

Holier-Than-Thou-Club!

I. Announce:

- A. Slide #1,2 Justice Matters Conf.
- B. Slide #3 Nate to Indo. (see notes)

II. Intro: Slide #4

- A. Last week, Paul took the time to paint a clear picture of the *universal depravity of humanity*. Condemning **1st the Gentiles** (last week); **now the Jews** (2:1-3:8); **all people**(3:9-20).
- B. **Gentiles**(idolatry & sexual perversion); **Jews** (holier than though attitude); **All people** (all equally condemned before God)
- C. God's judgment is based on **3 divine standards** - **truth** (2-4), **impartiality** (5-11), and **Jesus Christ Himself** (12-16) - which are absolute and infinite, condemning every person.
 - 1. **Yet still some will say/think...**
 Some **Jews** thought, *but I'm not as bad as some!* - **Answer:** Yes, you do the same things, you're just more refined in how you sin.
 Some **Gentiles** thought, *but I should be acquitted on the grounds of Ignorance!* - **Answer:** No, you have a **conscience & nature** around you.
- D. **Slide #5 The Queen Mary** was the largest ship to cross the oceans when it was launched in 1936. Through 4 decades and a World War she served until she was retired, anchored as a floating hotel and museum in Long Beach, California. During the conversion, her **3 massive smoke-stacks** were taken off to be **scraped down** and **repainted**. **But** on the dock they **crumbled**. Nothing was left of the **3/4-inch steel plate** from which the stacks had been formed. All that remained were **more than 30 coats of paint** that had been applied over the years. The steel had rusted away.
 - 1. There was **no substance**, **only an exterior appearance!** [thats this 1st group]
 "No substance, only an exterior appearance!"

III. Slide #6 HYPOCRITICAL JUDGMENT! (1-3)

- A. **Slide #7** Ever been a member of the *Holier-Than-Thou-Club?* (oh, were a full fledged member huh!)
- B. (1) "Judging others" is often misunderstood. Some believe we should **never** make a moral decision about anyone.
 - 1. Should we never confront anyone about legitimate sin in their life? **Yes!** (*in love*)
 - 2. **But** what he's saying is **spiritual introspection** is necessary **before** **spiritual confrontation?**
- C. A **Hypocrite** has been defined as...*Someone who complains there is too much sex & violence in his DVD collection.*

1. In a Connecticut city, **53 residents** of a certain neighborhood **signed a petition** to stop reckless driving on their streets. The police set a watch. A few nights later **5** violators were caught. **All 5** had signed the petition! :) ha!
2. A Hypocrite says, “*Mary is always criticizing others!*”
3. We don’t become righteous by pointing out the sins of **others**.
 - a) If you see another stumble or fall, let your first thought be...of all men you are most likely to stumble or fall in that same manner.
4. We are congenitally **blind** to our **own faults**.
We have **amnesia** when it comes to our **past sins**.
We **rationalize** it (that’s not pornography...it’s art!).
We **rename** it something more palatable (*affair/adultery; white lie/lie; prayer request/gossip*)
5. **We might be righteous in our own eyes but it doesn’t mean we are in God’s!**
6. I find it very easy to cover up my own failures by criticizing others! How about you?
 - a) **Slide #8** “How rarely we weigh our neighbor in the same balance in which we weigh ourselves!” Thomas a Kempis
 - (1) **Whom do you judge more...yourself or others?**

IV. Slide #9 GOD’S GOODNESS! (4)

- A. **Slide #10** It’s possible that God’s...**Goodness/kindness** may refer to how He overlooks our **Past sins**; & **Forbearance/tolerance** our **Present sins**; & **Longsuffering/patience** our **Future sins**.¹
- B. Notice it is not the *badness of man* but the *goodness of God* that brings a person to repentance!
 1. So, me living w/**Guilt on overload** won’t do it?...**Nope!**
 2. How about **Shame** that would make a sailor blush?... **Nope!**
 3. The prodigal came to repentance, not when he thought of his **badness** but of his father’s **goodness!** But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! (Lk.15:17)
 - a) **Slide #11** “When the dove was weary, she remembered the ark & flew into Noah's hand at once!” (Spurg)
- C. Thomas Jefferson said, “I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, that His justice cannot sleep forever.”
- D. **Goodness** = “what is suitable or fitting to a need.” **Are you grateful for God’s Goodness?**

V. Slide #12 FAITH PROVED BY WORKS! (5-11)

- A. (5) **Hardness** = (sklērōsis/sclerosis) **abnormal hardening** of body tissue. (multiple sclerosis) a chronic, typically progressive disease involving damage to the sheaths of nerve cells in the

¹ Spurgeon Quote

brain and spinal cord, whose symptoms may include numbness, impairment of speech and muscular coordination, blurred vision, and severe fatigue.

1. **Spiritual sense** - abnormal hardening of your heart!
- B. **Slide #13 Slowly treasuring up.** There's been times while filling my little **pond** in my back yard, I turn on the valve to fill it up & forget & walk away. Every moment it is slowly rising, but it's quiet. It is barely noticed. It keeps *slowly swelling* until it busts over the edge if I'm not watching it & starts flooding my backyard. [accidentally let the bathtub run over? Sink?]
1. It is like **adding drops of water** to a full glass of water to see how many you can get in before it rushes over.
 2. So is the hard & unrepentant heart. **Drop by drop it stores up wrath for itself.** - Not realizing it is like a stream dammed up. **Gathering force...One day the dike is going to break!**
 3. **Slide #14** One of Isaac Watts' stanzas reads: **Thousands make a wretched choice, And rather starve than come.**
- C. (7-9) Not one sin escapes the righteous wrath of God. Sin is always paid for!
1. **Either by Christ, who was punished for our sins;**
Or, by the sinners who reject Him & suffer eternal punishment.
- D. (10) A person's doing **good** shows that his heart is regenerate. **Is my faith *proved* by my works?**

VI. **Slide #15 HIDING BEHIND RELIGION! (12-16)**

- A. Could the **Jews** expect *preferential treatment* for having the **law**?
Or, Could the Gentiles plead *special consideration* for **not** having it?
- B. (13) **External rituals** do not guarantee **internal changes**!
1. **Slide #16** William Bradford, the governor of the Plymouth Colony of pilgrims, insisted, "Those who believe in the Holy Scriptures are bound to observe its teachings. Those who do not are to be bound by its consequences."
 2. "A **salty pagan**, full of the juices of life, is a hundred times dearer to God, and also far more attractive to men, **than a scribe** who knows his Bible...in whom none of this results in repentance, action, and above all, death of the self. A terrible curse hangs over the know-it-all who does nothing." (Helmut Thielicke)
 3. **We modern Christians are long on talk and short on conduct...It is easier to pray, "Lord, help me to carry my cross daily" then to pick up the cross and carry it.** A.W.Tozer
- C. (14,15) **Moral Gentiles** who do by nature things required by the Law, show that the Law is not to be found only on **tablets of stone** but is also *inscribed in their hearts* and is **reflected** in their *actions, consciences, and thoughts*.

D. (15) Your **conscience accuses** or **excuses** you!

1. “Many people have only their **bad memory** to thank for their **clear conscience**.”
2. **Slide #17 Cowardice** asks the question...*Is it safe?*
Consensus asks the question...*Is it popular?*
Conscience asks...*Is it right?* (MLK, Jr)
3. **Slide#18 Conscience** is defined as...*an inner feeling or voice viewed as acting as a guide to the rightness or wrongness of one's behavior.* (Websters)
4. “My conscience has been taken captive by the Word of God, and to go against **conscience** or **Scripture** is neither right nor safe.” Martin Luther
5. **Slide#19 Conscience** is an important part of human nature, **but** it is **not** an **absolutely trustworthy indicator** of what is right. [Jiminy Cricket, Pinocchio's conscience. The Blue Fairy said, “*Now, remember, Pinocchio: be a good boy. And always let your conscience be your guide*”]
 - a) **Slide#20** One's conscience can be **good** (Acts 23:1) & **clear** (Acts 24:16); **but** it can also be **guilty** (Heb.10:22), **corrupted** (Titus1:15), **weak** (1 Cor. 8:7,10,12), and **seared** (1 Tim. 4:2)
 - b) All people need to trust the Lord Jesus Christ so that “*the blood of Christ*” might “*cleanse their conscience*.” (Heb. 9:14)
 - (1) How much more shall **the blood of Christ**, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, **cleanse your conscience** from dead works to serve the living God?
6. An **uneasy Conscience** is a hair in the mouth. - Mark Twain
7. **Conscience** is the still small voice **that** makes you feel still smaller.
8. **Conscience** is a sacred sanctuary where God alone may enter as judge!
9. **Conscience** is a 3-pointed thing in my heart that turns around when I do something wrong, and the points hurt a lot. **But** if I keep doing bad, the points eventually wear off,...and then it doesn't hurt any more.

E. **True guilt** is a valuable asset for living.

1. It helps us when we hurt others **or** betray our own standards and values.
2. God uses **guilt** to influence us to change our minds about what we are doing, leading us to repentance.
3. If we never felt **guilt**, we would not follow rules or standards, obey the law, **or** have good relationships with loved ones.

F. (16) As we talk about God's judgment...let's recap:

1. He does it **honestly**(2) – W/o **partiality**(11); & **no secret is hidden** from Him(16).

2. God revealed Himself **to the Jews** through the Law of Moses written on stone tablets; **to the Gentiles** by writing it on their hearts.
3. God is *The Great Log & Stain Remover*. He removes **logs** from our **eyes**, & the **stain of sin** from our **lives**!
 - a) **Slide#21,22** Like w/a **stain** on a carpet, I remember George Tally taught me, *you aren't suppose to rub out a stain, it must be lifted out!*
 - b) Have you been frustrated trying to run our some sin of your past??
 - c) Are you ready this morning to let Christ lift it our? (Today?)