

SUNDAY - August 23, 2026

UNASHAMED - Romans 2:1-11 - Judgemental

SERMON SUMMARY:

Romans 2:1–11 warns against the danger of judging others while overlooking our own sin. Everyday encounters show how quickly we can make assumptions based on appearances, only to discover we were wrong once we actually know someone's story. Paul reminds us that Scripture is not a weapon for pointing out everyone else's failures. It is a mirror meant to expose our own hearts. Like the Pharisee in Luke 18, religious people can become so confident in their own goodness that compassion is replaced by criticism and humility by self-righteousness.

God alone is the perfect and impartial Judge because He knows every heart, motive, and circumstance. Our calling is not to police everyone else's soul, but to remain humble, repentant, compassionate, and willing to draw near to people others might dismiss. Because God has shown us patience, mercy, and forgiveness, we should extend those same things to others. A forgiven heart should stay soft, ready to pray, serve, forgive, and give people another chance while trusting God to judge perfectly.

SCRIPTURE:

Romans 2:1-11, Hebrews 4:12, Matthew 5:43-45, Romans 3:10, Romans 7:18

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. According to Romans 2:1-3, what is the primary problem with passing judgment on others?
2. What reason does Romans 2:4 give for why people should not be judgmental?
3. In the parable from Luke 18, what are the specific attitudes and actions of the Pharisee compared to those of the tax collector?
4. What does Matthew 5:45 say about who receives the blessings of sun and rain from God?
5. Romans 2:1 says that those who judge are condemning themselves. Why is passing judgment on someone else's sin an act of self-condemnation?
6. The parable in Luke 18 concludes that the tax collector, not the Pharisee, went home justified. Why would God justify the one who openly admitted his sin over the one who proudly listed his good deeds?
7. Jesus uses the example of sun and rain falling on both the righteous and the unrighteous. How does this illustration of God's common grace challenge a mindset of moral superiority?
8. What does it look like for a person's heart to become "hard and impenitent" (Romans 2:5), and how does a judgmental attitude contribute to this process?
9. Think of a recent time you made a quick assumption about someone based on their appearance or a brief action. What was your initial judgment, and what might you have missed by not being curious or drawing nearer to them?
10. Scripture is meant to be a mirror for self-examination, not binoculars for inspecting others. When you read a challenging passage in the Bible, what is one practical way you can turn it inward to examine your own heart before considering how it applies to anyone else?
11. Where in your life are you most tempted to play the judge—perhaps with a family member, a coworker, or a group of people with different political or theological views? What would it look like to consciously relinquish that role this week and instead trust God to be the perfect judge?
12. God's common grace is seen in everyday gifts like good food and beautiful weather. How can intentionally thanking God for these shared blessings help soften a heart that is prone to contempt and judgment towards others?

13. The Pharisee thanked God he was not like other people. In what subtle ways do you compare your morality, lifestyle, or beliefs to others to feel spiritually superior?
14. A friend draws near to help, while a judge announces guilt and withdraws. Is there a relationship in your life where you have been acting as a referee? What is one step you could take to move from judging to offering a forgiving, patient presence?