"THERE'S NO FREE PASS:
With Your Synagogue Membership"
Darin Latham/www.broadwaychurch.com
Romans 2:1 – 3:20

After describing the awful reality of the world at large, Paul anticipates the thinking of some of his Jewish readers. They will be thinking, "Yes, those filthy Gentiles! We Jews, however are exempt because we're God's chosen people!" Paul takes a scalpel to that destructive thought.

I. THE MIRROR OF TRUTH

A. Examine Yourself Closely (vv. 1-5)

1. Do you secretly do what you publicly condemn? (v. 1)

2. Do you think you can escape the justice of an omniscient God? (vv. 2-3)

3. Are you confusing God's patience with God's endorsement? (vv. 4-5)

B. The Playing Field Is Level (vv. 6-11)

1. If you consistently choose truth, you merit eternal life.

2. If you fail to consistently choose truth, you merit wrath and anger, trouble and distress.

3. This is true for the Gentile and equally true for the Jew.

II. THE CLOUD OF DECEPTION

A. "But We Have The Law!" (vv. 12-24)

1. All will be judged in relation to what they know. (v. 12)

2. However, merely knowing the Law doesn't make one righteous, obeying the Law makes one righteous. (v. 13)

3. The Gentiles essentially create their own "law", in response to the stamp of God's image on their consciences. (vv. 14-16)

4. You have the Law, but do you obey it? (vv. 17-23)

5. Their failure to obey the Law has brought shame upon God's reputation amongst the Gentiles. (v. 24)

B. "But We Have The Rite of Circumcision!" (vv. 25-29)

1. Circumcision without obedience is like a wedding ring without faithfulness. (vv. 25-27)

2. True Judaism touches the heart, not just the flesh. (vv. 28-29a)

3. Paul uses a "play on words": the Hebrew word for "Jew" is rooted in the word "praise". (v. 29b)

C. "So What's The Point of Judaism?" (3:1-2)

Paul anticipates the question, "If the Law and circumcision don't get us a free pass, what's the advantage of being a Jew?"

1. The Jews were God's chosen vessel for His words and His Word!

D. "Does Israel's Failure Affect God's Faithfulness?" (vv. 3-4)

1. Not at all. In fact quite the opposite: God's faithfulness is highlighted when contrasted with Israel's unfaithfulness.

E. "Is God Unjust To Condemn Us If We Hi-Lite Him By Failing?" (vv. 5-8)

1. It is impossible for the Source of Justice to be unjust. (vv. 5-6)

2. The fact that a clean shirt stands out all the more when placed beside a filthy shirt neither negates nor justifies the filth. (v. 7)

3. Such thinking is obviously foolish. (v. 8)

F. The Verdict (vv. 9-20)

1. Do Jews get a free pass on Judgment Day? (vv. 9-18)

a. Absolutely not: Jews and Gentiles are under the same judgment.

2. Instead of seeing themselves as exempt from the condemnations of the Law, the Jew ought to realize that they apply to him first, and the Gentile second! (v. 19)

3. The Law does not make one righteous; the Law makes one aware of their unrighteousness. (v. 20)

This would have been a sobering reality check for Paul's Jewish readers. They are caught in the same trap as their Gentile neighbors: in spite of their history and privileges, they are pronounced "Guilty."