

## **All Have a Standard**

(Rom 2:13-15)

- Read Rom 2:11-16
- We have dealt with the statement of v.11-12&16, and now we have the parenthesis

### I. Division of the parenthesis

A) V.13- Deals with the Jew who though his mere possession of the Law made him righteous

1. Paul assures the Jew that “hearing” the Law is not enough, a man must “do” the law (“hearing” in that day comparable to “reading” in our day)
  - i. “Doers”- To perform that which the law requires to perfection, it is execution of the law to every jot and tittle
  - ii. Just as we say “ignorance of the law is no excuse,” so also “knowledge of the law” is not execution, law requires conformity and obedience

B) V.14-15- Deals with the gentiles, and the question of is it fair to condemn the gentiles who never “heard” the law like the Jew

1. Paul answers “NO! The gentiles also have a standard which they have not kept”
  - i. “Law unto themselves”- They themselves are there own standard

#### 2. Proofs

- i. They show the “work of the law” in their heart
  - a) “Work of law” and not “law”- That which the law is designed to produce, morality and uprightness
    - 1) This is universally seen throughout all mankind and in every culture or tribe, all have laws against stealing, murder, etc.
  - b) Rom 1:32- Sums up this thought perfectly
- ii. By their conscience
  - a) Our conscience condemns the wrong in us and our lives
  - b) The conscience is mostly negative and is a restraint placed their by God
  - c) The conscience is not perfect and is subject to change
    - 1) Paul had persecuted Christians in “good conscience”, and was neither right, nor justified, but that changed
  - d) Disobeying our conscience is always wrong, no matter the charge
    - 1) Rom 13- Proof text
  - e) Having a conscience, which man can say he has never been condemned by his? Thus he is guilty same as the Jew, for sin is present in him and he has the proof of it

- iii. By their thoughts (reasoning/reckoning)
  - a) Their talk and argument concerning the right/wrong of the things done daily among themselves
    - 1) Condemning others for crimes and then justifying ourselves in the same cases
    - 2) The very reasoning proves there is a standard of guilt
- 3. So being “without the law” does not exclude the gentiles from judgment

## II. Doctrine of parenthesis

- A) To arrive at what is meant here it seems best to begin with what the apostle is not teaching:
  - 1. Paul is not saying in that there will be some Jews found in heaven that got there by the works of the law
    - i. Rom 3:19-20- No flesh justified in His sight
    - ii. Gal 2:21- If by works, Christ died in vain
    - iii. This entire section is not dealing with justification at all, only condemnation
  - 2. Paul is not saying that the Law is in the heart of all men and therefore all will be judged by the same standard
    - i. What he is saying is that although the standard of proof varies, the guilt is identical because sin is found in ALL
    - ii. Rom 3:9-12- None good, Jews nor gentiles
  - 3. Paul is not describing in v.13 what any man does, he is stating what the Law demands
    - i. Matt 5:2- Except your righteousness exceed the scribes and pharisees....
    - ii. Rom 10:5- Anyone who can perform it perfectly shall live by it
      - a) It- Matt 22:34-40- Love God/neighbor is the Law
        - 1) Consider the way in which the average moralists excludes God altogether
        - b) James 2:8-11- Must fulfill the Royal Law
  - 4. Paul is not saying that gentiles have been or could be saved by keeping the light they have revealed to them
    - i. Rom 3:19-20- “No flesh”
    - ii. The entire passage from Rom 1:18-3:20 is proving that no one has ever lived up to the light he has
  - 5. Paul is not saying that the gentiles have the Law of God/Moses written in their hearts
    - i. This is impossible, because the first table has to do with God and the gentiles were without the knowledge of the true God (Eph 2:11-12, Rom 1:18-32)

- ii. This is impossible, because then the Jew would have had no advantage (Rom 3:1-2)
  - a) The Jews had the law on stones and then gentiles would be in superior position if it was written on their very hearts
- iii. This is impossible, because if it were true, then the gentiles already had the promise of the New Covenant
  - a) Jer 31:31-34 & Ezek 36:24-27
- iv. This is impossible, because of what we are told about the Old Testament saints
  - a) Heb 11- “By faith”
  - b) Gal 3:6-9- Abraham had gospel preached unto him
  - c) Heb 4:1-4- Israel had gospel preached unto them
    - 1) We must remember that this is exactly what the old “dispensation” was, the Law of Moses was the preaching of the gospel in ceremonies and types
- v. This is impossible, because it makes missionary work and the great commission a harmful thing
  - a) If the gentile can be saved by the light he has and condemned also by it, then we put him in a worse position by revealing the truth of depravity and the righteousness required
    - 1) Preach the Sermon in the Mount to a man, and that man is more condemned than he was before
- vi. This is finally impossible, because what need would the world have for the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ?**