

## In Heaven's Courtroom

**Text:** Romans 2:6-16

### Introduction:

1. Review context: In this section the Apostle is bringing the whole world to its knees condemned before a righteous, holy God. He is demonstrating the exceeding sinfulness of sin.
2. Having dealt with the Gentiles in chapter 1, Paul now turns his attention to the self-righteous Jew.
3. The Apostle Paul is leading up to a summary statement he will make in chapter 3:9-10 where he declares plainly that both Jew and Gentile are under sin.
4. This lesson: The Apostle outlines the future day where God's righteous judgment will be unveiled (Vs. 5)

**God's judgment will include the following three things:**

### I. **Recompense (Vs. 6-10)**

The righteous and the wicked are identified by their fruits and rewarded accordingly.

#### A. **The Righteous (Vs. 7 & 10)**

1. Their Actions - Patient, persistence in Service
  - a. "well doing" = lit. good work
  - b. "Salvation is not by works, but it will assuredly produce works. Outward godly works are the evidence of inner faith." (JM)
  - c. Eph. 2:8-10 *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus **unto good works**, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."*
  - d. Titus 2:13-14 *"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might **redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.**"*
  - e. Jesus said, *"Ye shall know them by their fruits..."* (Matt. 7:16-20)
  - f. "You don't work to get saved, but if you're saved, you'll work!"
2. Their Aim - Passionate, pursuit of Eternity
  - a. Glory, honour & immortality = blessings of eternal life
  - b. The Christian life is a pilgrimage
  - c. Illustration: Pilgrim's progress

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3. Their Rewards
  - a. Eternal Life (Vs. 7)
  - b. Glory, honour & peace (Vs. 10) Note: They are rewarded with the very things they seek (Refer Vs. 7)

### B. The Rebellious (Vs. 8-9)

1. Their Character (8a)
  - a. “contentious...do not obey the truth” = Rebels against the Truth
  - b. “obey unrighteousness” = slaves to sin
  - c. Refer 1 John 3:6-9 = Those who practice sin habitually are unsaved
  - d. 2 Cor. 5:17 *“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a **new creature**: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”*
2. Their Reward (8b-9)
  - a. Divine Anger – “indignation and wrath”
    - i. ‘wrath’ = the attitude of anger. It builds and accumulates (S. Vs. 5)
    - ii. ‘indignation’ = the bursting forth (manifestation) of anger
  - b. Divine Punishment – “tribulation and anguish”
    - i. The expression of God’s anger
    - ii. ‘tribulation’ = means a pressing together
    - iii. ‘anguish’ = lit. a narrow place
    - iv. 2 Thess. 1:7-9 *“And to you who are troubled rest with us...”*
    - v. Rev. 20:11-15 *“And I saw a great white throne...”*
    - vi. Matt 13:41-42 *“The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”*
  - c. Divine Perspective (Vs. 9b & 10b)
    - i. The Jew is first = more accountable because of his privileged position. Greater light means greater responsibility.
    - ii. Matt. 11:20-24 *“Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, **because they repented not**: Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, **It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.** And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would*

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*have remained until this day. But I say unto you, **That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.***

- iii. Christ told the Pharisees that they would receive “the greater damnation” (Matt. 23:14)
- iv. Note also Heb. 6:4-9 (“For it is impossible for those...”) & Heb. 10:26-31 (“For if we sin willfully...”)

### II. Righteousness (Vs. 11-15)

The judgment of God will be completely impartial and in accordance with God’s Divine Law.

#### A. Impartial – no respect of persons (Vs. 11)

- 1. “respect of persons” = lit. to receive a face!
- 2. Your status in this life will not be taken into account on judgment day (e.g. whether you were rich or poor, religious or non-religious etc...)

#### B. Standard – the moral law (Vs. 12-15)

- 1. The Law written on the tables of stone (12-13)
  - a. The 10 commandments (Exodus 20)
  - b. Examples: Theft, adultery, lying, blasphemy, idolatry
  - c. Rom. 3:19 *“Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.”*
- 2. The Law written on the tables of the heart (14-15)
  - a. Manifested in moral choices (Vs. 14)
  - b. Witnessed by conscience (Vs. 15)
    - i. ‘conscience’ = with knowledge
    - ii. Note: The conscience can be seared (1 Tim. 4:2)

### III. Revelation (Vs. 16)

The depths of man’s depravity will be exposed by Christ the Perfect Judge.

#### A. Man’s sin revealed (16a)

- 1. ‘secrets’ = the hidden, concealed things. E.g. the thoughts and motives of the heart, secret activities unknown to men
- 2. Matthew 12:36 *“But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.”*

#### B. God’s Judge revealed (16b)

- 1. “by Jesus Christ” = Christ is the one who will sit upon the throne of judgment
- 2. Acts 17:31 *“Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath*

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*ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.”*

3. Christ's eyes will be searching: Rev. 1:14 *“His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and **his eyes were as a flame of fire;**”*
4. Christ's face will be majestic: Rev. 20:11 *“...**from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away;**”*
5. Note: You can face Christ now as the Lamb of God and Saviour or you can face Him then as the Lion of the tribe of Judah and Judge.

**Conclusion:** There will only be two groups of people on judgment day, the lost and the saved, the redeemed and the damned. **Which group are you in?**