

Romans Session 29

Principles of God's Judgment Part 2 (5)

And False Security 1

Tonight we come to the sixth principle, as Paul has laid them out for the Roman Church.
We have already talked about the following principles by which God will judge Sin and the Sinner;

Knowledge (v-1)

Truth (v-2-3)

Guilt (v-4-5)

Deeds (v-6-10)

Impartiality (v-11-15)

Motives (v-16)

The sixth principle of God's judgment = Motive

Romans 2:1-16 (NASB)

¹ *Therefore you have no excuse, everyone of you who passes judgment, for in that which you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things.*

² *And we know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice such things.*

³ *But do you suppose this, O man, when you pass judgment on those who practice such things and do the same yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God?*

⁴ *Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?*

⁵ *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:*

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

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 and also of the Greek,*

¹⁰ *but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*

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,*

¹⁶ *on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.*

The verse we want to look at this evening is verse 16;

Romans 2:16 (NASB)

¹⁶ *on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.*

Paul, here speaking about the final judgment, the day when according to my gospel, God will judge.

Motive is a valid basis for judgment only because God is able to **judge the secrets of men through Jesus Christ**. Because the Lord infallibly know every person's motives for doing the things he does, He can infallibly judge whether or not those deeds are truly good or bad, whether they come from the flesh or from the Spirit.

David counseled his son Solomon to serve God with a whole heart and a willing mind; for the Lord searches all hearts and understands every intent of the thoughts;

1 Chronicles 28:9 (NASB)

⁹ "As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a whole heart and a willing mind; for the LORD searches all hearts, and understands every intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever.

In one of his most beautiful Psalms David confessed:

Psalm 139:1-3 (NASB)

¹ O LORD, You have searched me and known me.

² You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You understand my thought from afar.

³ You scrutinize my path and my lying down, And are intimately acquainted with all my ways.

Through Jeremiah, God says;

Jeremiah 17:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ "I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give to each man according to his ways, According to the results of his deeds.

Three times during the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said;

Matthew 6:4 (NASB)

⁴ so that your giving will be in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.

Matthew 6:6 (NASB)

⁶ "But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.

Matthew 6:18 (NASB)

¹⁸ so that your fasting will not be noticed by men, but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.

There is obviously such a thing as relative human goodness.

Many unbelievers live on a high moral plane compared to most people.

But that is not the kind of goodness that satisfies God, because nothing is truly good that comes from any motive other than His glory and done in any power but His own.

Everything that is done in the flesh can only serve the flesh and is by nature tainted with imperfection and self-interest. It cannot be done out of the only right motive, that of pleasing and glorifying God.

Whether done to impress others with one's goodness, or 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.

David committed terrible sins while he served as God's anointed king of God's chosen nation. As noted in the previous chapter, many of his sins, such as his adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband Uriah, are capital offenses for which God could justly have demanded David's life.

But the basic motivation and direction of David's life were not selfish ambition and un-righteousness but the service and worship of God.

He readily acknowledged and confessed his sins before God, throwing himself on the Lord's mercy and grace. Judas on the other hand, although outwardly upright and religious and a professed follower of Christ, was thoroughly self-centered.

Inwardly he came to have contempt for Christ and His gospel of grace. The heart desires that moved those two men were open books to the Lord, and their respective guilt and deeds will be judge for what they truly were and not for the way they appeared to other men.

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

Thus we have the basis for God's judgment on sin and sinful man, it will be within the frame work of

The knowledge we have,
The truth we have believed and accepted,
The guilt that is ours from the way we have lived,
The deeds that have been produced from the truth we have known or rejected,
And in that judgment there will be no impartiality by God, as he looks on
The motives of the heart for all that is lived and done in our lives.

Now Paul in his writing to the Roman church moves on to the subject of the false security that many were living under at the time.

FALSE SECURITY

Romans 2:17-29 (NASB)

- ¹⁷ ***But if you bear the name "Jew" and rely upon the Law and boast in God,***
¹⁸ ***and know His will and approve the things that are essential, being instructed out of the Law,***
¹⁹ ***and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness,***
²⁰ ***a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of the immature, having in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth,***
²¹ ***you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal?***
²² ***You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?***
²³ ***You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God?***
²⁴ ***For "THE NAME OF GOD IS BLASPHEMED AMONG THE GENTILES BECAUSE OF YOU," just as it is written.***

²⁵ *For indeed circumcision is of value if you practice the Law; but if you are a transgressor of the Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision.*

²⁶ *So if the uncircumcised man keeps the requirements of the Law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision?*

²⁷ *And he who is physically uncircumcised, if he keeps the Law, will he not judge you who though having the letter of the Law and circumcision are a transgressor of the Law?*

²⁸ *For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh.*

²⁹ *But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.*

People long for economic security, job security, marital security, national security, health security home security, security of social position, and may other kinds of security.

It is a natural impulse of self-preservation to want security.

Yet, despite the claims of independence and self-sufficiency that many people make, they know instinctively that, in themselves, they are not completely secure.

A measure of economic security can be had from such things as having a long term work contract, working for or owning a business that has proven to do well even in hard times, or by having a diversified portfolio of investments.

A measure of home security can be achieved by burglar alarms, high fences, or watch dogs.

A measure of national security can be had from a well-trained well equipped military force.

But history and personal experience have proved over and over again that such things cannot guarantee absolute security.

When they bother to think about it, most people hope for some form of eternal security.

If they do not believe in heaven or hell, they hope death will be the end of existence, that it will usher them into an impersonal, unconscious nothingness, or recycle them through another lifetime in an endless linking chain of lives better than the ones before.

But Paul has already declared unequivocally that, whether they realize or admit it or not, all men, even the most pagan reprobates, know something of God's invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature.

Every person, Jew and Gentile alike, has the witness of heart and conscience, by which he is able to discern basic right from wrong and all people know to some degree that those who do not live up to God's standards of righteousness are worthy of death.

Most people have this gnawing fear that God is going to judge their sin, that one day they will be held accountable for the way they have lived.

And scripture says they will live and die only once, and after this the judgment. (*Heb. 9:27*)

Therefore instinctively people hope that, in some way or another, they can escape that judgment.

Whether consciously or unconsciously, religiously or irreligious, they understand deep within themselves that they need to deal with their spiritual insecurity.

They want assurance that they will not be punished for their evil.

So, in an attempt to do that, men have devised countless false ideas and philosophies to try to escape the punishment they innately know they deserve.

Some people build up a false sense of spiritual security by trying to convince themselves they are basically good and that a just God could not condemn good people to hell. They believe that their good works and intentions outweigh their bad ones and that, in the balance, they are pleasing and acceptable to God.

Others believe that God is too loving to send anyone to hell and will ultimately save even the most wicked of sinners.

Still others insist that there is no God and that the idea of a final divine judgment is therefore ludicrous.

These beliefs are so common that those who put their security in them can find reassurance in the large numbers of other people doing the same.

They even design religions to affirm these views.

Now, far from being cruel and insensitive, the Christian who exposes such false ideas of spiritual security does a great service to those he warns.

If a person is to be commended for warning a family that their house is on fire or that a bridge they are about to cross might collapse under them, how much more is a believer to be commended when he warns the unsaved of their lostness and condemnation apart from Jesus Christ.

No greater kindness can possibly be offered a person than that of showing him the way of salvation. But before he can have motivation for being saved, he obviously must be convinced that he is lost.

As a forerunner of Jesus Christ, John the Baptist preached a sobering message of repentance from sin.

Matthew 3:2 (NASB)

² *"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*

Jesus began His own ministry preaching the same message;

Matthew 4:17 (NASB)

¹⁷ *From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*

The Sermon on the mount is an extended series of warnings about such false spiritual security in that message the Lord declares unequivocally that men's righteousness, attitudes, good works, relationships, professions, prayers, fasting, ceremonies, and generosity can never measure up to the standard of perfect holiness to which God holds them accountable.

Matthew 5:48 (NASB)

⁴⁸ *"Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."*

Jesus stripped naked the hypocritical and legalistic false securities of Judaism of that day.

He declared that those who trust in outward substitutes for true righteousness will one day say to Him,

Matthew 7:22-23 (NASB)

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.'"*

The person who builds his religious house on any self-made foundation is certain to have it washed away by the storm of God's judgement.;

Matthew 7:26-27 (NASB)

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."*

Having shown how both the moral Jew and the moral Gentile alike will be brought before God's great tribunal in the end times and have no basis for any sense of wellbeing and security.

Paul now focuses exclusively on the Jews, the covenant people of God.

They had far greater light and blessings than the Gentiles.

But as the apostle now points out, that greater privilege made them more accountable to God, no less, as most of them supposed.

Before he explains the way of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, he shatters the idea of false spiritual security that most Jews had in their heritage (2:17a), in their knowledge (vv. 17b-24), and in their ceremony (v. 25-29).

We will begin to take these on in our next study together.