

Romans 2:1-11

**Pray...** that God would cause you to be shocked by the *miracle of faith* all over again, or for the very first time. That you would be driven to deeper faith and obedience because your awe in Jesus.

**Read** Romans 2:1-11

**Look closer...** Paul has just finished commenting on the history of idolatry in 1:18-32 (see last study/prayer guide), and he is beginning to transition to commenting on Judaism. What Paul wants his readers to know is that, because salvation is a gracious gift from God, there is no difference whether someone is a Jew or not, but we either know Jesus, or we don't. He starts with talking about *judging others* in verses 1-4, because he knows that this is something that we all (Jews and Gentiles) struggle with. If we think something is right, and someone else doesn't do it, we naturally go into judgement mode. We've all been there. But Paul wants us to see the deep flaw with this way of life. To judge others assumes that we have achieved goodness on our own, which is the furthest thing from the truth!

Our morality is "filthy rags", we are under slavery to ourselves, and without God stepping in to free us, there is no true goodness in us! To judge others based on our good works means that we have decided to step out of God's grace, where salvation is a gift, and into our own race to achieve righteousness, which will only end in despair.

**Think about it...** Paul admits that if we were truly "good" then God would grant us eternal life (Rom 2:7). But in the very next chapter he reveals that this "goodness" does not exist outside of God: "no one is righteous, not even one"; "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." God's goodness and grace is not an excuse for you to judge others, it doesn't mean you're better than everyone else; faith is a miracle from God, that sets our hearts towards him in love and repentance. Obedience is no longer "good works", but simply walking close to our beloved Jesus!

**Pray about it...** God's grace is a gift like none other. We are helpless and without any hope of goodness, yet Jesus comes nearer to us in our hopelessness to *become our goodness*. Pray that God would shock your heart into "wowwing" at the amazing grace of God who does not need us, but wants us.