

## 5. Learning Why God Does Not Respect Persons

In our last topic, we saw why mankind deserves judgment. When people totally turn away from God, God will allow them to carry out the evil desires of their hearts. Many who turn to the evil desires of their hearts reach the point where they also give approval to others who are doing the same thing. We saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn how to explain why it is necessary for God to bring judgment on all those who have chosen to carry out the evil desires of their hearts. However, there are some people that try to say that they have lived a good life. We are going to see in our topic today that they also commit sin and so they also face the judgment of God.

Romans 2:1-2 says, “Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things. But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things.” Here, we see that God now begins to speak to those who think they are good enough that they can judge others for their evil. The word that is translated “inexcusable” means *without defense or excuse*. The only other place it is used in the New Testament is in Romans 1:20 where we read, “For since the creation of the world His invisible *attributes* are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.” Here, we see that those who judge others are themselves without excuse.

The next phrase explains why those who judge others are without excuse. God says that people who judge others are actually condemning themselves. The reason why this is true is due to the fact that they also practice the same things. Christ gave an illustration in Luke 18:10-14 where we read, “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, “God, I thank You that I am not like other men--extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.” And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise *his* eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, “God, be merciful to me a sinner!” I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.” Although the Pharisee might not have outwardly committed the same sins as the tax collector, his self-righteous attitude was just as sinful as the sins that the tax collector had practiced.

We see that God is the One who will judge according to truth. God will judge very evil persons for their sins. However, God will also judge self-righteous persons for their pride because God always judges according to truth. Pride is no less a sin than the worst sin mentioned in chapter one. In fact, James 2:9-10 says, “But if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one *point*, he is guilty of all.” The person who has an attitude of pride is just as guilty as a person who has lived a total life of sin.

That is why Romans 2:3-5 says, “And do you think this, O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God? Or do you despise the

riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.” Any person who is guilty of even one sin will not escape the judgment of God. God told Adam in Genesis 2:17, “But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” It only took one sin to bring immediate spiritual death.

God also says that those who judge others are rejecting the goodness of God. The word that is translated “goodness” speaks of moral goodness or integrity. The word that is translated “forbearance” means *to wait to give a person what he or she deserves*. This means that God waits a lifetime to bring judgment instead of judging sin immediately. The word that is translated “longsuffering” means *patience or slowness in judging sin*. In 1 Peter 3:20, we read, “Who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while *the* ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.” Here, we see that God waited the entire time that Noah was building the ark before He brought judgment on the sins of the people of that day even though the thoughts of their hearts were evil continually.

God shows this goodness to give people time to come to repentance. Those who do not repent show that they despise the goodness of God. However, those whose hearts are controlled by hardness and an attitude of unrepentance are actually gathering up the anger that God has against sin; they will receive the anger that God has against sin when the day of judgment comes and they experience the righteous judgment of God. They will receive that judgment in the day of judgment because they have rejected the payment that Christ made for their sins by His death on the cross.

When the day of judgment comes, Romans 2:6-9 says, “who *‘will render to each one according to his deeds’*: eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness--indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek.” Here, we see that we will all stand before God for judgment. However, the judgment of Christians and the judgment of unbelievers will be very different.

In 1 Corinthians 3:11-13, we see that the works of Christians will be tested to see if they have eternal value or not. Those verses say, “For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation *with* gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.” As Christians, we have already been promised eternal life. Our works that have no eternal value will be burned up like wood, hay and stubble because they cannot be rewarded. However, our works that have eternal value will be like gold, silver and precious stones and they will be purified by that fire so that they produce eternal rewards for each of us as Christians.

In contrast, all those who have failed to repent of their sins because they were self-seeking and

chose not to obey the truth will be judged by their works. Revelation 20:12-15 says, “And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book of Life*. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.” Here, we see that every person who does evil and does not repent will experience eternal judgment. It will not matter whether a person is Jew or Gentile. It will not matter whether a person has committed many sins or few sins. They will all experience the eternal judgment of God against sin.

Luke 6:45 says, “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.” The person who has not repented of sin cannot do good works that have eternal benefit. In contrast, each one who has repented of their sin has a good treasure in his or her heart because every Christian has been given the Holy Spirit as the down payment and guarantee of our salvation. As a result, as we yield our lives to the Holy Spirit, every Christian is able to bring forth good works.

We also read more about the rewards that God has promised to all of us who have repented of our sin of unbelief and placed our faith in Christ. Romans 2:10-11 says, “But glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For there is no partiality with God.” God is anxious to reward every person who has repented of their sin and placed their faith in Christ. It does not matter if that person is a Jew or a Gentile. God will reward each one who works what is good. The word that is translated “good” means *that which is good in its character and beneficial in its effects*. That is why our good works have eternal value.

We see that God promises three things to those who allow the Holy Spirit to work through their lives to produce works of eternal value. First, God promises to give us glory. The word “glory” means *the honor resulting from a good opinion*. Today, we are to give glory to God. When we are rewarded, God is going to give glory to us. Second, we see that God will also give us honor. Honor means that God places great value on the things that the Holy Spirit does through our lives as we yield to Him. Third, we will experience peace throughout all eternity.

We also see that the Jews will be judged first so the Jews will also be rewarded first because they were the first to receive the Word and promises of God. However, all believers can look forward to that time of rewards because there is no partiality with God. He is going to reward every believing Jew and Gentile according to our works because there is no partiality with God. We want to help both our physical and spiritual children understand that there is no partiality with God. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children understand why God does not respect any person over another.