

“The Judge Sees ALL”
Romans 2:6-16

This passage is an extension & further explanation of 2:5... which was itself, an extension and deeper explanation of Romans 1:18... which was the consequence promised, under the power of God (1:16), for anyone and everyone (2:6-16), who reject the righteousness of God (1:17)...

In the end, those whose sins remain unforgiven, are un-redeemed... because they remain unrepentant; which will lead to God’s promised “day of wrath.”

Listen to how God’s Word points to that coming day of wrath:

2 Peter 3:7

Jude 6

2 Timothy 4:1

2 Thessalonians 1:7-8

Revelation 20:11-15

Matthew 13:41-43

Hebrew 10:31

Listen to how God’s Word points to God’s loving patience:

2 Peter 3:9

We’ve demonstrated this loving patience with two hands extended...
God extends one hand with His gift of grace...
God extends the other hand to hold back His wrath...
One day, both hands will drop at exactly the same time!

After Paul introduced us to God’s “set apart people” in 1:1 (read) and then the promises of God (1:2-7) and His Spirit-filled leaders in 1:8-15; we moved on to a full week each to look at “the power of God” (1:16), “the righteousness of God” (1:17), and then “the wrath of God” in 1:18...

In looking at the wrath of God, Paul explained in 1:18-32 that the Gentiles and all of their obviously-ugly sinful traits would meet with God's wrath if they reject the Truth of the gospel... But then, with what we noted as a bit of a twist, in Romans 2:1-5, Paul made sure that the Jews (and any other self-righteous religious person) realize that "good guys go to hell" until they repent & accept the gospel's grace by faith... in Jesus, the Christ!

In Romans 2:6-16, Paul continues the conversation and teaching on God's righteous wrath... After making sure that everyone knows that both the "good news" AND the "bad news" of the gospel apply to EVERYONE... He now refines and defines more of the "truth that is suppressed by stubborn, unrepentant, ungodly & unrighteous people," pointing out:

1. God will judge your "walk," regardless of your talk.

(Behavior Reveals Real Beliefs)

2. God will judge every "walk" *without partiality*.

(No "Back-Room" Deals)

3. God will judge your "walk" by your secret motives.

("Why" Defines "Who" & "What")

- A. **Rev. 20:12-13** = twice said: men will be judged "according to their deeds"
- B. **Isaiah 3:10-11** = same principle
- C. **Jeremiah 17:10** = same
- D. **Matthew 16:27** = **Jesus teaching the same thing!**
- E. **John 5:28-29** = **Jesus teaching the same thing!**
- F. **1 Corinthians 3:8-15** = **Paul teaches same thing (to BELIEVERS)**
- G. **2 Corinthians 5:10** = same thing... (to BELIEVERS again)
- H. **Galatians 6:7-9** = sowing & reaping principle
- I. **Romans 14:12** = each one will give an account of himself to God..."

Genuine salvation is by grace alone, thru faith alone... (Eph. 2:8-9)

HOWEVER...

Genuine salvation is never left alone without works of faith (Eph. 2:10)

- J. Jesus says: Not only will He recognize His children by their fruit... BUT... so will the rest of the world. (Read: **Matthew 7:16 & 20**)

NOTE: Critical point....
“Judgment” will be based on works...

“Salvation” is based on grace through faith...

Think of it this way....

Whether or not you have repented & received saving grace (by faith), determines if you are going to heaven or hell...

AND...

What you did with your life, will determine which respective neighborhood is yours within heaven or hell...

Philippians 2:12 = “...work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.”

Salvation doesn't come by works... it produces works! - JDP

While “good deeds” do not prove salvation, the absence of good deeds does disprove salvation... (a professed faith that is not proactive faith is dead faith per James and his book of the Bible!)

Works of righteousness come from the righteous...
Works of unrighteousness come from the unrighteous.
It's that simple.

Godly works come from the godly...
Ungodly works come from the ungodly.
It's that simple.

What is not simple... is seeing past the surface activity into the heart... where the real determination is made on situations that look one way but are, in reality, something else... (but hang on, we're getting ahead of our selves...)

K. Romans 2:6-16 is addressing the “evidences” of salvation, NOT the way to salvation (i.e. you can never be saved by works, but every saved soul realizes they have been saved to serve, and in so doing, bring glory to God)

Romans 2:5-6 lay the ground work for the truths found in vv.7-16...

Romans 2:5-6 = *But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, **6 who WILL RENDER TO EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS:***

I. WHAT YOU DO... (vv.6-10)

a) The Deeds of the Redeemed

Romans 2:7&10 = *to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life... but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek*

- (1) True salvation burns brightest thru a believers perseverance in “being” righteous in action & attitude
 - (a) When one is “being” righteous, he/she is seeking:
 - i) Glory
 - (1) God’s glory in ALL things
(a) Read 1 Corinthians 10:31
 - (2) Our glorification as children of God (“Christ-likeness”)
(a) Read 2 Corinthians 4:17
(b) Read Colossians 3:4
(c) Read Philippians 3:10-14 & 20-21
 - ii) Honor
 - i) Read Matthew 25:21**
 - ii) “Well done faithful slave...”
 - iii) Immortality (eternal life)
 - i) Read 1 Corinthians 15:53**
 - ii) Note the reality of “eternal existence”
 - i) 2 Thessalonians 1:9**
 - ii) Revelation 14:9-11**
 - iv) Realize contrast between two eternities:
 - i) Heaven
 - ii) Hell
 - v) Eternal life for believers starts now...
 - i) Galatians 2:20**

Qt: “Justification by faith alone does not negate works of righteousness in the believer’s life. Scripture makes clear that just as surely as we are saved by faith we will be judged by our works. When in sovereign grace God receives a sinner at the time of his conversion, God asks nothing but that the new believer believe in Jesus Christ and submit to Him. But, from that moment on, the believer enters into a

responsibility of obedience, and the mark of the his new spiritual life becomes his obedience to God. Faith in Christ does not produce freedom to sin and to do as we please, but freedom from sin and a new, God-given desire and capacity to do what pleases Him." - John MacArthur

James makes the relationship between faith & works clear:

James 2:14-20 & 26 = Faith and Works

14What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him? **15**If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, **16**and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? **17**Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself. **18**But someone may well say, "You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works." **19**You believe that God is one You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. **20**But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless?

26For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

B. The Deeds of the Unredeemed (vv.8-9)

- a) **Romans 2:8-9 = 8**but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. **9**There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first & also of the Greek

Paul now draws the distinct line between the "Doers of Heaven" and the "Doers of Hell"

v.8 = Three traits of unrighteous deeds:

- a. "Selfishly Ambitious"

Greek word rooted in "hired hand" - one who only does (and is motivated by) what he gets paid for... The concept carried over to those who could be "bought" to fight in wars, doing "whatever" so long as the pay was right...

This is consistent with the most base form of biblical sin... a serving of self vs. God.

b. "Do Not Obey Truth"

All "doing" that denies God's truth is sin...

Those who insist on doing things their way, at the cost of obeying God, show themselves to be lost...

Disobedience of the truth = rebellion...

Spiritual rebellion defines the Fall of man...

Spiritual rebels are enemies of God!

Read Colossians 1:21

"Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior."

c. "Obey Unrighteousness"

No one can serve two masters... (Matt. 6:24)

You are either for Me or against Me...

You either help Me to gather or you scatter...

Hence, you are either righteous or unrighteous.

You are either godly or ungodly.

You are either saved or lost - period.

"When man does not serve God, ALL other masters lead him to sin." - John MacArthur

"Serving God means obeying God's will!
Serving another master means obeying sin.

John MacArthur



“The road to hell is here very simply defined as the spirit of antagonism against the lordship of Jesus Christ. The unsaved person is by nature selfishly ambitious, and enmity against God leads him to disobey God’s truth and instead to obey unrighteousness.” - John MacArthur

Here again we see God’s reasons for His righteous wrath...

God’s wrath will bring the stubborn, unrepentant person eternal tribulation and distress.... hell.

“the Jew first & then the Gentile” = responsibility & privilege matter!

Amos 3:2 = *“You only have I chosen of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your sins.”*

While God disciplines His children, He also empowers them... No one could walk with God and do His deeds in their own power.

Moreover, the God that empowers also rewards...

Those that “do” for Jesus are rewarded with their heart’s treasure:

(v. 10) = Glory, Honor, & Peace... all gifts from God, to His glory!

II. WHOEVER YOU ARE... (Romans 2:11-15)

It is said that “Lady Justice” is blind... Hence, where and when you find a statue or image of Lady Justice in our culture, she is most often found with a blindfold covering her eyes...

This imagery is depicting the same message as Romans 2:11. In short, true justice (like God’s perfect justice), will declare its truths and make its decisions without partiality toward what or who is seen. Stated differently, “Who you are will have nothing to do with how justice treats you.

Think about it... if “human justice” calls for impartiality, how much more so does God’s judgment demand holy, righteous, impartial treatment of sin and sinners? God’s holiness, goodness, trustworthiness, and more are all directly linked to His impartial treatment of ALL the unrepentant souls, past, present, & future...

Read the following to get a better sense of God's impartiality... it's real!

Acts 10:34

Galatians 2:6-8

Ephesians 6:9

Colossians 3:25

1 Peter 1:17

Romans 2:11-15 makes two critical points:

***11**For there is no partiality with God.**12**For all who have sinned without the Law will also perish without the Law, and all who have sinned under the Law will be judged by the Law;**13**for it is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified. **14**For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves,**15**in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them,*

First, again... God is impartial in His judgment. You have to understand that God will not play favorites on Judgment Day. This principle is unwavering and unconditional. All unrepentant sinners will receive the eternal wrath of God... that they chose through their rejection of the gospel - period.

Anyone and EVERYONE who comes to Judgment Day in their own righteousness and sin will spend eternity in hell.

Secondly, as noted earlier, whether or not someone has been saved through the gospel truth will determine their eternal destination.

However, how they lived their lives (be it under grace or wrath) will then determine their "neighborhood" within either heaven or hell...

It is to the specific “neighborhood issue” that God now points in this passage. And in doing so, God continues to show His love, mercy, and righteousness...

Let me explain...

In verses 12-15 of chapter two, God now explains that He is going to assign people spots in hell based on how they lived, in conjunction with how much truth they rejected. This is amazing! God’s love & righteousness carry all the way down into the bowels of hell.

What God is saying is this...

“The more grace you trampled upon, the hotter the heat you will know in hell.”

“The more heavenly Light you rejected up here, the darker your torture & hell-hole will be down there.”

Think about it... the damned won’t even be able to bad-talk the Lord in hell... His glory, honor, & majesty shines forever!

I’ll tell you how I read this passage...

First, again and again we hear the Lord:

“None are exempt... for there is NO EXCUSE!”

Then, for those who have never desired to hear the gospel (for if they did, God promises that He would have brought it to them - for example, read about Phillip and the Ethiopian Eunuch; or Peter and Cornelius); God judges them NOT for their ignorance but for their decisions to sin, and the subsequent sins that followed and were left unrepented of...

For such sinners are reserved the least worst torture chambers of hell (I must admit, this is a difficult reality for me to envision in my mind).

Next, I picture those who heard a false gospel and ran with it... Those are the unrepentant sinners who found a watered down or perverted form of Christianity that allowed them to continue to live for self in sin, without truly accepting Jesus as LORD & Savior, but rather Santa Claus. Even the “best” of this crowd only got to 98% surrendered, which, in reality, is not surrendered at all.

Consequently, many of these people looked religious while they were living, and most were probably “sincere” in their thoughts of having been a “pretty good person.” Sadly, however, their sincerity and self evaluation will amount to lies, self righteousness, and a rejection of God’s gospel truth. As a result...

Having been exposed to more truth and more light, but choosing instead to stay under the lies and darkness of sin, hell’s level 2 torture chambers will be home forever to this crowd...

Before continuing, let me point out that Satan and his demons, some of which are in various categories themselves, are under the same principle of God’s wrath. With that said, it is beyond the scope of this passage and sermon to go into the depths and details of hell’s inner-most hell...

A study of the first half of the Book of Revelation has been conducted at THE BRIDGE. Reading Revelation and watching the aforementioned sermons online will give greater insight into the enemy’s place(s) in hell.

This message speaks directly to humanity...

Hell’s hottest heat in the human chambers will be reserved for the false teachers and false prophets that knowingly led people away from God’s truth and love. The wolves in sheep’s clothing that preyed on the weak and wanting-sinners on earth will know intimately and eternally the worst of hell’s torture.

With these loving, righteous, and eternally judging truths in mind, heed:

Matthew 10:28

Matthew 13:42

Remember this... regardless of your chamber address...

HELL IS HELL! and FOREVER IS FOREVER!!!

Jesus’ Parable of the Master & His slaves underscores this passage...

Luke 12:47-48

The one who knows what is expected is responsible!

To whom much is given... much is expected!

As Jesus & Paul told the Jews of their day...

You know enough to be fully responsible & accountable!

So I say to you...

As a people who have heard and been taught God's truth, you must embrace your responsibility & acknowledge your accountability before God and man...

Like it or not, you are now in the "big leagues" of judgment because you have received the "Truth in Love" (**Ephesians 4:15**), the light of God's Word... the promised Way out... Consequently, you will be held to a higher standard on Judgment Day.

Know this....

It is my calling and MY RESPONSIBILITY, in love... to equip you for that day.

Now... what you do with that equipping is up to you.

BEFORE YOU GET MAD OR AGITATED... recognize this:

The truth that will condemn you in hell (if you reject it and live as an enemy of God)... is the SAME TRUTH that will SET YOU FREE!

John 8:32 - *"...for you will know the truth and the truth will set you free."*

Moreover... this truth offers more than just "help" - God's Truth in love (a.k.a "THE gospel") offers you complete HEALING & WHOLENESS in conjunction with & preparation for ETERNAL LIFE!

Think of it this way...

If you die the most painful death known to man... and you die that death, which takes forever to take affect, in excruciating agony, 24/7, 365 days a year - only to find out that the worst part of this disease is that it actually curses you with the ability to maintain your existence (in your torturous pain) without end...

In the midst of that literal hell... imagine this thought hitting you....

None of this had to be....

Because I was literally given the cure for this disease.... HIS NAME IS JESUS!

But I rejected His offer of healing & hope...

Ask yourself:

Which would be the worse aspect of hell:

The endless torture & agony...

OR

The constant knowing... that you were chased, loved, and sacrificed for...

And yet you stubbornly & unrighteously pushed away the Cure & the Cure-carriers OVER & OVER... AGAIN & AGAIN & AGAIN & AGAIN...

If you doubt this representation of God' truth in ANY way...

Read Matthew 11:20-23

Read Hebrews 6:4-6

Read Hebrews 10:26-31

God's Word puts these truths in bold... underlines them... drives the point home!

Listen to v.15 again...

“For NOT the hearers of the Law are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified.”

God called... and He left a message:

TALK IS CHEAP!
ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS...
LIPS LIE... LIVES TELL THE TRUTH.

While “doing” alone is not enough to replace grace...
Not “doing” as a way of life proves the rejection of grace.

Remember... James tells us: “faith without works is dead faith.”

“And dead faith is no conduit of grace.” - JDP

Thus, dead faith is NOT saving faith.

Therefore, apathetic, disengaged Christians are an oxymoron... by the biblical definition of a true Christian, they cannot not exist. Christ-likeness requires caring & doing!

Biblical caring, coupled with biblical doing, becomes biblical “being... the result of God’s grace being poured out through the conduits of repentance and faith” - JDP

(see Matthew 22:37-40)

The million dollar question then becomes:

What constitutes biblical “doing,” or more specifically, “Who are the biblical doers referenced in Romans 2:15?”

Here’s a great answer: Quote from John MacArthur

“People who only think they are Christians merely because they do such things as attend church, listen to sermons, participate in a neighborhood Bible study, and listen to Christian music delude themselves according to what James wrote. ‘For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was’ (James 1:23-24). In other words, the person who is satisfied with superficially knowing God’s Word is living a spiritual illusion, thinking he is saved when he is not. By looking in a mirror, he judges himself by himself rather than by the Word of God that he knows much about but does not take to heart. His failure to obey what he hears proves

he does not believe it or accept it. His disobedience proves he does not trust in the God whose Word he hears. And the more he hears without obeying, the more he piles up guilt (and wrath per v.5) against himself for the day of judgment. Our Lord certainly had this on His mind when He preached the conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount." - John MacArthur

Read Matthew 7:21-27

21"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. **22**"Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' **23**"And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'

24"Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. **25**"And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock **26**"Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. **27**"The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell--and great was its fall."

Paul goes on to point out that whether you obey or disobey God, you will be judged accordingly. Moreover, whether you are responding to God's explicit Word or His truths that are revealed through "general revelation," you will be held accountable. Again, remember... NO EXCUSES!

To that end (no excuses), the fact that some with only general revelation still adhere to God's standards proves that there are no excuses...

Your conscience convicts you!

As do the "good deeds" of unrepentant, lost souls... they knew enough to do "good" but did not love OR trust enough to accept the gospel.

Just in case you might be thinking that your conscience is clean and you need not be concerned about Christ and/or the call for Christ-likeness...

The reality may be that your conscience has been seared shut, cauterized closed - thereby deadening your internal alarm system that God gave you... Now, instead, He gives you over to your sin (Romans 1:18-32)

Read 1 Timothy 4:1-2

1But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, 2by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron,

(For more on what the Bible has to say regarding conscience, read the following: Romans 13:5; 1 Corinthians 8:7; 8:12; 10:25; 10:29; 2 Corinthians 5:11; Acts 23:1; and 24:16)

III. MOTIVE DEFINES MEANING

Doing bad is always bad. Period. No matter who you are. That's what we've covered so far in Romans 2:6-15...

Now, God ratchets things up significantly... as only He can do!

You see... while all bad actions and attitudes are bad...

IT IS NOT SAFE TO ASSUME THAT ALL GOOD ACTIONS ARE GOOD

(Read again Matthew 7:21-23)

Unfortunately, some things that "look" good are really "bad."

Examples:

In nature, many of the most beautiful and colorful species are the most poisonous and dangerous...

Often times, the things that taste the best are the most damaging to one's health...

More abstractly but still powerfully true... some of the most alluring temptations draw us to the most damning of sins...

So it is with the things we do...

God knows that when our actions appear to be good but they are actually grounded in bad motives... those actions are SIN... no matter how they "look."

Some obvious examples:

Deception is never okay in God's way of doing things.

Blatant manipulation is always bad, even if it looks good.

Selfish motives poison apparently "good" deeds.

But what about the "not so obvious" motives

"It makes me feel good."

"I am doing _____ to earn my reward."

"I am doing _____ because I am supposed to..."

Think about this...

First, God looks beyond the behavior to the motive.

Second, God says motives matter.

Third, God has a standard for motives that many don't know or like.

Fourth, God is clear... bad motives equate to bad behavior

(no matter how they look)

Fifth, "bad behavior" is called "SIN"

Sixth, all unrepented sin is a capital offense...

Hence, any and all "good deeds" that are not in line with God's standards for motives are really bad deeds that are damnable... no matter how those deeds look on the surface.

Read 1 Samuel 15:7

Read 1 Chronicles 28:9

Read Psalm 139:1-3

Read Jeremiah 17:10 ***

***** Three times in the Sermon on the Mount Jesus says:**

**"Your Father who sees in secret will repay you."
(Matthew chapter 6; verses:4, 6, & 18)**

Qt: "Whether done to impress others with one's goodness, to react to peer pressure, to alleviate guilt feelings, or simply to feel better about oneself, ANYTHING that is not done for God and through His

power is basically sinful and unacceptable to Him - no matter how outwardly good and self-sacrificial it may appear to be.”

- John MacArthur

*** Whatever you do... Do ALL things as unto the Lord.

Look at and consider the contrast between two giants of the Bible...

David - committed HUGE sins, some of the most ugly in all the Bible...

Judas - spent extensive time with Jesus, was a trusted disciple (treasurer), and is known by most for one sin...

Jesus heralds one as being “a man after God’s own heart” and the other as having betrayed Him.

David is an explanation of God’s grace... He was quick to acknowledge, confess, and repent of his sins before God... throwing himself on the Lord’s mercy and grace.

Judas is an explanation of Romans 2:16 (and the other verses noted above that point to the defining importance of “motive”).

“Judas, although outwardly upright & religious and a professed follower of Christ, was thoroughly self-centered. Inwardly he came to have contempt for Christ and His gospel of grace.” - MacArthur

CLOSING:

“If Romans 2:6-16 teaches anything, it teaches that a redeemed life will produce holy living and that a life that reflects no holy living has no claim on eternal life. Right living, which can only come from right motivation, is the God-given evidence of genuine salvation. Lack of right living is just as certain evidence of lostness.” - John MacArthur

Read Jeremiah 29:13... and pray