

## Romans

Dr. Charles "Buddy" Parrish  
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Romans 2:12-16



Vs. 12

- Having touched on the Jews and their mistaken belief that simply because they are Jews that they are exempt from judgement, Paul now turns to the Gentiles. Judgement comes whether you lived with or without the written Law.
- There is no escaping judgement. A common question people sometimes ask is "What about the people who never heard about Jesus or who came before Jesus". Here is the answer: you are judged on the Truth that God has revealed to you. The Jews had the Law that God gave to Moses, so apart from Christ, they will be judged by the Law. God is just. God will judge to the level of fidelity to the Truth He has shown.

Vss. 13-14

- Remember that Paul is not sitting at a desk writing as someone might write an academic paper. A more likely picture is that of Paul pacing the room as he is dictating the letter to Tertius (Romans 16:22). And poor Tertius is just frantically trying to keep up. So here in these two verses it is as if Tertius is putting them in a parenthesis and then has Paul returning to his line of thinking from verse 12.
- James 1:22 says, "But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not just hearers who deceive themselves". Throughout Scripture, it's what you **DO** that matters. Paul agrees with James that faith without works is dead. James goes on to declare that "the demons also believe...and shudder". Back in Romans 2:6, Paul quotes Psalms 62:12 and Proverbs 24:12 that God will render to us according to our work/deeds.
- Paul tells us that while the Jews had the written Law, there is also a Law that God writes on the heart of every person. We were all created with the Divine spark and everyone has a base understanding of God's Law, by which God will judge them. And on some level, this was something that the ancients all understood. William Barclay tells us that the Greek Stoics believed that "in the universe there were certain laws

operative which a man broke at his peril--the laws of health, the moral laws which govern life and living". Aristotle said, "The cultivated and free-minded man will so behave as being a law to himself". The philosopher Plutarch said, "Law, the king of all mortals and immortals, which is not written on papyrus rolls or wooden tablets, but is his own reason within the soul, which perpetually dwells with him and guards him and never leaves his soul bereft of leadership".

Vss. 15-16

- How are people who have not known the or Christ to be judged? As they "**show** the work of the Law written in their hearts". And what does that work show? Some will stand accusing, ill deeds that have violated the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Some will stand defending.
  
- John 3 is "illuminating". Verse 19 says, "This is the judgement, that the Light has come into the world and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their **deeds** were evil". Again, it's all about the deeds, it's all about what we DO, not just what we say we believe. So the Light, Jesus Christ, shines and "will judge the secrets of men". In John 3:20-21, Jesus tells us, "For everyone who **does** evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But he who **practices the truth** comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God". Judgement begins and ends with Jesus Christ.