

GOD'S PRINCIPLES OF JUDGMENT

TEXT: ROMANS 2:1-16

INTRODUCTION:

1. The great theme of the apostle Paul's epistle to the Romans is "the gospel of God" (1:1).
2. The second part of Romans chapter 1 speaks of the judgment of God (cf. 1:18, 32).
3. This theme of judgment continues into Romans chapter 2 -- note the word "Therefore" (2:1). The word "judge" and "judgment" are mentioned repeatedly throughout Romans 2 (2:1, 2, 3, 5, 12, 16, 27).
4. Also: "condemnest" (2:1), "wrath" (2:5), "perish" (2:12), etc.
5. All throughout his epistle to the Romans, the apostle Paul emphasizes the terrible results of sin, and the certainty of God's judgment (cf. Rom. 1:29-32).
6. W.H. Griffith Thomas said, "It is not to prove that all men are sinners, but, taking this for granted, to unfold the awful significance of it, in order to bring home to hearts and consciences the terrible results of sin in the certainty of God's judgment on unrighteousness" (*St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*).
7. Sinners "are without excuse" (1:20b; 2:1).
8. The "things" referred to in Romans 2:1-3 are the sins mentioned in Romans 1 (cf. 1:23-32).
9. Therefore, the judgment of God is inevitable (2:1-3). Sinners cannot escape the judgment of God (2:3). It is "the righteous judgment of God" (2:5).
10. Nothing is more certain than the fact that every man will be judged hereafter (2:1-3).
11. Hebrews 9:27 says, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."
12. Here in Romans 2 we see the principles of God's judgment. It is:
 - (1) "According to truth" (2:2).
 - (2) According to every man's deeds (2:6).
 - (3) According to absolute impartiality (2:11).
 - (4) According to the Gospel of Christ (2:16; cf. 1:16).

I. GOD'S JUDGMENT IS ACCORDING TO TRUTH (2:2).

1. "The judgment of God is according to truth" (2:2). Therefore, it is absolutely impartial (2:11).

2. Romans 1 deals primarily with the sins of the Gentile world -- their heathenistic worship and idolatry, gross immorality, etc.
3. But then in chapter 2, Paul includes the Jews (2:9-12, 17).
4. Romans 3:19 says, "all the world may become guilty before God."
5. "The judgment of God is according to truth" (2:2).
6. In a courtroom, witnesses take an oath -- "Do you solemnly swear or affirm that you will tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?"
7. Unfortunately many of these witnesses lie. And often the lawyers lie, and the judge lies, etc. And the news reporters lie.
8. But in God's great courtroom, there is no dishonesty -- "The judgment of God is according to truth" (2:2). It is "the righteous judgment of God" (2:5).
9. The Bible tells us sinners have hard and impenitent hearts (Romans 2:5). Sinners are stubborn, stiff-necked, obstinate, proud, sin-loving, and spiritually blind (cf. Romans 3:18).
10. The word "hardness" (2:5) means that which is insensible. When it is used in reference to the heart (the center of knowledge and understanding), it describes a stubborn sinner who is insensible to all appeals.
11. "He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Proverbs 29:1).
12. Romans 2:5 says sinners are treasuring up (hoarding up, accumulating) to themselves "wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God."
13. I like H.A. Ironside's illustration of Romans 2:5. He spoke of a poor old Christian woman who was taunted because she believed what the Bible said about a literal lake of fire and brimstone.
14. Scoffers laughed at her and said that "no such an amount of brimstone could be found in one place." She replied, "Everyone takes his own brimstone with him!"
15. Ironside said, "Ah, that is it! Each rebel against God, each sinner against light, each violator of his own conscience, carries his own brimstone with him! He is making his own destiny" (*Romans*).

II. GOD'S BASIS FOR JUDGMENT IS THE DEEDS OF MEN (2:6).

1. Here in Romans 2, Paul is not describing the basis for salvation, but the basis for judgment.
2. The basis for salvation is the shed blood of Christ (Rom. 5:6-8).
3. The basis for judgment is the deeds of men (2:6).

4. Romans 2 deals with the sin of hypocrisy. F.B. Meyer said, "Those who are harshest in condemning others are often guilty of the same sins, though in their own ease they manage to find some excuse which extenuates their shortcomings."
5. There are hypocritical preachers, moralists, and politicians who judge and condemn certain evils. But God declares that they are no better than the rest. The very things they condemn they are guilty of themselves.
6. Roman Catholic priests condemn homosexuality, and meanwhile they molest little boys.
7. As New York's attorney general, Eliot Spitzer broke up prostitution rings, and raised the penalties for patronizing a prostitute. Then as governor, Mr. Spitzer signed a strong anti-prostitution bill into law.
8. But then he was arrested for patronizing prostitutes (2:1-3).
9. Our current governor is just as bad. He used tax-payer's money to make rainbow (symbol of the sodomites) buttons that say, "NY where everyone is welcome."
10. By the way, after the flood, the LORD put a rainbow in the cloud, and said, "It shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth" (Genesis 9:13), but now the sodomites have made the rainbow their symbol for perversion.
11. So the governor is making these rainbow buttons, which state: "NY where everyone is welcome."
12. But this same governor said last year that people he considers "extreme conservatives who are right-to-life, pro-assault-weapon, anti-gay...have no place in the state of New York, because that's not who New Yorkers are."
13. The governor has declared that conservatives and Christians are not welcome here in NY.
14. He walks around with his silly "NY where everyone is welcome" button. Meanwhile, he supports abortion. Here in New York State, women can abort their babies throughout all nine months, until birth, for any reason.
15. So this means not everyone is welcome here! Unborn babies are not welcome.
16. I could give many more examples, and so could you if you read the newspapers and keep up with the news.

17. Men sin with impunity, and think they can get away with it, but Romans 2:6 says the Lord "will render to every man according to his deeds."
18. "God shall judge the secrets of men" (2:16).
19. Revelation 20 describes the great white throne judgment of God, and these words are repeated -- "and they were judged every man according to their works" (Rev. 20:12, 13).
20. By the way, the word "treasure" in Romans 2:5 denotes abundance, and it also denotes secrecy. What an awful idea is expressed here!
21. The sinner is amassing, like hoarded treasure, an ever accumulating stock of Divine wrath, which will burst upon him on his Judgment Day!

III. THE RESULTS OF JUDGMENT (2:6-10).

1. W. H. Griffith Thomas said, "The rewards will be generous and eternal. The doom will be certain and terrible" (*Romans*).
2. Revelation 20:15 says, "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."
3. There is no "escape (from) the judgment of God" (Rom. 2:3).
4. Over and over again, Scripture warns us that punishment in hell is eternal. Second Thessalonians 1:9 refers to "everlasting destruction."
5. Revelation 14:11 says, "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night..."
6. One preacher wrote, "Both (heaven and hell) rest upon the same divine revelation, and both have the same word 'everlasting' applied to their duration. If the threatenings of God's Word are unreliable, so may the promises be; if the denunciations have no real meaning, what becomes of the invitations?" (William C. Procter, *The Fundamentals*).
7. In his book, *Death and The Life Hereafter*, Dr. Herbert Lockyer says, "Belief in a life beyond the grave is all but universal...When the Eternal God created Adam and Eve, He wove into their nature the hope of immortality which the succeeding centuries of sin and darkness

were not able to completely erase from man's inner being."

8. Furthermore, there is deep in man's inner being a belief in divine retribution. The doctrines of heaven and hell must stand or fall together. Man instinctively believes in a future judgment.
9. Therefore, these truths must be pressed home on every man's conscience. God has given us these warnings so that sinners will repent (Romans 2:4).

CONCLUSION:

In his commentary on the book of Romans, William Newell gives ten "Principles of God's Judgment."

- (1) is according to truth (2:2).
- (2) is inescapable (2:3).
- (3) is sometimes delayed (2:4).
- (4) is measured out according to the accumulation of guilt (2:5).
- (5) is according to works (2:6).
- (6) is according to privilege or light received (2:9).
- (7) is without respect of persons (2:11).
- (8) is according to performance, not knowledge (2:13).
- (9) will take into account the secrets of men's heart (2:16).
- (10) is according to reality, not religious profession (2:17-29).