

20 Lessons from the Impartiality of God, Part I

“For there is no respect of persons with God.”

Romans 2:11

REVIEW

1. God as Judge will show no partiality (the meaning of “no respect of persons”). No partiality means no bias, favoritism, tipping of the balances, or regard for wealth, station, education, gender, ethnic group, religious background, denomination, profession, nationality, family history, looks, appeal, talents, reputation, friends, rhetoric, imposing presence, fear of backlash, hope for kickback, etc.

2. The idea here is pure justice, meaning no mercy.

We're talking absolute execution of justice with no more delay or other unmerited kindnesses. Mercy has its last day. See the absence of mercy with the rich man in hell denied a *touch* of water, the *eternal* wailing and gnashing of teeth, or the use of “*whosoever*” and “*cast*” in texts such as “And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” (Rev. 20:15)

3. “Christians” may be subtly, ignorantly presuming on the mercy of God at the judgment.

See the sloppy and careless self-evaluation in Matt. 7:21-23. Had the man no moments of reflection when he was disturbed by his lack of vital fellowship with God? Was he deceiving himself? Was he presuming he could indefinitely get away with fraud? Do we? Could what we presume to be God's favor or acceptance be temporary mercy? Should not a person examine the authenticity of his faith by tests supplied in the Scriptures, such as how he deals with offenses?

4. This immovability, this shocking lack of competing considerations, this pure absolute eternal justice by God should incite unmitigated fear and trembling in the hearts of human beings.

“It is a fearful thing to fall in the hands of the living God.” (Heb. 10:31) “For our God is a consuming fire.” (Heb. 12:29) “Thou, even thou, art to be feared: and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?” (Ps. 76:7) “Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me.” (Ps. 55:5) “But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.” (Luke 12:5)

5. We are to reflect what is true about God and likewise be impartial in judgment.

“Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.” (Lev. 19:15) “Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man.” (Deut. 1:17) “It is not good to have respect of persons in judgment.” (Prov. 24:23) See James 2:1ff.

6. The Bible's description of God as severe judge in no way contradicts other descriptions of Him.

Some might raise objections by Scripture such as Ps. 103:8-14, but the answer is in understanding the offices of God (Judge vs. Father) and the times of man (temporal vs. eternal). See Acts 17:30-31. See also Albert Barnes: “The doctrine of the impartiality of God as judge does not imply that, as a sovereign, he may not make a difference in their endowments, their beauty, strength, or graces; it does not imply that he may not bestow his favors where he pleases where all are undeserving, or that he may not make a difference in the characters of people by his providence, and by the agency of his Spirit. All these are actually done, done not out of any respect to their persons, to their rank, function, or wealth, but according to his own sovereign good pleasure. To deny that this is done, would be to deny the manifest arrangement of things everywhere on the earth.”

