

New Found Freedom

“Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things. We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who do such things. Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who do such things and yet do them yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God? Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed. He will render to each one according to his works.” Romans 2:1-6

Such powerful verses these are and God has used them in recent days to teach me much about myself and to convict me of sin in my own life. Even now as we think of standing before God on judgment day we must ask the Holy Spirit to guide us into the truth of whether or not we are as these Scriptures say. Are you as verse one says, one who passes judgment on another while at the same time practicing the same thing? Do you gossip even as you tell others that it is wrong to gossip? Do you lie even though you have told your family that you know it is wrong to lie and get after your younger sibling when they lie to you? Do you look at pornography, never telling a soul, while getting after your friend, who is at least seeking help, to discontinue looking at it? The list could go on and on in regards to what it could be that you are doing in your life and yet at the same time passing judgment on others who are doing the same things. Scripture tells us that those of us who do such things will not escape the judgment of God, but will one day be judged according to our deeds.

Have you, as I have done, taken the kindness of God for granted, not understanding truly what it is to repent. Repentance is not merely lip service to God. Certainly you may agree with God that what you are doing is wrong. You know it is wrong, because you see it as wrong in other peoples' lives. Repentance though is a complete changing of the mind about what you are doing. Maybe what needs to take place in your life is not so much the understanding that your actions are wrong but that there will be consequences for your actions. God is not a God of lip service. God looks at the heart of a man. If you continue to confess your sin and then go and sin again continually, over and over again, even as you are passing judgment on others God will hold you accountable. God's kindness ought to lead us to repentance, as the Scripture says. It is in God's forgiveness and grace that we find the desire to turn from our sin and begin to seek after a life of holiness and honor before God. Understand this though, we all struggle with sin and just because you sin more than once in a certain way or perform the same sin as another after you have passed judgment over their actions does not mean that you need to begin to freak out and start worrying about your relationship with God, simply confess your sin to Him and ask Him for forgiveness and the understanding of how you can completely turn from your sin. It is in the secret hidden sins in our own lives that we most often find ourselves judging others over and those are the ones for which God is going to hold us accountable. As verse six says, God is one day going to render to each one according to His works and if you continue to sin and pass judgment over others for the same sin you are storing up for yourself wrath on the day when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.

If God has convicted you of sin in your life today I encourage you to turn to Him, ask forgiveness for your sins, and in your freedom in Christ turn from your sin in repentance,

thanking for His kindness towards you.

You know, something that I have found interesting as God has convicted me and brought me to repentance is that in this new found freedom God has given me the ability to show love and grace towards those on whom I had previously passed judgment. Neat, huh? Thanks be to God who leads us into triumph!

- Justin Kantonen