

Women's Bible Study – Handout



Lesson 3 | Romans 1:18-32

God's wrath, Pt 2 : The wickedness of the self-righteous

Name: _____

Date: _____

PREPARE YOUR HEART

Pray for the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom, insight, and understanding as you study this passage. Begin by reading the full text above before working through the questions.

SCRIPTURE FOCUS

Romans 2:1-3

You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge another, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things. 2 Now we know that God's judgment against those who do such things is based on truth. 3 So when you, a mere human being, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God's judgment?

1. Paul begins chapter 2 in light of what he's just taught us in chapter 1 about people who exchange the truth of God for a lie, and worship created things rather than the Creator. In v1, he seems to be issuing a warning to those of us who smugly agree and look down on people who live like this. How does Paul turn and point the finger at us when we judge in this manner?

MY RESPONSE

LESSON NOTES

2. What similar description does Paul use for the truth suppressers in Rom 1:20 and the people described in Rom 2:1? Yet how are the kinds of people described in Rom 2:1 different than those described in Rom 1:20?

MY RESPONSE

LESSON NOTES

3. Why, according to vv2-3, is our judgment impaired when we judge other people out of a spirit of superiority and self-righteousness? When are you personally tempted to look down on other people and criticize them because they are not living up to your standards?

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MY RESPONSE

LESSON NOTES

SCRIPTURE FOCUS

Romans 2:4-5

Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance? 5 But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed.

4. V4 teaches that if “we” have not experienced God’s judgment yet, it is because of what? (“We” refers to those of us who feel we’re better than other people because of how we judge ourselves compared to them.)

MY RESPONSE

LESSON NOTES

5. So when we judge others for their shortcomings before God, how are we misreading God’s kindness, forbearance, and patience toward us? See v4.

MY RESPONSE

LESSON NOTES

6. According to v5, when we are full of judgment and have a critical spirit toward other people, what does that reveal about the condition of our heart, and how is Paul warning us?

MY RESPONSE

LESSON NOTES

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7. Looking back on the kind of people described in Rom 1:26-32, it would be easy to think, “Well that’s not primarily who I am...I’m mostly a good person...I get a pass in God’s eyes.” But these first five verses in Rom 2 describe a very different person – who is also is facing God’s judgment. How would you describe and categorize this type of person?

MY RESPONSE

LESSON NOTES

SCRIPTURE FOCUS

Romans 2:6-11

God “will repay each person according to what they have done.” 7 To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. 8 But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. 9 There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; 10 but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. 11 For God does not show favoritism.

8. Read Rom 2:6-8. One of Paul’s primary teachings is that we’re NOT saved by our works. Vv6-8 at face value seem to cast doubt on that (see also Ps 62:12, Mt 16:27). However, look up Gal 6:8-9, 5:6. How do these additional verses add context to Paul’s claims here in Rom 2:6-8?

MY RESPONSE

LESSON NOTES

9. a) It’s important to recognize in v7 that the glory and honor referred to here are not the glory and honor that come from people. They are the glory and honor bestowed upon us by knowing, being in the presence of, and enjoying God. So what does it look like to seek this kind of glory, honor, and immortality? See Phil 1:21, 1 Tim 6:12. b) What might it look like for you personally to ward off spiritual apathy, and to “take hold of the eternal life to which you were called?”

MY RESPONSE

LESSON NOTES

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10. In some ways, vv9-10 are a restatement of what Paul has just said in vv7-8, but in reverse order. And then he adds v11. When vv 9-11 are read together, what is Paul's main point??

MY RESPONSE

LESSON NOTES

SCRIPTURE FOCUS

Romans 2:12-16

All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law. 13 For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous. 14 (Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law. 15 They show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts sometimes accusing them and at other times even defending them.) 16 This will take place on the day when God judges people's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares.

11. a) Paul continues his teaching about God's judgment in vv12-16. Read vv12-13. On what basis, ultimately, will God judge people to be righteous, regardless of whether they are under the law (Jews) or apart from the law (Gentiles)? b) How might v13 be convicting to someone who's spiritually adrift, but assumes she's in a good place with God – because she's grown up in a Christian family and has heard the Bible preached all her life?

MY RESPONSE

LESSON NOTES

12. a) Some people might read v13, and object, "How can we obey if we don't even have or know what the law is?" How does Paul answer this objection in vv14-15? b) What do you think he means?

MY RESPONSE

LESSON NOTES

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13. In v16, Paul is talking about the Day of Judgment, when God gives his final verdict on every human life. What is the scope of his judgment, and why is that sobering?

MY RESPONSE

LESSON NOTES
