

Sunday 17th May 2015

“The Law is Written in My Heart”

Romans chapter 2 verse 12

People who have the law and those who have never heard of the law are all the same when they sin. People who don't have the law and are sinners will be lost. And, in the same way, those who have the law and are sinners will be judged by the law.

I have been preaching from **Romans**. It is a letter. Paul wrote it, and sent it to the Christians in the church in Rome.

In the first part of chapter 2, Paul wrote about God's judgement. I do not want to repeat what I said last Sunday, but I want you to read one verse:

Romans chapter 2 verse 11: *God judges everyone the same. It doesn't matter who they are.*

Doesn't matter about my culture, my country, my language, my religion — God will judge everyone in the same way. This verse will help me understand today's preaching.

Verse 12: *People who have the law and those who have never heard of the law are all the same when they sin. People who don't have the law and are sinners will be lost.*

'The Law' means what? Means the 10 Commandments, written in the Bible. God gave the 10 Commandments to who? To the Jews, through Moses. They knew God's law. They knew what God wanted them to do, and what they should not do.

But what about the other people in the world, who had never read God's law? Should God punish them also? Is it fair?

Yes, it is fair. Why? Because everyone has God's law written in their hearts. We all know what is right and wrong. We all know God's law.

Verse 12: *And, in the same way, those who have the law and are sinners will be judged by the law.*

Means all Jewish people. The Jews had God's law, written down — means God will judge them using His law on the Last Day.

Verse 13: *Hearing the law does not make people right with God. They will be right before him only if they always do what the law says.*

Maybe I think, *"That is wrong. I can only become right with God through Jesus Christ, not through the law."* True. So what does this verse mean? It says I must *"always do what the law says."* What does the law say?

The law says, *"You can never behave good enough for God. You can never follow all of God's rules. You must rely on Jesus only. You must ask God to forgive you, because you are not good enough."*

So I must do what the law says — I must **not** try to follow all the law; I must go to Jesus Christ, because I know I am not good enough.

Remember: Jesus was perfect. He kept all God's laws. I do not have to keep God's laws. I rely on Jesus only.

When I rely on Jesus, He saves me and changes me. I become a true Christian. Now I want to follow God's law. I love God's law. I do not rely on God's law, but it is wonderful and precious. I want to become near to God — how? Through His

law.

Verse 13: *Hearing the law does not make people right with God.*

The Jewish leaders heard the law. They learned God's law. They knew all the details. But they were not saved. They hated Jesus, and they crucified Him. They did not do what the law says.

Verse 14: *Those who are not Jews don't have the law. But when they naturally do what the law commands without even knowing the law, then they are their own law. This is true even though they don't have the written law.*

What does this verse mean? There were many people in the world who did not know God's law — but they still knew what was right and wrong. They still wanted law and order for themselves.

This is proof that all people have God's law written in their hearts. Maybe I have never read the 10 Commandments — but I know that lying is wrong, and stealing is wrong, and many sins are wrong. How do I know? Because I have God's law in my heart!

Verse 15: *They show that in their hearts they know what is right and wrong, the same as the law commands, and their consciences agree.*

This verse shows that God's law works in two different ways inside me:

1. In my heart.
2. In my conscience.

What is the difference?

Verse 15: *Sometimes their thoughts tell them that they have done wrong, and this makes them guilty. And sometimes their thoughts tell them that they have done right, and this makes them not guilty.*

Everyone has a fight inside. I will explain:

Example: A man plans to do something that is against God's law. This man does not know God's law in the 10 Commandments. Maybe the man plans to kill someone, or cheat on his wife. He knows it is wrong, but he wants to do it anyway. **This is God's law in his heart.** He knows what is right and wrong.

When the man decides to sin, his conscience hurts. It is hard for him to sin, maybe, because he knows he should not sin, and it hurts him. **This is God's law in his conscience.** He feels bad when he wants to sin.

So what does he do? He makes an excuse to himself. He thinks, *"I am right, because that person should die."* He has a fight inside. He knows God's law, and his conscience hurts — but he tries to ignore his conscience, and make excuses.

All people have this fight — not just the people who know God's law. This shows that God's law is in our hearts.

Verse 16: *All this will happen on the day when God will judge people's secret thoughts through Jesus Christ.*

Everyone has God's law in their hearts. Everyone knows what is right and wrong. God will judge everyone — those who have read His law, and those who have not.

How do I know God's law is in everyone's hearts? Let us look at some examples from the 10 Commandments:

Commandment Number 1: You will have no other gods before me.

Is this command in everyone's hearts? Does everyone know we should have one God only? What about people who worship many gods?

Yes, all people know there is one God. Is it not natural to worship many gods. People **decide** to worship many gods — it is not natural in their hearts. When missionaries first arrived in countries where people worshipped many gods, they did not have to work hard to explain that there is one God — it was natural, in their hearts.

Commandment Number 2: You will not make any images.

This command is in everyone's hearts. Making idols and worshipping idols is not natural.

Chapter 1 verse 21: *People knew God, but they did not honor him as God, and they did not thank him. Their ideas were all useless. There was not one good thought left in their foolish minds. They said they were wise, but they became fools. Instead of honoring the divine greatness of God, who lives forever, they traded it for the worship of idols—things made to look like humans, who get sick and die, or like birds, animals, and snakes.*

Worshipping idols is not natural. It is a choice. People know that God is there, but they choose to not worship Him. They choose to worship idols instead.

Even small children know that God is so big, they cannot draw Him. It is obvious that God is outside this world, great and holy. But people are sinful, so they choose to worship idols.

Commandment Number 3: You must not take the Lord's name in vain.

What does this command mean? Does it mean I should not use God's name to swear? Yes — but it means more. It means I should not use God's name in a false way — for example, I should worship God in an honest way.

All people have this law in their hearts. All people know that pastors should be honest. Maybe a pastor has some big sin — the story will be printed in newspapers, and everyone will talk about it. Why? Because people know God's law in their hearts. They know that the pastor should not sin.

Commandment Number 4: Remember the sabbath day.

Is this law in people's hearts? Yes — because everyone knows we should honour God, and give time to Him. Maybe they do not give time to God — but it is a choice. They decide to ignore God. It is not natural.

Commandment Number 5: Honour your father and mother.

Is this law in people's hearts? Yes. How do I know? Maybe there is someone who is proud, and does not respect their parents. We see people who do not respect authority. Everyone says, *"That is wrong! We should respect our parents, and people with authority!"* It is written in our hearts.

Commandment Number 6: Do not kill.

This law is easy to see in people's hearts. Just watch TV — most of the programmes are about catching people who kill. We all know that killing is wrong.

Commandment Number 7: Do not commit adultery.

Maybe you say, *"This law is not in people's hearts. There is so much adultery around today."* Yes — but when someone suffers from adultery, they can feel the shame and sadness. They know it is wrong. The law is in their heart.

I do not want to explain all of the commandments today — but you can see how God's law is in everyone's hearts. Everyone knows God's law. It is in our hearts. And God will judge everyone by His law.

Verse 16: *All this will happen on the day when God will judge people's secret thoughts through Jesus Christ. This is part of the Good News that I tell everyone.*

I want to preach a few points from this verse:

1. There is one Judgement Day.

There is one day coming when God will judge everyone. This is true. I must tell you. I cannot ignore this fact. God will judge everyone, and He will not make any mistakes.

You must understand this: God **will** judge. You must not think that God will forget, or ignore your sin.

It is hard for a pastor to preach about sin and judgement. I do not want to preach about negative things all the time — but I need to warn you. Maybe some people here today will meet God on the Last Day and say, *"But I am not ready! I never knew about judgement!"*

This is my responsibility. I must warn you about judgement. Maybe I think some people will not want to come to this church, because I talk about sin and judgement — but what can I do? Never talk about sin? No! I must talk about sin. I must warn you.

When I (pastor) was younger, we all knew about judgement and punishment. Why? Because we were punished for many things. We knew that there were rules, and we had to follow them.

Today young people do not know about judgement. Why? Because they are allowed to do so much. The world says, "*Do whatever you like. Just don't hurt anyone.*" Young people do not experience much punishment. So they do not think God will punish them; or they do not understand.

But this verse tells me: there is a Judgement Day coming. I must be ready.

2. God will judge the secrets in my heart.

Please think about that day — the Last Day, the Judgement Day. Think how you will feel when God sees all the secrets in your heart. Maybe you have many secrets — many sins that no-one knows. God can see all the secrets, and on the Last Day He will judge all your secrets.

3. Jesus Christ will be the Judge.

Who will judge me on the Last Day? Jesus. Maybe I am surprised. I think, "*But Jesus is the Saviour, full of love! How can He judge me?*"

Yes, Jesus is full of love — but He is God, holy and perfect. He cannot ignore sin. He will judge everyone's sin. He is the

kindest, best judge — but He is pure and honest. He will judge.

Think: Jesus invites you now, and He will forgive you and bless you and love you. But if you ignore Him, He will judge you on the Last Day.

4. We must preach the Gospel.

This is my last point. We must tell people about judgement. I must talk about sin, because I want to warn people.

Remember: everyone has God's law in their hearts. God will judge everyone, because everyone knows what is right and what is wrong.

I am a Christian, means God will not judge me — but only because I am safe in Jesus Christ.

May the Lord help us all to remember his judgement, and to thank Him for saving people through Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Fellowship Outing

Annual church outing to a park

Date: 25th May (1 week)

Time: 9.30 here at church for a lift in bus

(Or go straight yourself)

What do we do? Go on a walk, enjoy the nice weather, eat ice cream. We have food on the grass, have a nice day. Any questions?

Remember to bring your own food! And a blanket to sit on. And an umbrella? Bring sandwiches, rice, whatever.

We don't have a finish time, it depends on who is driving your bus. Please check. Normally about 5.00 or 6.00pm.

We have a deaf bus so we can talk on the way. If you are with hearing people please teach them to sign.

Please all come!