

The Coming Day of God's Righteous Judgment *Romans 2:1-16*

Sermon-in-a-Sentence: We all stand guilty and condemned before God's holy and righteous judgment; we cannot save ourselves by means of our good works; our only hope is to repent and cast ourselves on the grace and mercy of God as revealed in His Son, Jesus Christ.

In Roman 2 Paul responds to the self-righteous religious hypocrite who refuses to humble himself before the righteousness and holiness of God and who arrogantly stands in judgment of all around him. We will not escape the judgment of God by trying to draw His attention away from ourselves by pointing out the sins of others! As we stand in self-righteous judgment of others, trying to divert attention from ourselves by pointing out their sins, we are actually condemning ourselves.

We will not escape the judgment of God. If we continue to judge others, we will miss the grace and mercy of God offered to us in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The remedy for our arrogant self-righteousness is to humble ourselves before the Lord, repent of our sins, and cry out to God for mercy. (Psalm 51:1-12)

In Romans 2:5-16, Paul continues to warn the stubborn and unrepentant that they are storing up God's wrath for the day of judgment.

Romans 2:5

- Romans 1:18-32 – those who reject God and the truth of His Word are today, at the present time, under the wrath and judgment of God. (cf. John 3:16-18, 36)
- Romans 2:5-16 – there is also a future day of judgment when God will pour out His wrath on the unrepentant.
- 2 Corinthians 3:18 – believers in the Lord Jesus Christ are being transformed by the Holy Spirit into the image of Christ "from glory to glory."
- Romans 2:5-16 – unbelievers are going "from wrath to wrath" as they reject God's grace and continue in their rebellion against Him.

Romans 2:6

- What will be the basis of this coming judgment of God? God will judge and reward all men according to their deeds.
- Is this a contradiction to the Bible's teaching that no one is saved by good works? (e.g., Ephesians 2:8-9) Absolutely not!
- No one will be saved by their works; nevertheless, God will judge all men on the basis of their works. This will demonstrate that God is absolutely righteous and impartial.

Romans 2:7-11

- People are not saved by their good works; rather, people who are saved will do good works. Good works—acts of faith and obedience to the Word of God—are the visible evidence of a person's salvation.

- "According to this verse (vs. 7), it seems that **eternal life** can be gained by **doing good**. But Romans clearly teaches justification by faith (3:22). But Paul does not contradict himself. The subject of this verse is judgment, not justification. Believers who continue in good works will receive rewards in the life to come. Whenever the New Testament speaks of eternal life as a present possession, it is a gift received by faith (John 3:16); but whenever it refers to eternal life as something to be received in the future by those who are already believers, it refers to eternal rewards... Rewards will be based on works accomplished here on earth." (*The New King James Study Bible, p. 1881*)
- So those who are stubborn and unrepentant are storing up wrath for themselves in the day of God's judgment (vs. 5) and those who are persistent in doing good are storing up rewards for themselves in the day of God's judgment (vs. 7).

Romans 2:12-16

- What about those who have never heard the law of God?
 - Verse 13 – We demonstrate the reality of our faith by our works. (cf. Matt. 7:21-23)
 - "We are not saved by good deeds, but when we commit our lives fully to God, we want to please him and do his will. As such, our good deeds are a grateful *response* to what God has done, not a prerequisite to earning his grace." (*The Life Application Study Bible, p. 2030*)
- God will judge people on the basis of the spiritual light they have received.
 - Those who have received the law, those who have heard the Gospel, will be judged on the basis of the law or the Gospel.
 - Those who have not heard the law of God, who have not heard the Gospel, will not be judged on the basis of the law or the Gospel.
 - They will be judged on the basis of the spiritual light they have received, and God will demonstrate His righteousness, justice and fairness by showing that they have failed to live up even to the light that they did receive.
 - He will demonstrate that they are convicted by their own conscience since they have failed to live up to their own standards. (cf. Romans 1:18-20)
- For those who never have the opportunity to hear the law or the Gospel, God has not left Himself without testimony: There is the testimony of 1) Creation; and there is the testimony of 2) Conscience. And both of these witnesses are sufficient to leave Man without excuse before God. (Romans 3:20)
- God will judge both the outward deeds of men and the inward motives of their heart.
- He will show no partiality and He will perfectly demonstrate His righteousness and justice so that no one will be able to accuse Him of being unfair.