

25. The Book of Romans—2:7, 10

(8/9/23)

This evening we find ourselves in the first main section of the Book of Romans.

This first section falls under the heading of “**Condemnation**” because in it Paul wants to prove that the whole human race, apart from Christ, is condemned by God—which means at one point He will judge the world.

And so, that leads to a very important question—if all people will someday face the judgment of God—what will be the criteria by which God will judge?

Or in other words, on what basis will people be condemned and sent to hell—and on what basis will people be allowed to enter heaven?

I believe that the basis for divine judgment is given by Paul in the first 16 verses of Romans 2 where he gives 6 principles that become the basis on which God will judge all people: *1. Knowledge; 2. Truth; 3. Guilt; 4. Deeds; 5. Impartiality; 6. Motives*

We’ve already looked at the first 3 principles of God’s coming judgment—which brought us to number *4*—which we started to look at last week.

4. Deeds—v.6-10

Romans 2:5–6 (NKJV)

⁵ 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, ⁶ who “*will render to each one according to his deeds*”...

In both the Old and the New Testaments, we are told that God will judge people on the basis of their deeds (their works)—both good and bad.

As we said last week—the whole point of this is to drive home to your understanding that God doesn't judge us on the basis of our *profession* of faith (what we *say* we believe)—He judges us on the basis of the *performance* of our faith (how we *live* what we say we believe).

Please don't misunderstand what I'm saying—the works aren't a condition for *attaining* salvation—they are the evidence of a person *having* salvation.

You see, that is the '*litmus test*' when it comes to true saving faith—as Jesus pointed out, "*You will know the true from the false by the fruit produced in their lives.*" (Matthew 12:33-37)

Jeremiah 17:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings.

Matthew 3:7–8 (NKJV)

⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" ⁸ Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance,

Isaiah 3:10–11 (NKJV)

¹⁰ "Say to the righteous that *it shall be well with them*, For they shall eat the fruit of their doings.

¹¹ Woe to the wicked! *It shall be ill with him*, For the reward of his hands shall be given him.

Matthew 16:27 (NKJV)

²⁷ For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.

The only issue that matters is—does the life of a person who professes to know Jesus Christ as their Savior manifest obedience to God and His Word? (Titus 1:16)

Don't get me wrong—the real issue is still faith—it's just that the deeds of their life become the outward manifestation of what's really on the inside—which is why Jesus said, "*You will know them by their fruits.*"

And so, Paul in Romans 2:6 is saying that God will judge us, not on the basis of what we say (profess), but on the basis of how we live (what is produced from our lives).

Now, if going to church, being baptized, or even being a deacon isn't the deeds that God is looking at to determine whether a person is a true believer in Jesus Christ—what is?

Well, in verses 7-10 Paul examines the deeds that distinguish a true believer in Jesus from those who are phony, false believers in Christ.

A. Marks of a true believer—v.7

Romans 2:7(NKJV)

⁷ eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality;

1. Patient continuance in doing good—v.7

Ephesians 2:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

John 8:31 (NKJV)

³¹ Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide [continue] in My word, you are My disciples indeed.

John 10:27 (NKJV)

²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they [continue to] follow Me.

Hebrews 10:35–39 (NKJV)

³⁵ Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. ³⁶ For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: ³⁷ “*For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry.*” ³⁸ *Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him.*” ³⁹ But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

1 John 2:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but *they went out* that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.

2. Seek for glory—v.7

Another unmistakable mark of a true believer in Christ is someone who is always seeking the glory of God—not the glory of self in their life.

A true believer has as his or her passion a desire to glorify God.

Their life reflects Paul’s admonition in 1Cor. 10:31: “*Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*”

To glorify God basically means to manifest His nature and character in this fallen world—

John 17:4 (NKJV)

⁴ I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.

John 1:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared [manifested] *Him*.

John 14:8–9 (NKJV)

⁸ Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.” ⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”

I believe that it’s possible for a person to be saved and still be preoccupied with themselves as they cater to the flesh—I believe it’s possible for a person to be a ‘carnal Christian’ (1Cor.3:1-4).

But a Spirit-filled believer in Jesus will always desire to glorify God and not self.

3. Seek for honor—v.7

There are 2 kinds of honor a person can seek after—1. Honor from the world; 2. Honor from God. (Comment)

John 5:22–23 (NKJV)

²² For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, ²³ that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. (see John 8:24)

John 5:38–44 (NKJV)

³⁸ But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe. ³⁹ You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. ⁴⁰ But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life. ⁴¹ “I do not receive honor from men. ⁴² But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you. ⁴³ I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive. ⁴⁴ How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek the honor that *comes* from the only God?

John 12:26 (NKJV)

²⁶ ...If anyone serves Me, him *My* Father will honor.

The honor that comes from God will ultimately be to hear Him say to us someday—“*Well done good and faithful servant.*” (Matt. 5:21)

4. Seek for immortality—v.7

1 Corinthians 15:53 (NKJV)

⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality [the Rapture].

2 Timothy 4:6–8 (NKJV)

⁶ For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

A true believer is one who sees himself or herself as a stranger and pilgrim in this world—

Hebrews 11:13–16 (NKJV)

¹³ These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced *them* and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. ¹⁴ For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. ¹⁵ And truly if they had called to mind that *country* from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly *country*. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

Let me sum up the marks of a true believer in one statement—“*His or her perspective is heavenly.*”—

2 Corinthians 4:16–18 (NLT)

¹⁶ That is why we never give up. Though our bodies are dying, our spirits are being renewed every day. ¹⁷ For our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever! ¹⁸ So we don't look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever.

A true child of God lives not for the temporal but for the eternal—he or she ‘*sets their mind on things above and not on things on the earth.*’ (Col. 3:2) Also Matthew 6:19-21

Verse 10 corresponds to verse 7—

Romans 2:7, 10 (NKJV)

⁷ eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality...¹⁰ but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

One commentator points out—

“*The expression to the Jew first, and also to the Greek cannot indicate favoritism, because the next verse points out that God's judgment is impartial. So, the expression must indicate the historical order in which the gospel went out, as in 1:16. It was proclaimed first to Jews, and the first believers were Jews.*”