

Romans Session 24

Principles of God's Judgment Part 1 (2)

As we began our study last week we realized and found that Paul in writing to the Roman Church presented six principles by which God judges sinful man.

Knowledge (V-1)
Truth (V-2-3)
Guilt (V-4-5)
Deeds (V-6-10)
Impartiality (V-11-15)
And Motive (V-16)

And we are taking them one at a time.
We have already looked at the first two. Knowledge and Truth

Today we want to look at Guilt

GUILT

Romans 2:1-10 (NKJV)

- 1 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.***
- 2 But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things.***
- 3 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?***
- 4 Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?***
- 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":***
- 7 eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality;***
- 8 but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness-- indignation and wrath,***
- 9 tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek;***
- 10 but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.***

Paul here is letting us know that God judges on the basis of a person's true guilt, guilt that is common to every human being, including those, such as the ancient Jews, who considered themselves exempt because of their high moral standing, their religious affiliation, or any other external reason.

- 4 Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?***

The Apostle first warns his readers not to **think lightly of the riches of God's kindness and forbearance and patience.**

The famous commentator Matthew Henry wrote;

"There is in every willful sin a contempt for the goodness of God"

*Every intentional sin takes **lightly** and presumes upon god's **kindness and forbearance and patience**.*

Think lightly of translates *kataphroneo*, which literally means "to think down on" something or someone and to underestimate the true value.

It therefore often had the connotation of disregarding or even despising.

Through the Prophet Hosea God proclaimed His love for His people;

Hosea 11:1 (NKJV)

¹ *"When Israel was a child, I loved him, And out of Egypt I called My son.*

And

Hosea 11:3-4 (NKJV)

³ *"I taught Ephraim to walk, Taking them by their arms; But they did not know that I healed them.*

⁴ *I drew them with gentle cords, With bands of love, And I was to them as those who take the yoke from their neck. I stooped and fed them.*

But the result;

Hosea 11:7 (NKJV)

⁷ *My people are bent on backsliding from Me. Though they call to the Most High, None at all exalt Him.*

It seems the more gracious God was to Israel, the more she presumed upon or spurned His grace.

Without exception, every person who has ever lived has experienced the **kindness and forbearance and patience** of God.

Every breath a person takes and every bit of food he eats is by the kind provision of God.

God is the only source of goodness, and therefore everything good and worthwhile a person has is from the gracious hand of God.

God's own **kindness** is reflected in His children and is one among the fruit of the Spirit that believers are to manifest.

Galatians 5:22-23 (NKJV)

²² *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,*

²³ *gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.*

Forbearance comes from *anochē*, which means "to hold back," as in judgment.

It was sometimes used to designate a truce, which involves cessation of hostilities between warring parties.

God's **forbearance** with mankind is a kind of temporary divine truce He has graciously proclaimed.

Patience translates *makrothumia*, which was sometimes used of a powerful ruler who voluntarily withheld vengeance on an enemy or punishment of a criminal.

Until the inevitable moment of judgment, God's **kindness and forbearance and patience** are extended to all mankind, because He does not wish, "**for any to perish but for all to come to repentance**" (2Pet. 3:9).

Kindness refers to the benefits God gives,
Forbearance refers to the judgment He withholds,
Patience to the duration of both.

For a long period of time the Lord is kind and forbearing.
That is God's common grace or providence that He bestows on all of fallen mankind.

The Psalmist rejoiced;

Psalm 33:5 (NKJV)

⁵ He loves righteousness and justice; The earth is full of the goodness of the LORD.

And

Psalm 52:1 (NKJV)

¹ Why do you boast in evil, O mighty man? The goodness of God endures continually.

And

Psalm 107:8 (NKJV)

⁸ Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness, And for His wonderful works to the children of men!

And

Psalm 119:68 (NKJV)

⁶⁸ You are good, and do good; Teach me Your statutes.

And

Psalm 145:9 (NKJV)

⁹ The LORD is good to all, And His tender mercies are over all His works.

Strangely, most people do not perceive of God as being totally good.
Instead of recognizing His gracious provision, patience, and His mercy, they accuse Him of being insensitive and unloving for letting certain things happen.

"How could God allow that little child to die?"

Or "why does God allow that good person to suffer pain and poor health and permit a scoundrel to enjoy health and wealth?"

Such people judge God from an incomplete and distorted human perspective, failing to acknowledge that, if it were not for God's gracious goodness and patience, no human being would be alive.
It is only God's grace that allows any person to take another breath

Job asks the question,

Job 12:10 (NKJV)

10 In whose hand is the life of every living thing, And the breath of all mankind?

Before God destroyed the world in the Flood, He waited 120 years for men to repent while Noah was building the ark and calling them to repentance through his preaching of righteousness.

2 Peter 2:4-5 (NKJV)

4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;

5 and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly;

Regardless of His many warnings, and Israel's continued rebellion, the Lord waited some 800 years before sending His people into captivity.

Rather than asking why God allows bad things to happen to seemingly good people, we should ask why He allows seeming good things to happen to obviously bad people.

We could ask why He does not strike down many other people for their sins, including Christians, as He did with Ananias and Sapphira.

We should wonder why does God not cause the earth to swallow up apostate Christendom as He did the rebellious Korah and His follows as recorded in Numbers.

Here is the answer;

Romans 9:22-23 (NKJV)

22 What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction,

23 and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory,

The purpose of God's **kindness** is not to excuse men of their sin but to convict them of it and lead them **to repentance**.

The word *metanoia* (*repentance*) has the basic meaning of changing one's mind about something. In the moral and spiritual realm it refer to changing one's mind about sin, from loving it to renouncing it and turning to God for forgiveness (**1 Thess. 1:9**)

To stubbornly and unrepentantly refuse God's gracious pardon of sin through Jesus Christ is the worst sin of all.

To do so is to greatly magnify one's guilt by rejecting God's goodness, presuming on His kindness, abusing His mercy, ignoring His grace and spurning His love.

We would judge God for what He did in the Old Testament, and then we relate that to today's atrocities that He allows we say in the world.

Why does he judge so harshly we say when He allows all that is going on in the world to continue without stopping them and judging them? We fail to study the Old Testament in the light of Creation, if you remember, all sin was a capital offence.

Yet if we study the Old Testament carefully we see God Mercy and Patience with His people and with all people throughout the whole of the text.

Every day we live we should thank the Lord for being so patient and merciful with us, overlooking the many sins for which even as His children, we deserve His just punishment.

The crucial question is not why do certain people suffer or die?
But rather why does anyone live?

When some Jews asked Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices, He replied, do you think that these Galileans were greater sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered this fate? I tell you no, but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.

Or do you suppose that those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, were worse culprits than all the men who live in Jerusalem? I tell you no, but, unless you repent, you will all likewise perish (**Luke 13:1-5**)

Obviously those who questioned Jesus thought that the worshipers who were slaughtered by Pilate and the men who were killed in the tower accident were exceptionally wicked sinners and were being punished by God.

Jesus plainly contradicted their presupposition, however, telling them that those unfortunate victims were no more sinful than other Jews.

More than that, He warned His questioners that all of them were guilty of death and would indeed ultimately suffer that punishment if they didn't repent and turn to God

The only answer to the guilt that is ours is that Jesus Christ took our lives with Him to the Cross and there He was crucified for us and for our sin so we could be sin free and guilt free. But one of the criteria for judgment was as Paul said, man is guilty of sin.