

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Romans 2:14

Romans 2:14 - posted by kristi1, on: 2006/2/19 23:19

If one without the law is judged according to the law written on his heart(conscience), what are the implications of this in the Christian era? How does God deal with those who live sincerely under false doctrine (Christians in the Dark Ages) or those who live a holier life than most American Christians and yet follow the tenets of their national religion (Buddism) . I do not believe that there are many ways to God. The Bible clearly shows Jesus to be the only legal payment for our sin. How then can His blood be imputed to those who do not know Him. But also how does He judge those that seek to follow their conscience and yet do not know Him. I am sure that greater minds than mine have pondered this question. If anyone has any Biblical council or knows of a godly writer who has discussed this matter I would appreciate the help. :-)

Re: Romans 2:14 - posted by grod95, on: 2006/2/19 23:37

Romans is a mountain of a book. It is a life study and the revelation of its truth comes in ever-increasing stages as we walk with Christ. To gain a foundational understanding of Romans 2:14, I would suggest reading it within the context of the entire chapter. I would then pray over it and ask God to give you insight. The Holy Spirit is the true Interpreter of Scripture. The thoughts of man will at times leave you wanting. But when God gives revelation on scripture, the truth will abide in your heart forever. Just seek him for the truth, my sister.

Re: Romans 2:14, on: 2006/2/20 0:22

It appears here grod that kristi too is seeking "dialogue".

I think the main points I can see is that "they are without excuse", {Rom 1:20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse} even the heathens in the jungles and to realize also, that there are differing degrees of Hell, because of how even the unsaved are sinning against their "God given conscience" and the witness He's left of Himself in creation.

The best illustration of this was a true story from a Missionary ... about the Chief of an 'uncivilized' Tribe.

He had a practice of going up to a mountain to pray to a god in the sky. The only God he could figure there was, had to live UP.

One day he had a vision while up there, praying to be a good leader to and for his people, to this "God".

A Voice said to him, "a man will come to your village to show you the Way, with this sign on the thing in his hand" and the Chief 'saw' the Cross.

Not long after, a Missionary came to the Village carrying a Bible with a Cross on the cover and the Chief rejoiced and had all his people to come listen to this Messenger from God.

Just goes to show ya ... Jesus 'is' the only way and He'll go 'all out' to save a searching/open heart ... no matter where they are.

I'm sure others will come with more.

God bless ya.

Edited to say: Grod is right too though ;-).

Because none of the books, which were really letters, had divisions of Chpt.s and verses so it's one running commentary, and your question's answer starts in Chpt. 1.

Sorry for that "tone" grod. I'm truly trying my bestest to work on that also.

I need a "toning fork". Or is it tuning ? :-(
God Bless ya's.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2006/2/20 7:10

Romans 2:14 follows close on the heels of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life Rom 2:5-7) This is the section of Romans that seems to have those in mind who are referred to as 'those who judge another' (Rom 2:1) In this section Paul is making the point that anyone who demands 'moral values' from another is putting himself under the same obligation. This is broader than the Jews who came later in Rom 2.

The plain statements of this passage indicate that God judges us 'according to his deeds' but these 'deeds' are then linked to 'motives'. Those who are seeking for

1. glory
2. honour
3. immortality

... the promise is 'eternal life'. This sits uncomfortably with the ways that evangelicals usually express things, but this seems to be saying that those seeking 'glory, honour, immortality' will be rewarded with 'eternal life'.

Perhaps the next section will make it more plain. Here again it is 'deeds AND attitudes' which are under examination. The criteria this time are those who are

1. contentious
2. do not obey the truth
3. obey unrighteousness

...their 'reward' will be quite different...indignation, wrath, tribulation and anguish, and (the familiar theme of Romans) in this there is no difference between the Gentile and the Jew. There is no respect of persons with God.

So how are we evangelicals to interpret this? Is 'eternal life' the 'reward of our seeking' or is it 'the gift of God'?

Re: Romans 2:14 - posted by crusader (), on: 2006/2/23 11:40

Our God is a righteous God. He knows the hearts and minds of every person on earth before the beginning of it so he can judge clearly as to what each individual knows and doesn't know. We can only judge by the way each person communicates with us in the time span that we meet them, therefore our judgement can err. But through the Holy Spirit these hidden chambers of their heart can effectively be brought to the light so that the revelations of God's Gospel can work in their lives. If a person lives by the knowledge of one law it is his response to that law that he will be judged. The only time a person is convicted of God's law is when he brings it into their hearts and it is rejected.

If a stranger accidentally lands in America without ever meeting any Locals or reading any of their books, and starts to act in a way that is not lawful for Americans to do, is he then excused by the law and the penalty removed as well as taught the law so he doesn't break it again or convicted and penalized!!!

Re: Romans 2:14 - posted by Graftedbranc, on: 2006/2/25 10:43

Quote:
-----If one without the law is judged according to the law written on his heart (conscience), what are the implications of this in the Christian era?

The apostle's words are to the point that those who are under the law are condemned by the law, and those who are without the law are condemned by their own standard. That is they don't even live up to the standard of their own conscience.

It is acknowledged by many that those who hold the teaching of Confucius have one of the highest standards of conduct. Yet no one lives up to this standard. They stand condemned by their own standard. The higher the standard, the greater the failure. But no one even lives up to the lowest standard.

Even among thieves, there is "honor among thieves." (you watch my back, I watch yours) Yet, they will betray one another when it suits them.

And this leads to the conclusion that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. And all are lost and separated from God apart from the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

His conclusion is that all are sinners. All have fallen short, and all are in need of the redemption which is in Christ by faith.

Graftedbranch

Re: - posted by arbustum (), on: 2006/2/27 21:24

this is cool, i always thought of it as a challenge, i mean, if people who don't know God can get their head around living for others (which is what you end up doing in practicing the word) then how much less of an excuse do we have to 'get on with it'. thanks for bringing a new angle to it.

Re: - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2006/2/27 21:50

Interesting, but after I read this thread and refreshed the page this came up in the random article

The Justice of God in the Damnation of Sinners
by Jonathan Edwards

<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/articles/index.php?view=article&aid=3382>

I got down to the part where he makes reference to Romans 3:9 and thought it might be helpful in this topic.

Re: - posted by kristi1, on: 2006/3/24 19:36

Thank you everyone for the input.

Re: - posted by letsgetbusy (), on: 2006/3/28 23:21

My brother asked me about this while I was witnessing to him.

My take is that:

- 1) God will be fair. The judge of the earth will do right.
- 2) Those that seek God will be given the truth. God will reveal Himself to all who seek Him, regardless of geographic location. I believe when we get to heaven we will meet many who were converted who never had a Bible.
- 3) I have heard from someone who grew up in China that those in the Buddhist temple's are not necessarily as upright as might be thought; sort of like convents.
- 4) I agree that all men are without excuse (Rom 1), and that the heavens declare the glory of God. Paul's testimony on many of his missionary days also revealed that natives knew much about God, but did not want to hear about turning their backs on their sinful ways.

My two cents (that won't even buy coffee). But do let the Holy Spirit guide you.

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2006/3/29 1:15

I don't know what exactly why these scriptures are used so much, that God has written His Word in our hearts, this says specifically that the Law is what God has written on their hearts.

Romans 2:14-16 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;) In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

We have so much more than the law written on our hearts. We have the fulfilled Law of God Himself in Spirit and we have the Holy Spirit Himself our Teacher renewing our minds to this truth, the truth of the New commandments Christ has given us and that is the Law of Love, the only way of life that superceeds the Law in being able to please God. The pleasure of God is Christ Jesus our Lord who is the greatest lover of all that can be claimed or shown in all scripture. Christ in you the Hope of Glory. We have so much more than just the Law written on men's hearts. We have a new heart that is the Heart of Christ Jesus our Lord.

In Christ: Phillip

Re: - posted by Graftedbranc, on: 2006/3/29 12:00

Quote:
-----We have so much more than the law written on our hearts. We have the fulfilled Law of God Himself in Spirit and we have the Holy Spirit Himself our Teacher

There is a difference between what the apostle here refers to as the law of God written on their hearts and the promise of the New Covenant that "I will write My law in their hearts and in their minds".

Paul here is referring to the innate law of our humanity. That is we are created in the image of God. We have eternity written in our hearts. We have in our very being the innate knowledge of God's righteousness together with His witness of Himself in nature.

Whereas speaking of the New Covenant in Hebrews, the writer is referring to the promise of the Spirit in contrast to the outward law of God of the Old covenant.

Graftedbranch