

**"The Doctrine of Condemnation"**

**Romans 1:18-3:20**

**Part 6**

**Introduction:** Tonight, in our study of Romans we are returning to our look at the Doctrine of Condemnation. Within our study of this Doctrine we have looked at the Rational Sinner found in Romans 1:18-32 and we were able to see how the Rational Sinner collides with the wrath of God when he/she refuses to allow the Truth/Light given by God to have its place within their lives. They suppress the Truth and in doing so they meet with the wrath of God. They then start into a downward spiritual spiral taking them deeper and deeper into the spiritual darkness. If they continue in this spiral and refuse to turn to God they find themselves in a life of idolatry because man will always worship someone or something. As they continue to suppress the Truth/Light God will then remove the moral restraints and he will give them over to a life of immorality. If they still refuse to repent God will then lift the restraints from the person's sinful mind and He will give them over to a reprobate mind to live a life of forbidden pleasures.

This is all the result of man abandoning God. This person cannot blame God for where they have fallen, for the darkness and the immorality he or she finds themselves in is the result of their own personal choices.

Now, last week we went through the list of sins given in Romans 1:29-32 and it is very clear based upon these sins and the immorality spoken of in Romans 1:24-27 that our Nation has collided with the wrath of God. It is easy to find people who fit this group and I am sure it was the same in Paul's day. As Paul wrote this he knew there would be people who would step back and they would judge those who fit into the category of the Rational Sinner. They would see themselves as innocent because they do not practice the sins of the Rational Sinner. They would see themselves as being above this category. So, Paul will address these individuals now.

**I. The Reformed Sinner**

**Romans 2:1-16**

**Part 1**

**Notice Romans 2:1**

The word "*Therefore*" in this verse is to be seen a little differently than in other places. Normally we understand the word to look back to what has been said before, but here the word looks forward to what is about to be said. The Reformed Sinner is guilty also because he has judged the Rational Sinner while at the very same he has done the same thing. Now let me explain what Paul means in this verse.

The Reformed Sinner is guilty and without excuse because he has judged the Rational Sinner which proves he too has a conscience and knows right from wrong. By judging the Rational Sinner, he proves he knows what is right and what is wrong for he can clearly see it in the lives of others. The Reformed Sinner believes in God but because he does not practice the sinful lifestyle of the Rational Sinner he has come to believe he will be accepted by God based upon his moral behavior. He does not see himself as a sinner but he is. He too has suppressed the Truth/Light given to him as we shall see. Let me show you what **H. A. Ironside** says concerning the Reformed Sinner.

*"In the first sixteen verses of this chapter of Romans another class of people is brought into view: the world of culture and refinement. Surely among the educated, the followers of the various philosophic systems, will be found men who lead such righteous lives that they can come into the presence of God claiming His blessing on the ground of their own goodness! Certainly, there were those who professed to look with disgust and abhorrence upon the vile lewdness of the ignorant rabble. But were their private lives any holier or any cleaner than those whom they so loudly condemned? It is now their turn to be summoned into court, so to speak, where the apostle fearlessly arraigns them before the august tribunal of the righteous Lord, who loveth righteousness. "Therefore, thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things" (Romans 2:1). **Philosophy does not preserve its devotee from the indulgence of the flesh. A recognition of the evil is not necessarily power to overcome the evil. Culture does not cleanse the heart nor education alter the nature. The judgment of God according to truth will be rendered against the evildoer. To praise virtue while practicing vice may enable one to get by with his fellows, but it will not deceive Him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.**"*

Let me show you two Biblical examples of the attitude of the Reformed Sinner.

#### **Luke 18:10-11**

<sup>10</sup> *Two men went up into the temple to pray: the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.*

<sup>11</sup> *The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that **I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers**, or even as this publican.*

#### **2 Samuel 12:1-9**

*And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.*

<sup>2</sup> *The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds:*

<sup>3</sup> *But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter.*

<sup>4</sup> *And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.*

<sup>5</sup> *And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die:*

<sup>6</sup> *And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.*

<sup>7</sup> *And Nathan said to David, **Thou art the man.** Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul:*

<sup>8</sup> *And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things.*

<sup>9</sup> *Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.*

David was quick to point out the sin of the rich man but was reluctant to see the sin in his own life.

This is a perfect description of the Reformed Sinner. The Reformed Sinner has no problem seeing sin in the life of someone else but he is reluctant to see sin in his or her own life. The Reformed Sinner believes he will escape the judgment of God because God will be too busy dealing with the Rational Sinner. When the Reformed Sinner is confronted with his sin he will quickly point to the Rational Sinner because he sees himself "less" sinful and therefore acceptable in the eyes of God.

Paul wants every Reformed Sinner to know they too are guilty of sinning against the Light just as the Rational Sinner. The Reformed Sinner knows what sin is because he judges others. He has a conscience also and he is guilty of violating his conscience many times and therefore he sins against the Light given to him. He will also see himself above the

Rational Sinner because he has not committed the immoral acts but he is guilty because he has lived them in his heart and mind.

**Matthew 5:27-28**

*<sup>27</sup> Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:*

*<sup>28</sup> But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*

We are all guilty of the sins of the Reformed Sinner. Let me show you the words of Ray Stedman on this person:

*"All of us know someone whom we consider a little bit lower on the ethical scale than we are, and what a comfort they are to our hearts! Every time our conscience gives us a little stab, we immediately remember these people, and we take courage, and feel a lot better. If we analyze our thoughts, we find that we secretly feel God has no right to bother us while these people are around. Let him concentrate on them! They are the ones who need it!... We all want a lightning rod that will divert the stroke of divine wrath from us, and channel it off to someone we consider a little more worthy of it."*

The Reformed Sinner will NOT escape the judgment of God.

**Notice Romans 2:2**

Here we see that God's judgment will be carried out "according to truth". This means that God knows every thought and every action in the life of every individual.

**Job 34:21-23**

*<sup>21</sup> For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings.*

*<sup>22</sup> There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.*

*<sup>23</sup> For he will not lay upon man more than right; that he should enter into judgment with God.*

**Psalms 139:1-6**

*O lord, thou hast searched me, and known me.*

*<sup>2</sup> Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.*

*<sup>3</sup> Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.*

<sup>4</sup> For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.

<sup>5</sup> Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.

<sup>6</sup> Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.

### Jeremiah 23:24

<sup>24</sup> Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD.

### Notice Romans 2:3

Man has a difficult time facing the Truth concerning himself. He will do all he can to avoid the Truth about his true condition. But there is coming a day when he will stand before his Creator and he will be judged according to the TRUTH. The idea in this verse is that HE WILL NOT ESCAPE THE JUDGMENT OF GOD. The Reformed Sinner has come to believe because he does not practice the very same sins as the Rational Sinner that he will not face the judgment. Let me remind you of something that we looked at on Sunday morning.

### Revelation 12:9

<sup>9</sup> And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

One of the great deceptions of Satan is that God will only judge those who are worse than me. The Reformed Sinner has bought into this very lie. The Reformed Sinner points to the fact that he is not a sinner like the Rational Sinner but he is. He is just a little more refined in the way he sins. But he is still guilty and he will face the judgment of God.

### Notice Romans 2:4

Here we see that God exercises three of His attributes toward the Reformed Sinner:

1. **Goodness** - This is the grace of God in every person's life. The "goodness" of God is gentle and loving. It refers to how God gently and lovingly provides for man's needs. He could very easily withhold the everyday blessings but instead God has chosen to show His "goodness" toward all sinners. One man illustrated it like this: If you were to break your arm and go to the doctor he would need to set the bone in place and he would do so. If your mom were the doctor she would use a special loving tenderness when she set the bone. That is exactly the thought behind the "goodness" of God.
2. **Forbearance** - I want you to notice the words of **Leon Morris** on the meaning of "forbearance".

*God does not punish the sinner immediately after he sins. He holds back his final judgment and thus gives the sinner an interval in which he can repent and turn to God. But the important thing to notice about this word [forbearance] is that it points to a truce, not a peace. It is temporary. It implies a limit. If the sinner does nothing but sin, if he rejects the invitation to repent (cf. Eccl 8:11), then in due course he must face God with all his sin about him. God's forbearance is wonderful, eloquent of his deep concern for people. But it is not forgiveness.*

### **Ecclesiastes 8:11**

*<sup>11</sup> Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.*

3. **Longsuffering** - Notice the words of **Barclay** on the word "longsuffering".

*"It is the ability not to lose patience when people are foolish, not to grow irritable when they seem unteachable. It is the ability to accept the folly, the perversity, the blindness, the ingratitude of men and still to remain gracious, and still to toil on. There is love. This is God's attitude to men. It is the attitude which bears with everything men can do and refuses to be either angry or embittered, and which will never seek anything but their highest good. To love men is to forgive them and care for them as God forgave and cares-- and it is only he who can enable us to do that."*

Notice how **William Newell** summarizes these thoughts- *Note the degrees or stages, also, of God's kindness during the earth-life of such a man: First, it is God's "goodness," in daily preserving him, providing for him, and protecting him. Second, Divine goodness being despised by him, God's "forbearance" is exercised, -God does not smite instantly the proud ingrate, but goes on in goodness toward him, withholding wrath even at times when disease, danger, or death threaten all about him. Third, all God's goodness and forbearance being despised, God's "long-suffering" keeps waiting, even over "vessels of wrath".*

**Notice Romans 1:4 again.**

The Reformed Sinner despises the mercy of God extended into his or her life. God extends this mercy to LEAD the sinner to repentance. It is very important to notice that it is not God's desire to DRIVE a person to repentance but it is His desire to LEAD the person to repentance. Why does God not DRIVE people to repentance? The answer is it would be against their will. Man has been created as a free moral agent and right here we see the proof. God could DRIVE every individual to repentance but then man would repent against his own will. God desires that man would chose to repent on his own. Therefore, the goodness and the mercy of God is extended into the lives of all sinners with the desire that it will LEAD them to repentance.

The Reformed Sinner who refuses to repent therefore despises the mercy of God in that he takes it lightly as something that is owed to him or something that he deserves because he is not like the Rational Sinner. Again, I remind you he is like the Rational Sinner and the only difference is his sin is more refined. Let us notice what happens as the Reformed Sinner refuses to repent.

**Notice Romans 2:5**

Because of this person's impenitent (unrepentant) heart the consequences are twofold:

**1. They harden their hearts.**

The word "*hardness*" is the root word from which we get the word "**sclerosis**". Which means "a hardening" of the arteries or of the liver. This is a very serious condition in our physical bodies and will lead to death. The "hardening" of the heart of the Reformed Sinner is much more serious for while hardening of the arteries will take a man to the grave, hardening of the heart will take a man to hell.

The hardening of the heart spoken of here is a deliberate refusal to listen to the commands and the convictions of God and it is a deliberate refusal to acknowledge the mercy of God and be lead to repentance. This results in a state where man's heart grows rock hard and ice cold.

**2. They store up wrath against themselves which will be unleashed on the day of judgment.**

The unleashing of the wrath will happen at the Great White Throne Judgment if the Reformed Sinner dies in their sins. Every day they live they are **TREASURING UP WRATH** which means it is being stored up. It has the idea of a great abundance awaiting the unrepentant sinner.

**Conclusion:**

**Notice the words of David Brown:**

*"What an awful idea is here expressed, —that the sinner himself is amassing, like hoarded treasure, an ever-accumulating stock of Divine wrath, to burst upon him 'in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God'" And this is said not of the reckless, but of those who boasted of their purity!"*

This Reformed Sinner is also sinking in a spiritual spiral just as the Rational Sinner. He is sinking deeper into the treasured-up wrath of God. Every day he lives he is adding to the store house for the day of judgment. The only way of escape for these people is the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

