

Romans: The Integrity of God
Blind Eyes
Perceiving Ourselves Better than Others
Romans 2:1-4

Several years ago, Jimmy Swaggert gave a reporter his opinion concerning what was happening to Jim Bakker and his PTL Empire. He called Jim Bakker a "cancer" in the body of Christ. During this time, Swaggert himself was visiting prostitutes. In our text, Paul has just finished describing reprobates, and now he refers to those blind to their own faults and focus on the faults in others.

I. Even moral people receive the disapproval of God (v.1).

A reprobate is "disapproved of by God." Paul addresses in these three verses those who think there's no way they could ever be a reprobate. They think they are better!

(A). Some believe Paul is referring to moral Gentiles.

Seneca, a Roman philosopher and contemporary of Paul, considered himself a "moral guide" to Rome and deplored evil, yet he is considered guilty.

(B). Some believe Paul is referring to the Jews.

Many of the Jews of Paul's day believed "*the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, even if they be sinners, unbelieving and disobedient towards God, shall share in the eternal kingdom simply because we are Jews*" [Dialogue with Trypho by Justin Martyr](#). This attitude is seen in many religious people today.

(C). Some, like I, believe Paul is referring to both.

In essence, Paul is saying to that person who sees himself by comparison as better than others --- "You, my friend, are in the same boat as the reprobate."

II. God is righteous in condemning moral, ungodly people (v.2-3).

"*This does not seem fair,*" someone shouts! I don't deserve God's condemnation!

(A). Moral people are guilty of the same sins as reprobates.

"*You that condemn others do the same things*" (Romans 2:1b). Don't gloss this. Seneca rationalized with Nero over the murder of the Emperor's mother-in-law. The judgmental person is doing those things that he condemns, but he is good at hiding what he does, or he dresses the outside up and is corrupt on the inside.

(B). Moral people think they will escape God's judgment.

The word "think" (suppose NIV) is the Greek word *logizomai* (logic). Moralists reason or calculate that they are not as bad as others, and hence God will wink!
"*Do you really figure that you have doped out an angle that will let you go up against God and get away with it? You don't have a chance,*" **Don Barnhouse**.
"**But if God is so angry with me, why in the world doesn't He show it?**"

III. That judgment has yet to come is a sign of His goodness (v.4).

"*Despise thou the riches of his goodness . . . which leads to repentance*" (v.4). The moralist "underestimates the true value" of God's goodness. It is not given as an affirmation that God delights in you, but as an opportunity to repent of sin.
"*There is in any willful sin a contempt for the goodness of God*" **Matthew Henry**.
The purpose of the kindness of God is not to excuse men, but to convict them.