

Wk 4 Romans | You Need to Hear This, Part 2

Sunday, March 10, 2019 | Kevin Berry



Introduction – Life is full of good news and warnings... and the truth is, we need both of them.

Luke 3:18 – speaking of John the Baptist: John used many such warnings as he announced the Good News.

GOOD NEWS AND WARNINGS GO TOGETHER!

There are certain things we want to hear – **good news**. Spring is coming! Warm weather is coming! We want to hear things like: You are going to get through what you are going through; I know it hurts, I'm so sorry; You might not see it now, but you are going to be okay.

Then there are those things we *need* to hear – **warnings**. Renee and I will be heading to Florida soon, and on the plane we are going to hear these words, "In case of a water landing..." and very few will actually listen. I've heard it all before; I've actually plugged my ears because I didn't want to hear it again. The problem is, it's not just that we don't want to hear warnings... we often ignore them.

It seems like we used to give more attention to warnings. As kids, a tornado warning meant we headed to the basement every time. But now, we have executives that actually pay to go with storm chasers to "relieve stress." CRAZY! They are ignoring the warning!

The Bible tells you more than what you want to hear, it includes what you need to hear!

Paul begins Romans by announcing good news (Rom 1:16-17) and now we find him weaving in words of warning – what they must know... what we must know.

What You Need to Hear: (review from last week)

You have no excuse, so stop judging.

Therefore, you have no excuse, you are just as bad (Rom. 2:1).

Again, Paul is making the point that everybody has sinned and everybody needs a savior. Because *everybody* has sinned... that means you, too!

God is kind, so repent.

How you view God affects every area of your life.

Don't you see how wonderfully kind, tolerant, and patient God is with you? Does this mean nothing to you? Can't you see that his kindness is intended to turn you from your sin? (Rom. 2:4)

God's kindness is meant to move you. It should move you to be kind to others, it should move to you repentance.

Repent and then times of refreshing will come (Acts 3:20).

Let the Lord wash over you! Remember, He's the one who makes you clean!

If you pour a cup of coffee in the ocean, did you just dilute the ocean? Of course not; the ocean just swallowed up all the coffee. So it is with the love of God... come to Him and let the love of God swallow up all your sins.

Come to me all you who are weary and I will give you rest (Matt 11:27).

Jesus was talking specifically to those Jews who were trying to be right with God by their actions... and it wasn't working out... it was tiring, draining, fatiguing.

You are responsible for your own heart.

Take responsibility for you – for your own heart.

But because you are stubborn and refuse to turn from your sin, you are storing up terrible punishment for yourself. For a day of anger is coming, when God's righteous judgment will be revealed (Romans 2:5 NLT).

He will judge everyone according to what they have done. He will give eternal life to those who keep on doing good, seeking after the glory and honor and immortality that God offers. But he will pour out his anger and wrath on those who live for themselves, who refuse to obey the truth and instead live lives of wickedness. There will be trouble and calamity for everyone who keeps on doing what is evil—for the Jew first and also for the Gentile. But there will be glory and honor and peace from God for all who do good—for the Jew first and also for the Gentile. For God does not show favoritism (Rom 2:6-11 NLT).

The ESV version puts it this way: He will render to each one according to his works.

"A day is coming" sounds like a warning... like something we may not want to hear, but need to hear. Somebody has to love you enough to tell you, not just what you want to hear, but what you need to hear. The idea of God judging people just doesn't sit well with everyone.

Everybody will face judgment according to what they have done.

It's critical you understand Paul is not telling people how to get saved. We are not saved by works... we are saved by grace, through faith (see Eph. 2:8-9).

Good works show we have saving faith; they do not add to our faith in saving us.

For the God-seeking they will be given eternal life:

He will give eternal life to those who keep on doing good, seeking after the glory and honor and immortality that God offers (Rom. 2:7).

How do you know if someone is really a believer?

Not everyone who says they are a believer really is (see Gal. 2:4).

You must prove your repentance by a changed life (Matt 3:8).

Test yourselves to make sure you are solid in the faith. Don't drift along taking everything for granted. Give yourselves regular checkups. You need firsthand evidence, not mere hearsay, that Jesus Christ is in you. Test it out. If you fail the test, do something about it (2 Cor 13:5 MSG).

Christians are looking for more than this world. They have their eyes set on eternity!

But we are citizens of **heaven**, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for him to return as our Savior (Phil. 3:20).

Beware beloved: Don't get too comfy here... this is not your home. If we are not careful, we will throw ourselves into what this world offers—give our thoughts, time, money, emotion—into this world and forget this is not home! If your passion is not Christ, test yourself to see that you really are in Christ.

So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires. Don't be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of

this world. Because of these sins, the anger of God is coming. You used to do these things when your life was still part of this world (Col 3:5-7 NLT).

But for those who are SELF-SEEKING and are not followers of Jesus there will be wrath and fury. See Rom. 2:8-9.

God will judge those who did not receive salvation through Jesus. They will give an account for what they have done.

Is Paul is talking about hell? It's a topic nobody wants to talk about. Some churches will purposely stay away from this one... it's not popular... yet it is a clear biblical reality.

You are free to reject God, but you are not free from the consequences.

Have you ever been in your house when the lights went out? I remember a time here at the church when the lights went out while I was in the bathroom. I thought, *who shut the lights out on me?* Then I realized it was the sensors; with no movement the lights shut off. I moved and waved my hands, the lights came on, and it was all good.

A day is coming for some when the lights will be turned out, and there will be nothing you can do to turn them back on. You can wave, you can jump up and down... but there is no movement, no words, no tears, no prayers, no begging that can turn the lights back on. It's the reality of Hell: the blackest of darkness; utter darkness; a bottomless pit.

I love to talk about the reality of God' love, His immense kindness, the way that His thoughts about you are more than can be counted, the way He relentlessly pursues us.

I don't like to think about Hell, much less talk about it. But there it is: The Apostle Paul talked about it, Jesus talked about it, Matthew talked about it, the Apostle John talked about it. You cannot read the Word of God without being confronted with its reality:

2 Peter 2:17 – doomed to the blackest darkness

Luke 16 – fire, torment, anguish that is never ending

Matthew 8:12; 25:46 and Revelation 20:12-15 tell there is a separation process. The saved will enter Heaven and the unsaved will enter Hell.

See the parable of the fishing net in Matthew 13:47-50. Some fish were marketable and put in a pile while others were garbage fish, worthless, and put in another pile. Just as every fish was brought up on shore, so every person will come and stand before the Living God on that judgment day. No one is exempt. At the end of the story, Jesus said, "Do you understand these things?" He was saying, *Do you get it?* That's a great question for us today – Do you get it?

Why would Paul talk about Hell to believers in Rome? **They—and we—need to be reminded of what we are saved from.** If you don't know the bad news, the good news is just news.

We have to pause now and then and bust out in thanksgiving that we have been rescued! We were guilty as charged! We sinned and had a one-way ticket to eternal damnation. "Don't forget" is a theme throughout the scriptures. Don't forget what we have been saved *from* and what we have been saved *to*.

Whether you have been saved for 2 weeks or 20 years – if you aren't enthusiastic about being saved, you are forgetting.

We have been entrusted with the responsibility to rescue others.

We are invited to be part of the greatest rescue of all time – to reconcile people to Him (see 2 Cor. 5:18-19). Who else can set the captive free?

This Easter, will you invite someone to come with you? Will you pray for that family? Take them out for lunch? Let them know you love them? Will you love them enough to ask them afterward: *What did you think about that? Do you know that things are right between you and God? Can I pray with you about anything?*

When the Gentiles sin, they will be destroyed, even though they never had God's written law. And the Jews, who do have God's law, will be judged by that law when they fail to obey it. For merely listening to the law doesn't make us right with God. It is obeying the law that makes us right in his sight. Even Gentiles, who do not have God's written law, show that they know his law when they instinctively obey it, even without having heard it. They demonstrate that God's law is written in their hearts, for their own conscience and thoughts either accuse them or tell them they are doing right. And this is the message I proclaim—that the day is coming when God, through Christ Jesus, will judge everyone's secret life (Romans 2:12-16 NLT).

We are without excuse, but not without hope.

Everyone will be judged based on what they know. We all are without excuse, but not without hope.

Romans 2:13 – Paul is again making a point: you can't be justified by keeping the law, because nobody can keep the law perfectly. Remember that Paul, like a great lawyer, is building a case that everybody has sinned. Sin void of repentance will be judged.

What about those who have never heard the gospel? Paul said, those who sinned without the law will perish without the law. They are all without excuse and will be judged based on:

- Creation – Rom. 1:18-32
- Their own conduct – because the law is written on their hearts, Rom. 2:14
- Their conscience – Rom. 2:15, we all have a built-in sense that there is right and wrong.

Paul closes this thought with these words in Rom. 2:16, "According to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men." For Paul, the gospel included the GOOD NEWS of being made right with God through faith in Jesus Christ – specifically faith in what He accomplished on the cross for you! If there was no sin problem... there would be no cross. This is where hope comes into the picture for you.

Put a little differently in verse 16, why does Paul say, "as my gospel declares?" Because God's just judgment is fundamental to his declaration about God's Son. Without judgment, salvation has no meaning. Without the reality of God's present and future wrath, the cross is emptied of its glory.

We are made right in God's sight when we trust in Jesus Christ to take away our sins. And we all can be saved in this same way, no matter who we are or what we have done. For we all have sinned; all fall short of God's righteous standard. Yet now God in his gracious kindness declares us not guilty. He has done this through Christ Jesus, who has freed us by taking away our sins (Rom. 3:22-24 NLT).

That is GOOD NEWS that you need to hear!