

Don't Tread on the Kindness of God

Romans 2:1-5 “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. ² We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who practice such things. ³ Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God? ⁴ 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? ⁵ 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.

❖ Recap

- Remember... Paul is trying to send people back to 1:16 and the gospel
 - Paul is going to talk a lot about sin... and who is under sin
- **1) No Excuse to Judge**
 - Paul has spent some time... making a point that mankind in general
 - Had rejected God... they had exchanged God for lies
 - Man has lived in rebellion and in sin...
 - Then... Paul comes to a point where He wants to talk to those who think:
 - Who think they are good...
 - Those who judge others...
 - The kind of judging both Jesus and Paul referred to was not a sane appraisal of character based on conduct but a hypocritical and self-righteous condemnation of the other person.
 - Evaluation is not the same as condemnation.
 - **Paul... makes the point... that although they may judge others...**
 - They too are guilty of doing the very same things...
 - And we were all confronted with the fact...
 - ◆ That all of us in here... are guilty of something...
 - ◆ no matter how much we want to place ourselves about those sinners out there
- **2) God Rightly Judges**
 - Paul reminds them... that we know God’s judgment falls on those
 - Who practice rebellious sins...
 - And these people He is talking to... they are saying... AMEN... that is right
 - You get them God...
 - But... they fail to realize... they have condemned themselves
- **3) Hypocrites Will Not Escape Judgment**
 - Just because we tell others they are wrong... does not make us right...
 - Knowing the difference between right and wrong... doesn’t matter
 - If we do not do right!
 - **So... Paul is really trying to make sure everyone knows they are guilty...**
 - From the one who lives in open rebellion
 - To the religious leader sitting on his little throne of judgment...
 - We are all in rebellion...
- **From Here... Paul is going to ask a very pointed Question...**
 - Do you presume on the riches of God’s kindness?
 - Now... contextually He is speaking to the hypocrites... right?
 - But... if you step back and look at what Paul is getting to...
 - You see... the hypocrite and the person in open rebellion...
 - They are the same person... deserving of the same judgment...

- **So... there is a fundamental problem with man...**
 - **We take God's kindness for granted...**

❖ **Introduction**

➤ **Let's ask a question this morning...**

- **What is the center of your world?**
- **What is it that is the most important to you?**
 - What is it that you spend the most time and energy and devotion and money on...
 - Would we not... most of us anyway.... Say ourselves?
 - We are important to ourself... right?
- **Who cares more about you than you?**
 - For most of us... that would be... no one!
 - People generally care more about themselves than others...
 - Although... it doesn't mean that they don't care deeply, even sacrificially about others

➤ **How do we feel when we... are taken for granted?**

- How does it feel when we do step outside of ourselves...
- And give time and energy and devotion and money to someone else...
- **When... maybe we give them a listening ear...**
 - Or we help them out with a project
 - Or we go out of our way to encourage them...
- **Let's stop this morning and really take this to heart.... Put yourself in this situation:**
 - You always are there to offer your help,
 - You give out favors like candy
 - You listen to a persons problems
 - You help someone out financially
 - You notice when a person needs encouragement...
- **But... in response...**
 - Others do not notice your kindness
 - That person won't listen to you problems
 - When you need help, they are busy
 - You do not even get a thank you for your help
 - Actually... people expect you to do more
- **How does it feel to be taken for granted?**
 - If you're a normal human being... then it stinks... it doesn't feel good
 - You are frustrated about it... you maybe feel down about it
 - You decide... I am not going to help that person out anymore
 - Maybe you become angry
 - Maybe you just think very low of the person that takes you for granted...
- **I know one group of people in here feel this way.... Mothers...**
 - Mothers who have given up sleep...
 - And their own personal time...
 - And their energy
 - To be there and take care of their children...
 - **YET... their children are rarely grateful...**
 - ◆ Maybe they say thank you... but their actions are different...

- ◆ They are never content with what they have...
- ◆ They want a different food than you cooked...
- ◆ They want a better toy than they have...
- ◆ They want more this or more that...

▪ **How About those that go out and provide money for the household**

- They work 40-80 hours a week...
- They sacrifice time being with their family
- Only to come home to complaints...
- We do not have enough of this... or that...
- Or... your not here enough... btw... we need a better tv or this needs to be fixed

➤ **So... it is very natural... I think...**

- to have a negative response to being taken for granted
- Even now... emotions are stirring up inside of you...

➤ **Today... we are going to take a look at the kindness of God being taken for granted...**

❖ **Outline Today.... Two very pointed Questions...**

- 1) Do You Think Lightly of God's Grace?
- 2) Are You Storing up Wrath for Yourself

❖ **1) Do You Think Lightly of God's Grace?**

- **⁴Or 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?**

➤ **Let's Focus on a Couple Very Important Truths About God**

- **1) God is Rich in Kindness and Forbearance and Patience**
- **2) God's Kindness is Meant to Lead us to Repentance**

➤ **1) God is Rich in Kindness and Forbearance and Patience**

- Paul lists 3 things that God is rich in...
- Kindness – Forbearance – Patience
 - **Exodus 34:6** The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness,
- **Kindness** – a quality of God... quality means what makes Him valuable or excellent...
 - ◆ Like leather seats would be a quality of a vehicle
 - ◆ God's kindness is one of His qualities...
 - Kindness is the quality of being warmhearted, considerate, humane, gentle and sympathetic...
 - ◆ God is kind toward us
 - **Matthew 5:45** so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.
 - **Luke 6:35** But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.
 - **Psalm 130:3-4** If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? ⁴ But with you there is forgiveness, that you may be feared.
- **Forbearance** – means to hold back... it is used in terms of a truce...
 - A promise to withhold an attack...
 - ◆ God is holding back on his judgment toward man...
 - ◆ **Psalm 78:38-39** Yet he, being compassionate, atoned for their iniquity and did not destroy them; he restrained his anger often and did not stir up all his wrath. ³⁹ He remembered that they were but flesh, a wind that passes and comes not again.

- **Patience** – means to endure pain and unhappiness
 - God is holding back his judgment on man... and He is doing so for a long time...
 - He is long suffering... He is waiting
 - **Isaiah 30:18 Therefore the Lord waits to be gracious to you, and therefore he exalts himself to show mercy to you. For the Lord is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for him.**
- **God is rich in these things...**
 - **Rich...**
 - ◆ Bill Gates is rich with money... worth 80 billion dollars
 - ◆ His richness in money.... Is poverty compared to the richness of God's kindness
 - **These things are Part of His Character**
 - ◆ And as infinite and mighty as God is... so is His richness in these things
- **All People Have Experienced God's kindness, forbearance and Patience...**
 - If you have ever:
 - Had breath for your lungs
 - Had your heart beat
 - Experienced the warmth of the sun
 - Or the coolness of the wind
 - Experienced the refreshment of cool water
 - If you have experienced any good thing in life...
 - It has all come from God
 - ◆ James 1:17 Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights
- **Why is God rich toward us in these? What is His purpose in being this way?**

➤ **2) God's Kindness is Meant to Lead us to Repentance**

- **Many ask...** Why didn't God spare... Why didn't God protect...
 - The real question is... why would God ever spare... Why would God ever protect?
- **So often... Sinful man thumbs there noses up at God in defiance and unbelief**
 - More often than not... People do not believe in God...
 - ◆ Because they look around at all the sadness and tragedy
 - ◆ And they place the blame at the foot of God...
- **Man sees a young child die and they say... why wouldn't God spare that child?**
 - They see a person going through a terrible sickness and they say
 - ◆ Why wouldn't God heal...
- **Man rarely places the blame where it ought to be...**
 - At our feet...
 - It is our fault this world is chaotic...
 - It is our sins that has led to destruction and death
- **When Adam and Eve disobeyed God... they put themselves first...**
 - It was not God who killed his younger brother...
 - Rather it was Cain... to whom God has shown great kindness
 - He killed His brother because of His jealous heart...
- **All sin leads to destruction...**
- **They question we should all ask is this....**
 - Why does God ever spare? Why is God ever good toward sinful man?
 - Why not strike man down as soon as they even make up their mind to sin...
- **Because God is waiting for them to turn back to Him...**
 - His kindness is meant to lead us to repentance...

- If God judged everyone immediately... There would be no one left...
- **What is repentance?**
 - John MacArthur says this: “*Metanoia* (**repentance**) has the basic meaning of changing one’s mind about something. In the moral and spiritual realm it refers to changing one’s mind about sin, from loving it to renouncing it and turning to God for forgiveness
 - **I like what J.I. Packer says...**
 - ◆ Repentance means turning from as much as you know of your sin to give as much as you know of yourself to as much as you know of your God, and as our knowledge grows at these three points so our practice of repentance has to be enlarged.
- **God’s kindness is meant to lead men to repentance...**
 - Jeremiah 3:12-14 ¹² Go, and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, “ ‘Return, faithless Israel, declares the Lord. I will not look on you in anger, for I am merciful, declares the Lord; I will not be angry forever. ¹³ Only acknowledge your guilt, that you rebelled against the Lord your God and scattered your favors among foreigners under every green tree, and that you have not obeyed my voice, declares the Lord. ¹⁴ Return, O faithless children, declares the Lord; for I am your master;
 - 2 Peter 3:9 ⁹ The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.
 - Revelation 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.

➤ 3) Man Should Not Presume on the Riches of God’s Kindness

- Important: Let’s Stop and make sure we apply this to all sins and sinners...
 - Not just hypocrites... not just judgmental people
 - Because... maybe you think He is talking only to them...
 - He is directing this toward them... but... he has already classified them...
 - ◆ With everyone else...
 - ◆ Remember... He says... **because you, the judge, practice the very same things.**
 - **So... He is talking to all sinners I believe...**
 - ◆ Paul wants to make sure the whole world sees their guilt before God...
 - ◆ And... this in return causes them to run to the Gospel... to run back to 1:16
 - **Paul asks the question... and it is a fair question...**
 - ◆ Because... NOTICE THIS... the problem here is...
 - That there is a group of people that think they escape judgment...
 - They think... oh... God loves me... I am one of the good people...
 - I am on God’s good side...
 - I will escape His anger and judgment...
 - ◆ So Paul brings this to light...
 - Because they are presumptive....
- **Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience**
 - To presume: to think lightly
 - To look down on... to underestimate its true value
 - To despise or disregard
- **Like David Disregarded the Word of God**
 - And He took bethsheba... killed her husband and then took bethsheba as his wife
 - He disregarded the Word of God
 - He despised the kindness and goodness of God

- **In Malachi we see that the religious leaders did this...**
 - **Malachi 1:12** ¹² But you profane it when you say that the Lord's table is polluted, and its fruit, that is, its food may be despised.
 - These leaders were saying that worship was not important...
 - So they were bringing their worst animals before the Lord as an offering
 - **Malachi 1:13** ¹³ But you say, 'What a weariness this is,' and you snort at it, says the Lord of hosts. You bring what has been taken by violence or is lame or sick, and this you bring as your offering! Shall I accept that from your hand? says the Lord.
- **How often do we bring the worst of ourselves before the Lord**
 - How often do we not come before Him with a thankful heart
 - How often are we not excited to be in the presence of God in worship
 - How often do we quietly hum a worship song that sings of God's greatness?
- **Have we taken for granted the kindness of the Lord?**
 - Do we spend time with Him in his Word
 - Do we sing praises to Him
 - Do we give back when he gives us money and possessions
 - Do we do good works for Him?
 - Do we spend our God given time serving Him by serving others...
 - NO!... We do not! Most of us are too self centered and self consumed
 - We do not want God to impose on our life
- **Or... Are we too busy to give to God?**
 - Are we too addicted to fun and comfort to give ourselves to God
 - **I like what John Piper said:**
 - *"I feel such a burden for us as a church to swim against the tide of almost every current in our culture. More and more and more, America is a nation given over to play. The industries of play are huge! Houses are built today with entertainment centers. Computers and videos and television and stereo all coordinate to give us ever more stimulating and captivating distractions from the realities of the world. When we need to be dreaming, for the glory of Christ, about how to spend our lives alleviating ignorance and sickness and misery and lostness, we are becoming more and more addicted to amusement."*
- **Have you taken the kindness of God for granted... have you taken it lightly?**
- **Do you know God's response to those who took worship lightly?**
 - Remember what we looked at in Malachi:
 - God says... Don't even come to church... I would rather you just shut the doors
 - **Malachi 1:10** Oh that there were one among you who would shut the doors, that you might not kindle fire on my altar in vain! I have no pleasure in you, says the Lord of hosts, and I will not accept an offering from your hand.
 - **Is God saying that to you?**
 - Is He saying... I would rather you not even be here... if you are going to take me in vain?
 - **Oh Be Merciful toward us Oh God...**
 - Thank God this morning that we are allowed to come...
 - Thank God that He is still offering a word of rebuke toward us...

❖ 2) Are You Storing up Wrath for Yourself

- ⁵ 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.
- **Why are certain people storing up wrath?**
- **Because: Hard Hearts Store up Wrath**

- **And Paul is speaking of people with hard hearts and unrepentant hearts**
- A hard heart is not soft to the Word of God
- When God speaks... the hard heart can not hear...
- A hard heart does not turn away from its sin...
- **Zechariah 7:11-12 ¹¹ But they refused to pay attention and turned a stubborn shoulder and stopped their ears that they might not hear. ¹² They made their hearts diamond-hard lest they should hear the law and the words that the Lord of hosts had sent by his Spirit through the former prophets. Therefore great anger came from the Lord of hosts.**
- **Do you have a hard heart?**
 - How do you know?
 - When God speaks... do you listen?
 - When His Word challenges you?... do you turn quickly aside to something else?
 - Or does His challenge stick in your heart leading you to action
 - How quickly are you able to dismiss God's call toward you?
 - The quicker and easier that is for you... the harder your heart is... that is for sure...
 - How are you at turning away from you sin...
 - How easy is it to recognize your sin?
- **Hard Hearts Store up wrath from Almighty God...**
 - Hard hearts think lightly of the kindness of God...
 - Hard hearts think they can do whatever they want, and God is ok with it
 - But...
 - **Psalm 29:1 He who is often reproved, yet stiffens his neck, will suddenly be broken beyond healing.**
- **God's Righteous Judgment will Be Revealed**
 - **2 Peter 3:10-12 ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. ¹¹ Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, ¹² waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn!**
 - **Ecclesiastes 12:14 ¹⁴ For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.**
- **What if you have a hard heart?**
 - Beg God to break it... And the more you desire for God to break your hard heart
 - The softer it is becoming...
 - **1 Chronicles ⁸ Do not now be stiff-necked as your fathers were, but yield yourselves to the Lord and come to his sanctuary, which he has consecrated forever, and serve the Lord your God, that his fierce anger may turn away from you.**
- ❖ **How Do We Not think Lightly of God's Kindness... And,not store up wrath for ourselves?**
 - **Run to the cross...**
 - **When we run to Jesus... We are humbling ourselves before God**
 - **We run to the cross because we are bringing our sins...**
 - Because we see our sins... we see our rebellion before God
 - **We run to Jesus**
 - Because we see He is the only perfect one
 - We see He is offering grace and forgiveness
 - **We Run to the cross because**
 - We have seen our pride

- We have seen our greed and our lust
- We have seen our black and darkened heart
- **We run to Jesus because we have nowhere else to run...**
 - We have tried other things... they don't give us what we need
 - We have run to ourselves... but we bring nothing to the table...
- **We are like the disciples of Jesus...**
 - After Jesus said some very hard things... many people left Him...
 - They quit following Him... It seemed to hard for them...
 - But His disciples thought differently...
 - When many left Jesus.... Jesus asked His disciples a question...
 - **John 6:67** ⁶⁷ So Jesus said to the Twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?"
 - **Peter Responds for the twelve**
 - **John 6:68** ⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, ⁶⁹ and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God."

❖ Invitation

- Where will you go?
- Will you continue to take the kindness of God for granted...
- **Or will you run to Christ and lay down your life... and follow Him...**
 - These men saw no other choice... there was no other way for them
 - They had no where else to Go...
- **Have you ever come to that point...**
 - And realized that God is the only place to turn...
 - He is the only one worth living for...
 - And you want to quit taking the kindness of God for granted...
 - And you want to serve Him...
- **God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance...**
 - To turn from yourself... to God...
- **That is the decision you must make today...**
 - I think this decision is for every person today...
 - We must all make a conscious and reall choice today
 - **I think this is a perpetual choice...**
 - There is an initial turning from self and to God for the person without God today
 - ◆ You must first give your life to God...
 - **For the rest of us...**
 - This occurs daily... Will we presume on the kindness of God...
 - Or will we live for Him...
 - **Jesus put it this way:**
 - **Luke 9:23-24** And He was saying to *them* all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it.
- **Follow Jesus Today**