

Judgment Without Comparison

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 16 August 2026

Preacher: Sam Bunnell

[0:00] along with the troubles our computer has been having we don't have our usual video so we're! we're going to hope the the sermon slides that i prepared to assist in preaching today will show up! but y'all just bear with us all right computer troubles are not the end of it they just make everything a little more challenging but we'll get past it um take your bibles if you would turn to romans chapter 1. as you do i hope you are edified by the picture on the screen has anybody ever felt like that just had a face palm kind of moment face palm kind of day what in the world i'm gonna move this out of the way this is for when people come up here and speak or pray or something they can grab this mic but i don't need it because i have mine so y'all just forgive me i'm gonna move that out of the way um romans chapter 1 paul's talking about those kind of people the people that just make you go every community has those people the ones who drive slowly in the fast lane can i get an amen the people who don't return their shopping carts leave them in the parking spot and then on a windy day it blows it into your car the people who let their dog do its business and just keep on walking come on now look we walk our dog every day and i gotta carry two i gotta carry two bags now because he's a big dog we all know who these people are look a lot of these are sometimes you know some more humorous things but a lot of times those people can get into some pretty rough stuff that makes you go more than oh my word sometimes those people just they need jesus they need to get right with god that's exactly where paul starts us where we're picking it up in romans chapter 1 verse 18 he's talking about those people and that's what we're going to talk about today is those people so whoever that is for you get their face in your mind and just think about all the things you can't stand about them that'll be the perfect spirit for you to be in as you receive the word this morning romans chapter 1 but listen y'all there's a bait and switch coming so just work with me romans chapter 1 verse 18.

we're going to read a long passage of scripture i'm not going to have you stand you've stood a lot today uh but let's pick it up in verse 18. for the wrath of god the wrath of god is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of people who suppress the truth in unrighteousness you see what kind of people these are because that which is known about god is evident within them god made it evident to them since creation of the world his invisible attributes both his eternal power his divine nature have been clearly seen if you're paying attention being understood through what has been made so that they are without excuse and you can see evidence of god all around the world through creation all around us for even though they knew god they did not honor him as god watch that or give thanks to him but they became futile in their reasoning and their senseless hearts were darkened you ever looked at those people and just said man they just don't have sense but paul's saying the same thing their senseless hearts were darkened professing to be wise they became fools exchanged the glory of incorruptible god you can't corrupt god but they exchanged his glory for an image of god in the likeness of corruptible man of birds four-footed animals crawling creatures and you go to some dark parts of the world and you'll find people worshiping idols made out of stone or wood and oftentimes they'll look like creatures i used to go on these trips to india anybody ever been to india before it's an interesting place yeah yeah i know you have bentz has been everywhere all the places that you don't think about going bentz has been there okay it's amazing talk to him um india is fascinating land of a billion people and over 300 million different things they worship as a god over there it's crazy the hindu culture kind of contributes to that and in the part of the the region we were mostly visiting uh they worshiped the monkey god so they had this this god that looked like a monkey all decked out in gold and jewels so it's kind of a picture of what paul's talking about here they make it they made these things that god created as part of nature and they've lifted them up as god birds four-footed animals crawling creatures therefore how did god respond to this he gave them over in the lusts of

their hearts to impurity so that their bodies would be dishonored among them so they exchanged for they exchanged the truth of god for a lie you ever know somebody who exchanged the truth of god for a lie have you ever been somebody who knew the truth of god but exchanged it for a lie instead that's what he's talking about and they worshiped and served the creature rather than the creator who is blessed to all eternity amen for this reason god gave them over to degrading passions for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error and y'all know what it's talking about there here you know he there's a direct reference to mix uh same gender relationships and sin so god's calling that out as unnatural paul is calling that out as unnatural as he's inspired by god to write this they say and it was against god's design and they're pursuing this as an act of rebellion against god and his created design just as they did not see fit to acknowledge god god gave them over to a depraved mind to do those things which are not proper being filled with all unrighteousness wickedness greed evil full of evil full of envy murder strife deceit malice there are gossips slanderers haters of god insolent arrogant boastful inventors of evil disobedient to parents y'all see that list of really bad stuff and then he throws in disobedient to parents kids i hope you're paying attention paul's listing that along with a list of really bad sins don't disobey your parents all right kids without understanding untrustworthy unloving unmerciful and although they know the ordinance of god that those who practice such things are worthy of death they not they know this but they not only do those things they also give hearty approval to those who practice them that's paul's those people that's the people that makes him go what are they doing what in the world pretty bad right now let's not stop there let's go to chapter 2 and verse 1 you may think you can condemn such people let me put it this way you may think you can condemn those people paul says but he continues but you are just as bad can we just pause there for a minute before we continue on and then he says just in case you think you're better than those people you're just as bad as bad as you're going to do that and then he's writing this to jesus followers in rome both historic jewish believers in the messiah and those who recognize that jesus was their promised messiah and then those gentiles who were brought into the faith of christ and now they're all trying to coexist and follow jesus together and they're struggling to do it they're having a hard time reconciling some issues with each other and he says you guys are just as bad and you have no excuse when you say they are wicked those people and they should be punished you're condemning yourself since you who judge do these very same things you know what our minds do our minds say no i don't what are you talking about i don't get into that lifestyle because you know what we just did we forgot about all the other things on that list and we went straight to the worst of it or what we perceive to be the worst of it we go straight to the well he was talking about those people who change their their natural created desires and they they go after same gender and all this i'm not that what's he talking about and you missed the entire rest of the list

greed envy strife deceit gossip slander arrogant boastful disobedient to parents without understanding untrustworthy unloving unmerciful all these things paul is saying you do them too this is a hard passage for us to read but if we're gonna preach through romans we've got to park it here for a little bit and we've got to figure out what was paul writing about it's an important message so we're into chapter two and he says you're condemning yourself if you're pointing the finger at these people and saying man they deserve harsh judgment they should be punished for all this because you who are doing the judging do the very same things we started many weeks ago i think this is week 14 of this series well there's 16 chapters in paul's letter to the churches in rome that we have preserved in the scriptures to this day and it's helpful for us and we started at the very end we're working our way from the back to the front we don't normally do it that way but this this time it's been kind of a different perspective on this letter which many of you have already read before so we've been in this series for a while and now we're covering not the entire chapters of romans 1 and romans 2 we might be able to finish romans 1 next sunday and kind of put a bow on this series through romans but we're going to get from romans 18 down through verse 32 where he gives this whole list of really bad those people you know who i'm talking about and you probably have a picture in your mind of who those people in henrietta or clay county or your life or your circles who those people are that kind of fit some of that list that paul was giving us maybe it's you maybe it was you maybe god's rescued you from some of that but paul's telling us he's doesn't about face here and he's telling us in chapter 2 and verse 1 you're just as bad why because some of those things on

that list apply to you too so this leads us to truth number one god does not judge by comparison this is something that makes us different from god this is something that makes our natural instinct different because what do we want to do we want to compare ourselves to each other and we want to always come out on the better end of that if we can help it we want to think well yeah i'm not perfect i know that but i'm not as bad as so and so right in a marriage relationship oftentimes the temptation is to come out on top that i'm the one with the upper hand i'm the one who maybe i'm some at fault but she's more at fault he's more at fault he's the real problem here so we compare ourselves and paul warns about that many times in his writings to the early church of jesus followers he says don't fall into the trap of comparison that's not how god judges us he doesn't look at us as mankind and say well some of you are really bad sinners i'm going to send y'all to hell and the rest of you you're only kind of bad sinners so i'll offer you forgiveness that's not how it works god doesn't have a grading system of how bad you think you've done or how bad you think you are or how bad your sins are that you've committed he said if you unless you have faith in me you're all guilty and your number one sin is unbelief it's not believing in me john chapter 16 shows this to us jesus kind of explains what sin actually is and all these other things that we call sins a lot of them are listed here at the end of romans 1. these are actually symptoms of the one true sin which is unbelief it's not recognizing god as god and when you don't believe you produce a different kind of fruit not the fruit that comes from the holy spirit of god and all these fruits are what we commonly refer to as sins disobeying god disobeying his commands going against his natural created order so god doesn't compare us according to how much of that list we've committed well i might be deceitful sometimes i might be prideful sometimes but i'm not going out and getting plastered on friday night i'm not addicted to whatever substance i'm not sneaking around and looking at pornography or i'm not cheating on my wife or whatever you think i'm not doing these things so i'm not as bad as somebody else that's human thinking that's not how god sees us what that's actually doing is minimizing your lack of belief and faith in the son of god and in god's eyes that is the number one way that you sin against god the other things are a result of that they're the fruit of that unbelief so god does not judge us by comparison now pick it up in verse 2 of romans 2. we know that god in his justice he's going to remind us what we already know about god he will punish those who do who do such things this whole list that he just went through god there's going to be natural punishment that comes from the naturally created order and system that god built this world around you're going to be punished by doing these things since you judge others for doing these things why do you think that you can avoid god's judgment that naturally comes from these things why do you think you can avoid it when you do them too don't you see how wonderful kind and patient god is really that's what we're talking about right now after we're just talking about how god punishes evil and all this wrongdoing now we're going to talk about how wonderful kind and patient god is well he goes on to explain can't you see that his kindness is intended to turn you from your sin it's not to let you live there and stay there and be continue in these things because you convince yourself that you're not as bad as so and so and so and so the things that you do struggle with just aren't that big a deal god says no no paul says no no god's kindness shows you that that's not a healthy way of thinking that's not reality that's not truth that's a lie but because you're stubborn and you refuse to do what god's kindness is supposed to lead you toward which is turning from sin you refuse to turn from your sin you are storing up terrible punishment for yourself punishment that god never intended for you to have to endure but when we go against his path the path that jesus is leading us on and we go off into all these other directions we encounter all these other things that god never intended for us and then we're so arrogant as to turn around when we have to endure the punishment of our sin the judgment that we naturally have to encounter and we shake our fist at god and say why did you let me go through this he says man you're so far from the path that you're supposed to that i wanted you on i didn't do that to you that's the natural judgment that occurs from that choice that you made that path that you're on now get back to where i have you you won't have to encounter any of that and ultimately that other path any other path [18:50] leads to permanent eternal destruction and judgment but we get a little taste of it here on this earth just like when you walk with jesus you can get little tastes and experiences of heaven on this earth by the same token when you don't walk with jesus you get little tastes and experiences of the eternal judgment and punishment that waits for those without god so so he talks about that day of judgment paul says the day of judgment is coming romans 2 when god who's right judgment is often now hidden it's hard to often see god's judgment happen sometimes we experience it and we recognize it sometimes it's like man they're getting away with everything the wicked people are

winning they never have to suffer for their wrongdoing well they do it's just always not public he says sometimes it's hidden but someday that day of judgment is coming when it will shine for all to see and he will judge everyone according to what they have done he will give eternal life to those who keep on doing good do you see that he will give eternal life romans chapter 2 verse 7 to those who keep on doing good put a little finger there we're going to come back to that in a minute because if you know the path of salvation to jesus christ you might be looking at that like wait a minute what did he just say that doesn't track seeking after the glory and honor and immortality that god offers that's an elaboration on what it means to keep on doing good but he will pour out his anger and his wrath on those who live for themselves who refuse to obey the truth and instead live lives of wickedness that's not always outward wickedness sometimes it is usually it'll come out at some point but he could also there be talking about inward wickedness that on the outside you look all clean you're all buttoned up you're good you're fine but on the inside he told the pharisees are full of dead men's bones he says you're wicked on the inside you put on this show of following after god but you're actually leading a life of wickedness there will be trouble and there will be calamity for everyone who keeps on doing what is evil for the jew first and also for the gentile but there will be glory honor and peace from god who for all who do good for the jew first and also for the gentile notice there just a little side thought god doesn't discriminate he's not prioritizing well for the jews i'll give them they're my special people from the old testament and i'll give them special privileges and they won't have to suffer as much as these gentiles who weren't part of my original crowd that's not what he says he says it's for everyone same level ground level playing field across the board jew gentile it's the same fruit of the same life depending on which direction you're going it's true for both for god does not show favoritism that's how he ends it now let's go back to verse 7. what did it say i underlined it here he will give eternal life to those who keep on doing good now this is a talk back moment i know we don't do a whole lot of that and you go to some cultures you go to um some black churches man they're talking back with the with the preacher the whole time anybody ever been in a black church service where you saw how they do it that's their culture man sometimes it's very entertaining it's i can really get into it um but i'm glad we don't do that all the time because they their sermons you know can last about two hours i don't know if i could go that long y'all for sure could not listen to me that long uh but this is a talk back moment right now okay so when we read in romans 2 7 he will give eternal life to those who keep on doing good

let's not dive into the theology that you may already know about the truth what is that telling you seemingly what is salt paul seemed to be saying here he'll give eternal life to those who keep on doing good somebody tell me who gets eternal life then works doing good right is that consistent with what the scriptures teach us what jesus said and what even paul teaches about the path to eternal life with god no so what do we do oh no we've got a contradiction in the bible the bible must not be true right of course not only someone with an agenda of trying to disprove the scriptures and too lazy to do the research would settle there and stay there but if it's making you scratch your head then let's look around and see what is he actually trying to say here because that's so inconsistent with what we know about god well let's look two chapters over so flip your bible over or pull up your bible app and pull down the chapter list and go to romans 4 romans 4 and verse 5 while you're turning i'm going to read it to people who do not work to people who do not work but trust god who forgives sinners their faith is counted as righteousness this is not talking about people who don't have a job that's not what he's saying when he's saying people who don't work he's talking about in the context of romans 4 he's talking about work salvation people depending on the works they do the good works they do man i gave money to charity i went out and served i helped my neighbor i went to church i read my bible i tried to pray i did all these good things tried to tell the truth try to be an honest man or woman he's saying to people who do this they're depending on that for salvation and it's going to fail them but the people who are not depending on their works romans 4 and verse 5 but instead they trust god who forgives sinners it's not their works that are counted as righteousness because what do we learn from the scriptures all our righteousness is as filthy rags in god's eyes you think your resume of righteous deeds is is is impressive and god says man i'm not impressed at all it just looks like unrighteousness to me because the only thing that makes you righteous is right here at the end of romans 4 5.

their faith is counted as righteousness you want to be righteous in god's eyes don't commit the sin of unbelief unbelief have faith have faith and if your faith is shaken go back and work through that

with god wrestle through that with god until you can say yes i do believe i have faith sometimes doubt tries to creep in sometimes it'll be shaken but i have faith in god this is what paul is saying john 14 and verse 10. he's going to give jesus is going to give the ultimate clarity to what paul is writing about in romans chapter 2 and verse 7. what did paul say god will give eternal life to those who keep on doing good john 14 verse 10. man whenever you read the bible you got to read it through the lens of jesus the bible the whole purpose of the bible was to point us to jesus the new testament points back to jesus the old testament pointed forward to jesus but it was all about the coming of christ that's what it was there for so let's see what jesus has to say about this john 14 and verse 10. don't you believe that i am in the father and the father is in me how many of you believe that god and the father uh that god the son and god the father are one how many of you would raise your hand and testify good good we got just about everybody in the room the words i speak jesus says are not my own but my father who lives in me does his work through me do you see where the works come from god the father does the work through the son well by that same token god the father can accomplish his work through us so it's not your works of righteousness it's by faith you get access to god and then god works through you so if you are continuing on in good works it's because god is present with you by faith he's offered this out of his grace to us and by faith we have this relationship with god so when paul writes god's going to give eternal life to those who keep on doing good yes because those who keep on doing good doesn't mean they're doing good perfectly doesn't mean sometimes they don't do bad because they listen to the other side the flesh not the spirit but because you keep doing good that is evidence that you have faith in god because god is going to do good through you it's not you it's not your works of righteousness that produce this relationship with god it's god working through you because of your faith so this is not a contradiction but you got to read it in the context of all of scripture and not just pull one verse out and say well i don't know about that sounds to me like we're saved by our works nope that's not it so the truth is what we do reveals who we're surrendered to i'm surrendered to god he's going to do his good works through me i'm surrendering to something else my flesh my desires my pride sin it's going to be different kind of works that leads us to number two and we'll be finished god doesn't judge by what we know he doesn't judge by comparison he also doesn't judge by how much we know look back at romans 2 down in verse 12 when the gentiles sin they will be destroyed even though they never had god's written law well that's not fair right they never had god's written law that was given to the israelites why were they going to be destroyed and the jews who do have god's written law they will be judged by that law when they sin watch this for it's not merely hearing the law that makes us right with god it's obeying the law so what did paul say makes us right with god i'll read it again it's not merely hearing the law that makes us right with god it is obeying the law so what did paul say makes us right with god obeying the law okay so we can walk out of here and tell everybody obeying the law makes you right with god is that true yes and no don't you love yes and no answers so clear it's great we got to go back to the scriptures and we got to search it out we got to figure out what's he saying even gentiles who do not have god's written law we've established that right god gave it to the israelites they show that they know his law in their hearts see god just didn't just give us his law written down on ten commandments or scrolls he gave us his law on our hearts there's a conscience there's a mind there's nature that testifies to god and his laws because they obey the gentiles obey his law even when they don't have it their own conscience their thoughts either accuse them or they'll tell them they're doing right it's not perfect it's not the holy spirit of god but it's something that god gave you to help point you back to him so this is the message paul says i proclaim that the day is coming when god through jesus christ will judge everyone's secret life just as my message says so this is what paul is communicating to them here in verses 12 down through 16. see we want to say look at the other people look at them look at those bad people that whole list in romans 1 look at them look at all the people that drive you nuts in henrietta or wherever you live look at those people paul says look at yourself quit looking at them look at you we say me i know the law or we could say i know the bible what are you talking about i'm a christian paul says are you living it are you obeying it say man i'm religious what do you mean i'm a good person paul says god doesn't show favoritism it's not about that are you obeying him and finally he ends with this little zinger jesus will judge what is hidden might be getting away with it on this earth you're not going to get away with it in god's eyes he reveals the secret things it's a hard passage so look back at verse 13. i underlined this one too because what did he say it's not merely hearing the law that makes us right with god well that's true hearing it only doesn't do you any good you got to obey it he says obeying the law makes us right

with god man that doesn't seem to be right talking about it's not obeying the law that makes us right with god let's go over one more chapter one chapter to romans 3 and verse 20. no one romans 3 and verse 20 should be one page over for you no one can ever be made right with god by doing what the law commands what he just said obeying the law makes us right with god now one chapter later he says no one can be made right with god by doing what the law commands the law simply shows us how sinful we are well this is a different angle why is he contradicting himself let's go to what jesus said and we'll understand it jesus told them john 6 29 you can turn there or you can mark it down for later but i'm going to go

ahead and read for sake of time jesus said in john 6 29 this is the only work god wants from you believe in the one he has sent all the law abiding all the obeying that's not what god was ultimately interested in those things would come from god giving you a new heart god has to replace your sinful heart with what he calls a new heart that means your desires the why behind what you do the who behind who you are god's going to give you a new identity he's going to give you a new set of desires and they're going to conflict with the old desires that are still hanging around but he says this jesus tells these people he said man jesus you do all these great works how can we do that kind of stuff too and jesus tells the crowd the only work god wants from you is believe in the one he has sent the only work or law keeping that god is interested from you and for me that's what we believe is belief in his son because if we believe he will change us he will work through us really the same answer to the contradiction we found earlier is the same answer to the contradiction we find here which isn't really a contradiction and we see that when we compare all of paul's writings together and not just cherry pick one thing and we tie in what jesus taught because that's who we're all following that's who this is all about anyway and we see that the only work that god wants from us is belief in the son so you know how god judges us how much do you believe how great is your faith in me guys the standard's not high he said if you just got a tiny little bit of faith you can move mountains you just got to have faith faith so i'm not impressed but who cares if i'm impressed or not god's not impressed by your list of qualifications for how good of a person you are how religious you are how great of a church member you are how great of a member of the community you are those are all good things we need good members of the community we need people to get involved and help each other and be good as citizens but you know what impresses god your faith in him your belief in him so how strong is that how strong is it in your family what are you communicating to those around you is it that faith and belief in god is the number one most important thing i'm going to finish with first first corinthians 6 and verse 11. here we go man i was supposed to have that on the screen when i read it just a moment ago but that's all right there it is okay sometimes i get a little behind in this first corinthians chapter 6 and verse 11. such were some of you what's it talking about it's talking about those people remember those people paul gave his list you've got your list in your mind if whoever those people are whatever they do that just drives you nuts and you're like who in their right mind would do such a thing paul tells this church in corinth he says such were some of you you were like those people and sometimes you still act like them but the only difference is you were washed you were washed in the blood of jesus christ set free from the bondage to those things that make those people behave the way they do you were sanctified you were set apart to be god's people and no longer the people of darkness you were justified made right with god in the name of our lord jesus christ and by the spirit of our god so church let me just say this to you and we'll be done instead of worrying so much about those people ask yourself god speak to me don't ask yourself ask god god what do you want to show me about me what do you want to show me about me i'm gonna quit worrying so much about those people

[38:02] god you change me breathe this prayer today lord i believe help my unbelief breathe this prayer today lord increase my faith god show me the reality about me show me the truth about me would you bow your heads with me in prayer let's all pray that together you don't have to say it out loud but can we join together as many of you say god show me the truth about me ask him today right now in your hearts and in your minds god what do you want to show me about me it's easy to point the finger at those people it's way harder to accept the truth that you revealed to me about myself god loves us so much he accepts us as we are but he loves us too much to leave us as we are he's gonna change you he wants to change you maybe he's already changed you a lot maybe somewhere along the way you notice he hasn't been changing you as much that's going to go back to a faith issue it's going to go back to a surrender willingness to him issue the organ's going to play and just before we dismiss this would you have a moment of silent prayer with god if you feel moved to get up from your seat and come down here to these steps and kneel if you'd like to pray

with somebody can help you with that if you want to just remain in your seat let this be a moment in the busyness of our week let this be a moment on a sunday a day of rest we just let god speak to us god what do you want to show me about me maybe he's going to show you that you need him you don't need to trust yourself you don't need to trust a priest or a preacher or a church your parents you don't need to trust anything else to have a right relationship with god you need to trust jesus his sacrifice for your sins and his willingness to accept you into his family by your faith in him so if that's what god wants you to do today you say today is the day i want to place my faith in jesus once and for all then would you slip your hand up right now and i'd love to pray with you about that encourage you in that you got a room full of people who have made that decision they'd love to welcome you into that faith family maybe something god wants to show you about you is you need this community of believers maybe it's your first time in a long time maybe you just started recently coming or maybe you've been here for a while but you haven't really dived in you haven't really engaged in this community and this this life with jesus was not meant to be lived solo we need each other so maybe god wants to show you quit trying to maverick this thing jump in with this family of believers and you want to place your membership in this church let's do this jesus life together whatever it is you say yes to jesus today you'll never regret that decision just as just as i am without one plea but that thy blood was shed for me and that

that thou bidst me come to the oh lamb of god i come come to jesus i come god we come to you today with open hearts flawed hearts flawed hearts sometimes we listen to the wrong voices but god you never expected perfection from us you just require our faith let no one in this room fall into the trap of comparison judging ourselves against each other let us see and be reminded that we are as god says we are sinners saved by god's grace through our faith in him in him ignite that faith maximize that faith grow that faith in us so we can see the fruit of that faith in our lives that you want to show us so much it's in jesus name we pray