

A GUILTY WORLD

INTRODUCTION – 1:1-17

“Romans” is Paul's explanation of the Gospel

- Paul greets a church he has never seen. (vv.1 -7)
- He intends to visit but writes instead. (vv.8 -15)
- He begins to give a full account of the Gospel. (vv.16 -17)



Topic: “A Guilty World” (1:1 - 3:20)

- All are guilty before God and condemned.
- “All” means Jew & Gentile - those with & without God's revelation.

IDOL WORSHIP AN INEXCUSABLE SIN – 1:18-32

1] God's true nature was obvious from creation (1:18-20)

- Mankind suppressed the obvious about God. (vv.18-19)
- Namely, that God is powerful & divine (not human). (vv.20)



Why would an atheist, who denies God, have some idea of Him?

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2] God was likened to images of men & animals (1:23)

- God strongly forbids images of Himself. ¹
- As Creator of the universe, images cannot portray His greatness. ²



A small view of God is just as dishonouring. Explain why.

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¹ Exodus 20:4: “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth;”

² Isaiah 46:5-6 “To whom will you liken Me, and make Me equal and compare Me, that we should be alike? They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver on the scales; they hire a goldsmith, and he makes it a god; they prostrate themselves, yes, they worship.”

3] God reacted strongly to this vile portrayal of Himself (1:24-32)

- By giving man up to his “vile” ways - sexual perversion and increasing sin.
- And letting him suffer from his “wise” (v.22) and hurtful (v.27) practices.



In view of this, explain why so many of man’s troubles are his own fault.

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GENTILES & JEWS ARE BOTH GUILTY – CHAP 2

1] Those who think they are better will be condemned (2:1-3)

- They condemn themselves when they judge, and yet do the same things. (v.1)
- The order of privilege is the order of condemnation. ³



For every finger we point at another, three point back at ourselves. Discuss briefly.

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2] Mankind is condemned whether Jew or Gentile (2:12-16)

- Jews by disobeying God’s moral law – the Ten Commandments, etc. (v.12)
- Gentiles, by disobeying an inner sense of right, confirmed by conscience. (vv.14 -15)



If true, how acceptable to God is a good-living person who may not even believe in Him?

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3] Keeping the law is what counts with God (2:17-29)

- The Jew teaches the law but doesn't keep it. (vv.17 -24)
- He has the mark of God's people (circumcision) but doesn't act like one. (vv.25 -29)

³ Consider how David condemned himself when he judged another, 2 Samuel 12:5 -7 : “So David's anger was greatly aroused against the man, and he said to Nathan, ‘As the Lord lives, the man who has done this shall surely die! ... because he had no pity.’ Then Nathan said to David, ‘You are the man.’”



Why is a Christian in name only, just as condemned as the Jew Paul speaks of?

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THE ADVANTAGES OF BEING A JEW – 3:1-20

1] The main advantage was to have Scripture (3:1-8)

- The Old Testament Scriptures prepared them for Christ’s coming. (vv.1 -2) ⁴
- But God cannot be blamed for their failure to believe the Scriptures. (vv.3 -8)



Why do the New Testament Scriptures give those with a Christian upbringing an even greater advantage?

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2] The privileged Jew is still guilty (3:9-18)

- Jews & Greek Gentiles are guilty (3:9) as the Old Testament declares. (vv.10 -18)
- The Jew is *more* guilty as he hasn’t used his privileges. ⁵



Why does a Christian upbringing leave us more guilty if we do not turn to Christ?

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3] No one can save himself by keeping God’s commands (3:19-20)

- Everyone is guilty before God, every mouth (excuse) is silenced. (v.19)
- God's law gives "knowledge of sin", it cannot make us righteous – i.e. “justify”. (v.20)

⁴ 2 Timothy 3:15: “and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

⁵ Luke 12:48: “For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.”



**We can no more save our own souls than a drowning man
can save his own life. Why?**

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TO CONCLUDE

**Though man cannot make himself righteous,
Paul will show us God's way of declaring a man righteous!**

(This will be the next topic)