

DESIDERATA¹
ROMANS 2:1-11, *TROUBLE IN RIVER CITY*
OCTOBER 5, 2008

BIG IDEA: GOD'S JUDGMENT IS JUST AS TOUGH ON BELIEVERS AS ON UNBELIEVERS (ACTUALLY IT'S TOUGHER!)

INSIGHT #1: HYPOCRITICAL JUDGMENT INCREASES MY OWN GUILT
(VERSES 1-3)

INSIGHT #2: HARSH JUDGMENT IS INCONGRUOUS WITH GOD'S KIND HEART (VERSE 4)

INSIGHT #3: DIVINE JUDGMENT IS UNINFLUENCED BY FAVORITISM
(VERSES 5-11)

VOCABULARY CHECK:

- To JUDGE: *KRINO*—To judge, to decide
- JUDGMENT: *KRIMA*
- CONDEMNATION: *KATAKRINO*—To condemn
 - **John 12:47-48** *"As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it.* ⁴⁸ *There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day.*
- HYPOCRISY: *HUPOCRITAS*-- strictly actor, stage player; figuratively in the NT, as a moral or religious counterfeit *hypocrite, pretender, dissembler*
 - **Ambrose Bierce:** *A Christian is one who believes that the New Testament is a divinely inspired book admirably suited to the spiritual needs of his neighbor.*
 - *Jews would have agreed heartily with all that Paul has had to say about the Gentile world. They ere always ready to condemn the Gentiles, but they saw themselves as on a much higher plane. A Jew could write, "Now therefore weigh in a balance our iniquities and those of the inhabitants of the world; and so it will be found which way the turn of the scale will incline. When have the inhabitants of the earth not sinned in they sight? Or what nation has kept thy commandments so well?" (2 Esdr.3:34-35). (Morris, 107)*
 - See the **Seven Woes Against Hypocrites** in Matthew 23

Passages that teach righteous judging:

- **Galatians 6:1-2** *Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.* ² *Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.*
- **Matthew 18:15-17** *"If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over.* ¹⁶ *But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.'* ¹⁷ *If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.*

¹ *Desideratum: Something considered necessary or highly desirable.*

- **John 7:20-24** "You are demon-possessed," the crowd answered. "Who is trying to kill you?" ²¹ Jesus said to them, "I did one miracle, and you are all astonished. ²² Yet, because Moses gave you circumcision (though actually it did not come from Moses, but from the patriarchs), you circumcise a child on the Sabbath. ²³ Now if a child can be circumcised on the Sabbath so that the law of Moses may not be broken, why are you angry with me for healing the whole man on the Sabbath? ²⁴ Stop judging by mere appearances, and **make a right judgment.**"

C. S. Lewis: *The sins of the flesh are bad, but they are the least bad of all sins. All the worst pleasures are purely spiritual: the pleasure of putting other people in the wrong, of bossing and patronizing;...the pleasures of power, of hatred. For there are two things inside me, competing with the human self which I must try to become. They are the Animal self, and the Diabolical self. The Diabolical self is the worst of the two. That is why a cold, self-righteous prig who goes regularly to church may be far nearer to hell than a prostitute.*

In fact, judgment is increased by family status:

- **Luke 12:48** " From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.
- **James 3:1** *Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.*
- In **Romans 2:3**, the *you* is emphatic, i.e., *Do you think that you of all people will escape...?* (Morris, 111)

Max Anders: *Today we are in a unique position in church history: We have a generation of Christians who believe the historically accepted orthodoxy while adopting lifestyles which deny the very truth they embrace. They sincerely believe one thing, but live another. The divorce rate among Christians is the same as among non-Christians. Alcoholism and sexual abuse are as prevalent within the church as without. Materialism is at an all-time high, and the "wealth and health" gospel commands a strong following. Meanwhile, personal discipline is at an all-time low. All of this and more has caused the church to lose its credibility as a significant force in American life. Many regard Christians as people locked in a commitment to an irrelevant way of life—a way of life they don't even exhibit themselves.*

*If we don't want to be a casualty, we must put on the breastplate of righteousness. Which means we had better quit playing fast and loose with the Christian disciplines and the commands of Christ. We had better stop saying, "What can I get away with?" and start saying, "What would Jesus do?" We had better stop crying "legalism" and start crying "righteousness. (Max Anders, *The Good Life*, Word, 1993, 255)*

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