.

**God's Judgment**

So, he says, "In the day when God shall judge," instead of: "In the day when God is judging." It is used to denote an event that is so absolutely certain that there's no question about it. The Greek had a way of being able to convey the fact that here's something that is beyond any question. It is active judging; that is, God is going to do it. It is indicative. It is a statement of a fact.

What God is going to judge is those things that people prefer other people not to know. It is what the Greek calls the "the cryptic things." ... This means the hidden things – these things of inner motivation. It says, "It's going to be the hidden things of men." That's the Greek word "anthropos." I hope that by now you have learned that anthropos stands for mankind in general – men and women. He's going to judge these secret things. What does he mean by that?

Well, outwardly, here's a fine, wonderful, moral man. He's a man who is esteemed in the community, and he ends up in the lake of fire. You say, "How can that be? This man did nothing but good. This man was a fantastic person." It is because God looks at his mental attitudes, and his mental attitude was sin. His mental attitude was short of absolute righteousness. God says, "You've got to have absolute righteousness. That perhaps can be called "+R." But the best man can come up with is "-R" – something less than absolute righteousness. And every fine moral person in the gentile unbelieving camp, who is responding to his conscience acting upon his innate sense of right and wrong, still falls short of God's standard.

So, it says that God is going to judge mankind: "Through Jesus Christ." God the Father is responsible for the judging, but we are told in John 5:22 that he delivers it to His Son. The name Jesus Christ refers to the fact of the one who is despised and rejected, who died and was resurrected. So, it stresses the glory of the Son of God.

**The Gospel**

He's going to judge him according to "My gospel" (My "euaggelion"); that is, the good news which Paul proclaimed. What was the good news? He's going to explain the good news from Romans 3:21 on through the rest of the book. The good news very simply is that the absolute righteousness that a person needs in order to have eternal life God has already provided in Jesus Christ, and all you have to do is to be ready to accept it.

**Summary**

So, let's summarize what Paul has said.

1. The righteousness of the moral unbeliever is not sufficient to secure eternal life.
2. The moral unbeliever must secure a righteousness, therefore, that comes to him totally apart from human merit, and it has to equal the Father's absolute perfect righteousness.
3. The only way to obtain absolute righteousness is by having God impute it to the moral, unbelieving gentile at the point of salvation.
4. This imputations can only be accomplished through faith in Christ, and not through the doing of the Law.
5. The moral unbeliever has rejected Christ and the gospel, and therefore, he possesses only a relative righteousness.
6. Therefore, the righteousness of the moral unbeliever will not stand up at the great white throne. All of that comes from his old sin nature, and all that is evil.
7. Finally, the gentile, moral, unbeliever seeks commendation from God for his human good, but instead he is condemned on the basis of that human good. It is your relationship to Christ that makes the difference.

So, the apostle Paul has delivered a very telling blow to the Jew. The Jew thought that by keeping moral standards, he was making himself acceptable to God. And Paul says, "Even the gentiles do that, and they are going to the lake of fire." If you don't have something more than morality, that's exactly where you're going too. Paul's point is that everybody knows what's right, and nobody lives up to that right, let alone to live up to the right which constitutes God's absolute righteousness.

He's going to take the Jew next, and deal with him now, who has the Law. And he is going to show that he is really no better (even though he has it all spelled out for him) than the gentile who just acts from instinct. Human beings cannot make their way to heaven without the grace of God making it for them.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1975

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