"THE JUST JUDGMENT OF GOD"

Romans 2:5-16

HRM – 2-11-2023

INTRODUCTION:

***God's Judgment will be a <u>Just Judgment</u>!** (v. 5, cp. v. 2)

<u>3 clear Proofs</u> show that God's judgment will be just:

I. God's Judgment will be Just Because:
ALL <u>EVIDENCE</u> WILL BE <u>UNDENIABLE</u> (V. 6-8)
(Your own <u>deeds</u> will testify for or against you)

A. Your deeds (works) <u>determine</u> your <u>rewards</u> (v. 6)

B. Your deeds (works) <u>reveal</u> your <u>heart</u> (v. 7-8)

1. <u>Good</u> works are proof of a <u>changed</u> (regenerate) heart (v. 7)

2. <u>Evil</u> works are proof of an <u>unchanged</u> (hard, unrepentant) heart (v. 8)

II. God's Judgment will be Just Because:
ALL <u>EVALUATION</u> WILL BE <u>IMPARTIAL</u> (V. 9-11)
(You will <u>not</u> be shown <u>favoritism</u> or <u>discrimination</u>)

III. God's Judgment will be Just Because:
ALL <u>EXCUSES</u> WILL BE <u>UNACCEPTABLE</u> (V. 12-16)
(You will not be able to say: "I didn't know the Law")

A. No excuse for those who <u>did not</u> have the Law (v. 12, 14-15)

B. No excuse for those who <u>heard</u> the Law (v. 13)

C. No excuse for those who <u>sinned</u> but it was never known (v. 16)

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1. <u>Good</u> works are proof of a <u>changed</u> (regenerate) heart (v. 7)

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III. God's Judgment will be Just Because:
ALL <u>EXCUSES</u> WILL BE _____ (V. 12-16)
(You will not be able to say: "I didn't know the Law")

A. No excuse for those who _____ have the Law (v. 12, 14-15)

B. No excuse for those who _____ the Law (v. 13)

C. No excuse for those who _____ but it was never known (v. 16)

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INTRODUCTION:

They convicted the wrong man -- ILLUS: I read a newspaper article involving a man who was convicted of a crime and sentenced to life imprisonment. After several years behind bars, the case was re-tried and the man was found innocent. Upon this ruling, the man sued the city for several million dollars and won. He sued because of irreparable emotional damage inflicted on himself while he spent time in prison for a crime he never committed.

Any law system governed by man is bound for failure at one point or another, because man is fallible and prone to error.

Judges and people who comprise a jury are human, mortal, and therefore often inconsistent. They are not perfect, not omniscient, nor is the law perfect, and neither is it always just.

No doubt thousands have been set free who should have been behind bars, and thousands have been imprisoned who should have been set free. No doubt thousands have passed through our judicial system who deserved a stricter penalty than they received, and thousands of others have been penalized more severely than their crime merited.

We will not always agree with the decisions made by the court of law because of man's proneness to error and injustice.

However, there is a Judgment coming that will be totally fair, just and righteous.

For you see, there is a Judge who will never make a blunder. There is a Judge who has all the facts; nothing escapes His notice; He accepts no bribes; and He shows partiality (favoritism) to no one.

God's judgment is said to be "according to truth" (2:2); it is a righteous judgment (2:5).

Why? Because God is total truth (Dt. 32:4; Is. 65:16) and total righteousness (ps. 145:17; Dt. 32:4).

***God's Judgment will be a Just Judgment!** (v. 5, cp. v. 2)

3 clear Proofs show that God's judgment will be just:

I. God's Judgment will be Just Because:
ALL EVIDENCE WILL BE UNDENIABLE (V. 6-8)
(Your own deeds will testify for or against you)

A. Your deeds (works) determine your rewards (v. 6)

No one will say to God: "It's not fair! I'm not getting what I deserve!"

"Render" = to pay back or give back; to reward
(Your deeds will be rewarded)

NOTE: Your deeds (works) will not determine whether you go to heaven, but will determine the rewards (crowns) you receive in Heaven. Salvation/eternal life is not a reward; it's a gift (Eph. 2:8, 9; Tit. 3:5; I Jn. 5:11-13).

Your deeds (works) will not determine whether you go to hell, but will determine the rewards (degrees of punishment) you receive in Hell throughout eternity (SEE v. 5 - "treasurest up" = to store up or gradually accumulate).

God's wrath "accumulates like waters at a dam, being held back by divine forbearance and longsuffering."

Many Christians have the mistaken notion that the Judgment Seat of Christ (described in I Cor. 3:13-15; II Cor. 5:10-11) is nothing to be too concerned about; nothing to be feared.

Paul, however, says in a context of the judgment of believers, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." Heb. 10:30b-31, "The Lord shall judge His people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." "Our God is a consuming fire!" (Heb. 12:29)

B. Your deeds (works) reveal your heart (v. 7-8)

1. Good works are proof of a changed (regenerate) heart (v. 7)

Verse 7 describes a heart that is seeking (zealous for) "treasure in heaven" or "things which are above" . . .

This verse is picturing someone who seeks "first the kingdom of God."

When Christ saves someone, He changes their heart (Acts 15:8-9 - "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as He did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.")

The reason our heart changes is because its tenant changes. The Holy Spirit moves in.

"The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Ro. 5:5).

The "earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (II Cor. 1:22)

God the Father sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts." (Gal. 4:6).

When God puts His Spirit into someone, He transforms their stony heart" into a soft, humble, submissive heart (i.e. "a heart of flesh") (Ezekiel 11:19; 36:26)

"True saving faith results in obedience and godly living, even though there may be occasional falls" (Wiersbe, p. 520).

God is showing us that outward fruits are an indication of an inward change. -- "By their fruits ye shall know them."

Because of the salvation he has inherited in Christ, he has his eyes on the eternal. He is living with Heaven and eternity in mind.

His heart is fixed on "glory" - that which is truly praiseworthy.
His heart is fixed on "honor" - that which is truly valuable.
His heart is fixed on "immortality" - that which is not corruptible.

Your actions prove your attitudes.

If your action is one of service for Christ, loyalty to fellow believers, and generosity for the work of God, this is an indication of an attitude of faith in God's promises.

At the Judgment many would no doubt claim: "But Lord, I had an attitude of love for you, etc." and the Lord will unfold before your eyes all of your actions which proved just the opposite. **Actions speak louder than words.

What is the overall focus of your life?

--If it is the world (temporal things), the love of the Father is not in you (I Jn. 2:15-16).

--If it is Heaven (eternal things), than this proves you are saved and the result will be eternal life.

2. Evil works are proof of an unchanged (hard, unrepentant) heart (v. 8)

"Contentious" = self-seeking; selfishly ambitious.

Verse 8 describes a heart that is totally 100% focused on self.

It describes someone who will do whatever it takes to please self (EX: step on others for self-advantage).

What motivates a person's heart to do evil? Selfishness

God knows what you are really living for! He knows your heart!

--Whenever someone rejects what is right, they will accept the wrong.

--When they are not persuaded that God's truth is the way to go, they reveal that they are persuaded that unrighteousness is the way to go.

Note: Contrast of "not obey" with "obey" -- By choosing not to obey the truth, you have chosen to obey unrighteousness. (no one can stay neutral)

Many think that at the Judgment, they will be able to say, "God I was not against you."

Jesus said, "He that is not for me is against me!"

"Indignation" = deep-seated anger

"Wrath" = the fuming, hot judgment of God

ILLUS: a little boy stealing a piece of cake and denying it, while the evidence is one his lips.

The evidence will be clear at the Judgment.

There will be no jury in Heaven to weigh the evidence. Your own deeds will shout out the verdict!

To the unbeliever, his lifestyle of fornication, adultery, theft, alcoholism, drug use, greed, pride, etc., will shout out the words "Guilty!" by virtue of his rejection of Christ.

To the believer, his lifestyle of honesty, purity, kindness, generosity, humility, etc., will shout out the words "innocent" by virtue of his acceptance of Christ and his righteousness.

II. God's Judgment will be Just Because:
ALL EVALUATION WILL BE IMPARTIAL (V. 9-11)
(You will not be shown favoritism or discrimination)

ILLUS: In recent days it has been said that if you are black and stand trial in NYC you are more likely to be convicted and sentenced than if you were white.

This kind of prejudice may be true. However, at the Judgment no one, regardless of race, color, ethnic background, will be treated differently.

NOTE: "every soul" (v. 9)
"every man" (v. 10)
"no respect of persons" (v. 11)
"Jew...and Gentile" (v. 9, 10)

God's judgment will be unbiased; God will not show favoritism; God is not prejudiced.

NOTE: Verse 9 is contrasted with v. 10 (evil doers contrasted with good doers).

According to God, you are either one or the other - no middle ground!

V. 9

"Tribulation and anguish" - further described the horrors of God's indignation and wrath.

"Tribulation" = affliction (pressure)

"Anguish" = distress, torturing confinement (the feeling of being crushed with no place to move).

"Doeth evil = present tense, indicating the constancy of the practice.

God is not describing someone who commits an act of sin (Even believers from time to time commit acts of sin - I Jn. 1:10); but is describing someone who has a lifestyle characterized by sin; a practice of evil.

V. 9 - Why Jew first? Because they know better; they had the written law of God.

V. 10 - Why Jew first? Because they were God's chosen people, His beloved nation.

"Worketh good" = present tense, again indicating the continual nature of the good working.

God is not describing someone who has done something good in his life. Even an unbeliever can do a "good" work now and then (though unpleasing to God - Is. 64:6). Rather, God is describing someone who has a pattern of good works; a lifestyle of doing good (only a genuine believer can maintain a consistency in living for God - an unbeliever does not have the power to do so).

Remember: No one "works good" until after they are saved by grace. Only then can they fulfill what they were "created in Christ Jesus for" = "good works" (Eph. 2:10).

"No respect of persons" - Lit. "to receive the face." God judges no one differently because of who they are. Everyone in the Bible, who sinned, suffered the consequences for it (even the heroes - EX. Moses, David).

V. 11

Because of pride, many suppose that God will deal with them differently. They say, "He understands."

The saying, "It does not matter what you know, but Who you know" will not be valid in Heaven. (Unless you “know” Christ!)
No one will come to the aid of an unbeliever at the Judgment.

--No one has an "in" with God
--No one has special favor with God
--God can't be bribed, bought off, or buttered up.

When you were in school, you may have been able to earn brownie points with your teacher but not with God.

You may be a smooth talker and able to talk your way out of penalties on earth, but not with God!

Two places the ground is level:
1) The foot of the cross 2) the Judgment of God

You will stand before God and be judged regardless of your sex (male/female), color, nationality (race), wealth, fame, intelligence, looks, family heritage, occupation in life, etc. (the pygmies in Africa will stand next to the NYC banker at the Judgment.).

"All things are naked and open unto Him with whom we have to do" (Heb. 4:13).

III. God's Judgment will be Just Because:
ALL EXCUSES WILL BE UNACCEPTABLE (V. 12-16)
(You will not be able to say: "I didn't know the Law")

V. 12

No one will claim "insanity."

No one will be considered "irresponsible" for their actions.

The emphasis in chapters 1-3 involves the sinfulness of man and therefore his inexcusableness before God at the Judgment.

--The pagan Gentile in 1:20 stands before God without excuse.

--The self-righteous Jew in 2:1 is without excuse.

--All men's mouths will be stopped at the Judgment, and all the unregenerate world will stand guilty before God (3:19).

A. No excuse for those who did not have the Law (v. 12, 14-15)

People wonder "what will happen to those who never had God's written word? ANSWER: They will perish.

Why won't they be excused? Because they had God's Law written in their hearts (v. 15)

Those who knew the Law will face a stricter Judgment (to whom "much is given, much shall be required." - Lk. 12:48).

v. 14

No matter where you travel in the world, you will always find people with an inner sense of right and wrong.

"Do by nature" - do instinctively; do without being taught by men.

V. 15

God's universal, moral laws are written upon the heart of every person!

The conscience bears witness or testifies of what God has written on your heart.

The conscience is the mediator between the heart (with its written law code) and the thoughts (which instigate one's actions).

The conscience functions like a referee.

The conscience receives the rules from the rule book and sends a message to our thoughts saying either Fair or Foul, Safe or Out, Yes or No!

Our conscience will either "accuse" (say "no, definitely not, that is contrary to God's Law"), or it will "excuse" (say "yes, that is permissible or allowable, I will do that, it is in accordance with God's standards).

Whenever we disobey our conscience, we are rebelling against God!

NOTE: A person's conscience only functions based on the information fed into it. If a person rejects the info. fed into his conscience by creation (Ro. 1:18-20), His conscience will not function properly.

B. No excuse for those who heard the Law (v. 13)

Many Jews in Paul's day would think that because they heard, were taught, and knew the Law that they were privileged characters. That they had an edge over all others (cp. v. 17).

Paul is making it clear, that it is not the possession of the Law that counted, but the practice of it (Wiersbe, p. 520).

Paul is speaking hypothetically in v. 13.

Hypothetically, if you were someone who kept every single law in the Bible, every day of your life, and never broke one - you would be justified (proven righteous). However, no one ever has (outside of Jesus Christ).

Paul is working his way up to proving that no one has "done" the Law. And that the Law cannot justify.

SEE: Rom. 3:20.

C. No excuse for those who sinned but it was never known (v. 16)

In the court of Law, there must be witnesses who accuse or defend someone (one is not convicted and sentenced without provable evidence - without someone standing up and saying, "I saw what you did").

People think, "Because no man has seen me, I am free!" Human nature deceives us into not feeling guilty until we are caught.

But remember, God sees all! and one day the "secrets of men" (the hidden things) will be judged. You can fool man, but not God.

I Cor. 4:3 - "But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self."

Jesus Christ will do the actual judging (Jn. 5:22, 27; Mt. 25:31-36; Acts 17:31)

CONCLUSION: *God's judgment will be a just judgment!

1. All evidence will be undeniable
2. All evaluation will be impartial
3. All excuses will be unacceptable

The Bad News:
The Good News: