

THE BOOK OF ROMANS
"No Excuse and No Escape"
Romans 2:1-3

INTRODUCTION

1. The great theme of Romans is God's righteousness for sinners who will believe (1:16, 17). Those who do not believe experience God's wrath (v. 18; John 3:36).
2. There is no more dreadful catalogue of sin than that given in Romans 1:21-32. Being given up by God (3 times--vv. 24, 26, 28) brings mankind to utter and total depravity.
3. Romans 2 is divided into two major sections:
 - a. Principles of God's judgment (vv. 1-16).
 - b. Profession of religion still requires judgment (vv. 17-29).

1. NO EXCUSE v. 1.

The "Therefore" anticipates what follows. It could be read "For the following reason. . . ."

a. What?

"Inexcuseable" is the key to the argument. It means a person is without an apology--a defense. Conscience recognizes sin in another because it is aware of sin in itself. Imperfection noticed in others is actually writing one's own condemnation. The only judgment or censure allowable is that which points to man's sin in the light of God's Word.

b. Who?

The "they" of Romans 1 is changed to the individual "thou" here. But the reference is probably to all mankind and this is suggested by "whosoever." The application is to ethical teachers (Plato, etc.) philosophers (Kant, etl.)--anybody.

c. Why?

The verb judge is a simple form and translated "determined" (Acts 27:1). "Condemn" is from the same root but is a stronger verb and means to condemn by a judge (cf. John 8:10).

Note: Others are often judged or censured on these grounds: race, civilization, culture, wealth, education, ethics, and religion. The only vantage point warranted is divine revelation (the Bible). All others are spurious. One who censures otherwise will be found wanting by divine standards.

2. NO ESCAPE vv. 2, 3.

Scripture teaches that Israel was warned to prepare to meet God (Amos 4:12). Reason?--because we must meet God (Heb. 9:27). To avoid this judgment bar, one must settle out of court through the mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:1; 1 Tim. 2:5).

God has clearly outlined His principles of judgment in this entire chapter: 1) truth (vv. 3, 4), 2) wrath (vv. 4, 5), 3) choice (v. 6), 4) respect of persons (v. 11), 5) God's standards (vv. 14, 15), 6) Gospel (v. 16). Any profession of religion will not save from judgment (vv. 17-29).

Two items are certain in these verses: 1) God's judgment is according to truth upon those who practice deeds of the same moral quality mentioned (v. 1).

"Commit" means practice (cf. same verb in 1:32).

2) There is absolutely no escape. It is true that a sinner may persuade himself or stupefy himself so as to believe his sins will go unpunished, but it is all self deception (cf. Heb. 2:1-4). No escape! Note: "Think" means to figure. It is used 27 times by Paul (only four other times in the N.T.). It is a mathematical word and means to reckon, count, compute.

There are suggested ways of escape for those who transgress a human law, but none of these are available for those who transgress God's law. Note the ways of man:

a. Keep crime undetected. But with God--He knows all things (Ps. 139:1-6).

b. Escape beyond jurisdiction, But with God--He is omnipresent (Psa. 139:7-12).

c. Technicality of the law. But with God--His is absolute (Num. 14:18).

d. Convicted may escape prison. But with God--He sees all (cf. Gen. 16:13).

CONCLUSION The issues of eternity are settled in this life. There is no second chance. The only way to escape is to settle out of court. You must take action now (2 Cor. 6:2). You are guilty, but you can yet escape through Christ. If you refuse God's mercy, you must face His wrath (John 8:21, 24). Amen.