

Tusculum Hills Baptist Church  
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Sermon title: God is Kind; Repent Romans 2:1-11

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**INTRODUCTION:** It's easy in our world to draw conclusions quickly. It's easy to be scammed in this world. It's easy for us to listen to a sound bite and make a decision, having no idea there is another part of the story. It's easy for us to hear a bit of juicy gossip and draw a conclusion. It's easy for us to judge others in their sins while ignoring our own. And, in Romans, Paul talks about judging others.

Here's a quick review of Romans Chapter. Last week we read about God's wrath in Romans Chapter 1. And, we quote Romans a lot as Christians: Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23, all of Chapter 6, Romans 8:1, Romans 8:28, Romans 10:9, Romans 10:10, Romans 12:1 and 2. These are popular common verses in the Christian culture.

There's a lot more to Romans, though. And, when Paul started his Book of Romans, it did not look like it was going to be a favorite book because Paul started in his book to the Romans about man's root problem—sin. And, he said *no one is without excuse because God has made himself known to all people*. The chapter ends on a very sad note—talking about how God has given people over to their depraved minds. He ends Chapter 1: *Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them* (Romans 1:32).

This particular verse is commonly used in speaking against homosexuality and abortion. But, in this scripture, Paul is talking about sin...capital S, capital I, capital N. Paul is not talking about specific sins. Paul uses the words, "you therefore..." "Therefore" is linking Chapter 1 to Chapter 2, so Chapter 2 was never intended to be a standalone chapter. In fact, the chapters in the verses we have in the Bible came much later after the Bible was written. The chapters in the verses were put there by people to help us be able to find places in the scripture. So, when Paul wrote this as a letter, he wrote it indeed as a letter—not as a book with chapters.

So, when we look at the last verse of Romans Chapter 1, we see it connects to Romans Chapter 2, verse 1. And, here's what the scripture says—

**SCRIPTURE:** Romans 2:1-4 <sup>1</sup>*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.* <sup>2</sup>*Now we know that God's judgment against those who do such things is based on truth.* <sup>3</sup>*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?* <sup>4</sup>*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?*

**EXPLANATION:** God's judgment is always justified. It is always based on truth. And, as we read in Romans 1:27, men *have received in themselves the due penalty for their error.*

Paul asks whether we think we will escape God's judgment. Paul asks this as a rhetorical question. Because again, he was writing a letter. No one can escape God's judgment—it's true, just, and fulfilled—thankfully by the blood of Jesus Christ. But, listen to this question he asks again: *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?*

**EXPLANATION:** Well, no doubt, there are some heavy words there. And, we see it is very clear: Paul is dealing with the larger issue of sin itself. God's kindness is meant to lead us to repentance. My question this morning is: *Do you show contempt for his riches?*

I don't know about you, but reading God's Word always leads me to ask more questions. This morning, I have one main point: **God's kindness is intended to lead us to repentance.** And, in studying what this means, we will ask three questions and give the answers. Here are my questions this morning:

1. What is God's kindness?
2. How do we show contempt for it?
3. How do we repent?

## **First, WHAT IS GOD’S KINDNESS?**

Throughout scripture, we see God’s kindness and faithfulness even when people are unkind and unfaithful. And, if you are honest with yourself, you will agree with me— God has been kind to us when we have been unkind, and God has been faithful to us when we have been unfaithful. If there is one thing we can agree on— 100% of us—it is this statement: God has been kind and faithful even when we have not.

**SCRIPTURE:** Psalm 103:10 <sup>10</sup>*He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.*

- God’s kindness is undeserved.

**ILLUSTRATION:** Did you ever get Christmas presents when you were a child, and you didn’t deserve them? Did you ever get a gift you didn’t deserve? Did you ever get a raise at work when you did not deserve it? There are times in our life—if we do an inventory—when we can honestly say we have gotten things we shouldn’t have gotten. People extended grace and mercy to us when they should not have, and they did not repay us the way they should have repaid us.

**SCRIPTURE:** Psalm 68:19 <sup>19</sup>*Praise be to the Lord, to God our Savior, who daily bears our burdens.*

- God’s kindness is constant. He bears our burdens every day.

**SCRIPTURE:** Psalm 145:8 <sup>8</sup>*The LORD is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love.*

- God’s kindness is rich, slow to anger but rich in love—just like every father should be, just like every mother should be.

**EXPLANATION:** Romans 2:4 says it—*God is kind, patient, and forbearing*. But, it gets even better. It is intended to bring us to repentance. And, some might say, *Isn’t it enough we are forgiven and justified? Isn’t it enough we have the love of God?*

It's kind of like the question, *Well, we are justified, so should we just keep on sinning? Jesus already covered our sins, so what's the big deal?* But, Romans 6:2, which we will cover in a few weeks, covers this. Paul says, *“By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?”* If we were to sum up the scripture in just a statement, it could be, *“Come as you are, but don't stay as you are.”*

So, we have—

- God's kindness is undeserved.
- It's constant.
- It's rich.

**And, the second question this morning is: HOW DO WE SHOW CONTEMPT FOR GOD'S KINDNESS?** (v. 4)

Here's the answer to the question: We show contempt when we do not repent.

**BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATION:** Even back in the days of Jesus, people found themselves in despair—asking Jesus where God was in such evil days. Some people came to Jesus and told him about an atrocity. Pilate had killed people while they were making sacrifices to God. He took their blood and mingled it with their sacrifices to mock them. They asked him, *“What about that? What does God have to say to this? Jesus answered them:*

**SCRIPTURE:** Luke 13:2-5 <sup>2</sup>... *“Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? <sup>3</sup> No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. <sup>4</sup> Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? <sup>5</sup> No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”*

**EXPLANATION:** Jesus didn't give them the answer they expected. He said everyone must repent or perish—meaning perish without eternal life.

**APPLICATION:** This is so similar to us today. We are facing widespread suffering and injustice. We see the sin so blatantly around us. It is easy for us to categorize sins and rate some as worse than others. And, to maintain a civil order,

we have to punish sins differently. A child who steals a candy bar will not have the same penalty as an adult who murders someone. But, in God's eyes, sin is sin, and all sin makes us fall short of the glory of God.

**APPLICATION:** Do you realize all of us deserve death when we are compared to God's holiness? Instead of getting caught up in rating others' sins while justifying our own, let's remember God's kindness and the hard words of Jesus: *Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.* Your life is in God's hands—hanging by God's grace. God made life. He has a right to take it and give it whenever he pleases. Job knew it.

**SCRIPTURE:** Job 1:21 <sup>21</sup> *“Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised.”*

The concept of showing contempt for the riches of God's kindness is seen throughout all of scripture. When we look at it, we see most of it comes from taking an attitude of ease and complacency. It's easy for us to justify our sin by saying Jesus already paid the price for our sins.

Keep reading in Romans 2—

**SCRIPTURE:** Romans 2:5-11 <sup>5</sup>*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.* <sup>6</sup>*God “will repay each person according to what they have done.”* <sup>7</sup>*To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life.* <sup>8</sup>*But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.* <sup>9</sup>*There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile;* <sup>10</sup>*but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.* <sup>11</sup>*For God does not show favoritism.*

**EXPLANATION:** There is more than just accepting God's gift of eternal life. Being a follower of Jesus requires a lifetime of discipleship.

**APPLICATION:** What is holding you back from this kind of life? Look at verse 5 again: *because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself...* I don't know about you, but I don't want to waste this life. We are going to face Jesus face-to-face one day, and we are going to give an account for our lives. Our society today promotes storing up earthly treasures, but God wants us to store up heavenly treasures.

We can despise or hold God's kindness in contempt in several ways. We can ignore it. We can take it for granted. We can even go a step further and pervert it to meet the filthy condition of our hearts—excusing ourselves from further sin.

**APPLICATION:** Here is a word for our sinful world: God calls us out of complacency—out of judgment—and into repentance. Verse 7—*Persist in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality...*

**BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATION:** In Luke 12, Jesus told about a rich young man who said he would build barn to store his surplus. Listen to what the scripture says: <sup>20</sup> *“But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’* <sup>21</sup> *“This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.”*

**EXPLANATION:** Rich in possessions, the man had lost his soul. God's kindness is rich. In verse 4 of Romans 2, Paul warns us not to show contempt for the riches of his kindness. We must all repent and be rich toward God.

## **Last, HOW DO WE REPENT?**

Do you understand what it means to repent? It is when you are walking one way, and you completely turn around and start walking the other way. It is a changed life based on your faith in Christ.

**BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATION:** I think of the story of Zaccheus. He was a tax collector—a man who was well-to-do, but who rather than seeing the needs of the poor, exploited his job for personal gain. Jesus met him where he was. After Zaccheus heard Jesus was coming to town, he climbed a tree to get a better look at Jesus. Jesus told him to come down from the tree, and he ate dinner with him. This encounter with Jesus completely changed Zaccheus' life. Listen to what he said:

**SCRIPTURE:** Luke 19:8 <sup>8</sup>“Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold.”

**EXPLANATION:** He didn’t just accept his forgiveness and stop doing what he used to do. He experienced the grace of God and started living with a new generosity rooted in grace.

And, here’s what Jesus told him: “Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. <sup>10</sup> For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” (Luke 19:9).

**APPLICATION:** Jesus is here to seek us and to save us. He is here to bring us to a life of repentance.

**CONCLUSION:** In these crazy times—full of death, destruction, and every kind of evil—let us guard ourselves against judgment of others and instead look toward repenting. Let us not fret and despair—*Where is God in the midst of all of this?* But, let us regard the kindness of God as intended to lead us to repentance.

There we have it: God’s kindness, God’s love.

The scripture tells one day his patience will run out. Won’t you repent today before it is too late?

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