

# The Greatest Letter Ever Written

## An Expository Journey Through the **Epistle of Romans**

### **Romans 2:1-29**

#### 7-There is NO Partiality with God

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May 12, 2024

#### **Romans 2**

**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.  
**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.**

Now please notice that the very *first* word of Chapter 2 is “**Therefore**”. And that means that Chapter 2 is NOT a “stand-alone” Passage, but a *continuation* of what Paul taught in the *last* Chapter. In fact, what Paul began in **Romans 1:18** continues all the Way down to **Romans 3:31**. So, from that we know that the Chapter divisions as well as the verse numberings are NOT inspired. They were added many hundreds of years AFTER the writers of the New Testament had died. Now there is NO sinister Motive behind the Chapter divisions and Verse numberings- they were added to help us study and memorize the Bible easier. And most of the Time- they ARE very helpful. But there are other times that these Tools are NOT helpful and so, we need to be able to ignore them when it is appropriate.

As I have already told you, there were two main Issues that Paul dealt with in Romans:

1. How God can pardon guilty Sinners and remain Righteous Himself
2. Why the Jew did NOT embrace Jesus Christ

First, the Old Testament taught that whoever justifies the wicked is unjust Himself and has become an Abomination to God.

### **Proverbs 17:15**

**He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous, Both of them alike are an abomination to the Lord.**

... and the Old Testament also taught that the person who sins will bear God’s Punishment.

### **Ezekiel 18:20**

**The person who sins will die. The son will not bear the punishment for the father’s iniquity, nor will the father bear the punishment for the son’s iniquity; the righteousness of the righteous will be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked will be upon himself.**

These Old Testament verses set the Standard as to *how* and *why* God judges Sinners. The guilty one will die; and the one who “justified” the Wicked is an Abomination! And that is very clear and easy to understand.

But we know that God justifies guilty Sinners all day long! In fact, that’s what Salvation is! God pardons and cleanses His elect. So, has God then become an Abomination to Himself? Is God an “unjust” (unrighteous) Judge? In **Romans 1:18- 3:31**- Paul seeks to explain HOW God can justify the Guilty and still remain perfectly Righteous Himself.

Also, we know that except for the first few years of Christianity- the Jew has categorically *rejected* Jesus as being the Messiah. So, what do we do with the Reality that the Jews were chosen by God to be His people? Is Sovereign Election only temporary? Did God change His Mind? How could God’s people reject God’s Son? This Mystery *begins* to be solved here in **Romans 1:18** and then Paul *continues* to explain this Mystery in the next Chapters until it is finally completely solved in **Romans 9,10, &11**.

And the Apostle began both Explanations by showing us how God “abandons” a people; a nation; a group- who despise God by making two sinful “Exchanges”. They do NOT love God; they do NOT honor God; and they do NOT fear God- and so, they make two unholy and ungodly “Exchanges”:

1. They exchanged the Glory of God for Idols
2. They exchanged the Truth of God for a Lie

#### **Romans 1:21-24**

**21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.**

**22 Professing to be wise, they became fools,**

**23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.**

**24 Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them.**

#### **Romans 1:25**

**For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.**

... and as a Result of these two sinful Exchanges- Paul taught that God *abandoned* them:

**Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. (Romans 1:24)**

#### **Romans 1:26&27**

**26 For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural,**

**27 and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.**

### **Romans 1:28-32**

**28 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,  
29 being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips,  
30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents,  
31 without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful;  
32 and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.**

... so, now here in Chapter 2- Paul is saying that God is NOT partial in His Judgments. And so, WHOEVER commits the Sins will be judged accordingly. And Paul is teaching here that this is true- even for the Jew! If the Jew is guilty of making these sinful Exchanges and if the Jew is guilty of NOT wanting God in their Lives- then God will abandon them, too!

But HOW would God do that- if the Jew is chosen by God? Is God's election of the Jews only temporary? Those Questions will be answered in Chapter 2.

### **The Jews were Condemning the Gentiles**

**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?**

Here we see that some people were judging the Gentiles for participating in some of the wicked Sins that Paul described in Chapter 1:

### **Romans 1:29-32**

**29 being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips,  
30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents,  
31 without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful;  
32 and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.**

... but then notice how the Apostle addressed the Judgment of God:

### **Romans 1:18-20**

**18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,  
19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.  
20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.**

The Wrath of God is against WHOEVER is guilty of doing the things that Paul described here:

#### **Romans 1:21-22**

**21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.  
22 Professing to be wise, they became fools,**

The Wrath that the Apostle speaks of in Chapter 1- is NOT poured out on those who did NOT know God- but on them who **“knew God- but who did NOT honor Him as God or give thanks”** And there were two groups of people in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century who knew God:

1. Gentiles
2. Jews

The pagans knew God because God made it a Point to reveal Himself through the created Universe:

#### **Romans 1:19&20**

**19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.  
20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.**

The Jew had the *“general Revelation”* of God through the created Universe as well. But they also had the *“special”* or the *“specific Revelation”* of God that is found in the 39 Books of the Old Testament that God gave them. So, if the Gentile had “no Excuse” because they had the “general Revelation” of God that is found throughout the created Universe- then the Jew had even *less* Excuse- because in addition to having the *“general Revelation”* of God found throughout all Creation- they also had the inspired; infallible; and inerrant Writings that made up the Old Testament Books as well. And that means that, if the Gentile has no Excuse and can and will be judged by God for having the *“general Revelation”* of God from Creation- then the Jew had even *less* Excuse than the Gentile. And the Judgment on the Jew will be even *greater* and more *terrible* than the Wrath poured out on the Gentile.

And that is *exactly* what the Apostle is teaching here in the first few verses of Chapter 2:

**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?**

... everyone of you who passes judgement ... (The 1<sup>st</sup> Century Jew was passing Judgment on the Gentiles- even the Gentile Believers)

... for in that which you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things. (The 1<sup>st</sup> Century Jews were actually *worshipping* Angels. And even though they didn't build physical idols to the Angels- they were nevertheless in horrible Idolatry.)

**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?** (The Gentile was being judged by God because they could put all the pieces together about who God was. But the Jew had infinitely MORE Revelation about God than did the Gentile- yet the Jew was NOT loving and obeying God either. They had just rejected God's incarnate Son and attributed His Miracles to the chief Demon- Beelzebul. Therefore, their Judgment would be even *harsher* than the Wrath that was poured out on the Gentile.)

**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?** (The Jew wanted the Gentiles to be damned by God and, like the Prophet Jonah, was angry that God showed those pagan "dogs" His Mercy. And in their disgusting Self-righteousness- they forgot that God was also showing the Jew His Kindness and Patience- giving them "space to repent.")

Now it is absolutely appropriate for Christians of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century to *apply* these verses to themselves. But as to the one single MEANING of these verses- Paul was referring to the unbelieving Jews.

## **There is NO Partiality with God (the Person who Sins will Die)**

### **Romans 2:5-11**

**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.**

It is abundantly clear here that Paul was saying that **Ezekiel 18:20** was correct:

**The person who sins will die. The son will not bear the punishment for the father's iniquity, nor will the father bear the punishment for the son's iniquity; the righteousness of the righteous will be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked will be upon himself.**

Twice in this Passage- the Apostle uses a similar phrase:

**of the Jew first and also of the Greek** (v. 9)

**to the Jew first and also to the Greek** (v.10)

... showing that He will judge WHOEVER sins- whether that is the Jew or the Gentile. And then, just in case the reader didn't get that Message correctly, Paul summed all that he has been teaching in Chapter 2 with the Statement in verse 11:

## **For there is no partiality with God.**

God is NOT being contradictory when He damns the Jew, who said he was chosen by God. The Jew is being contradictory to the Call of God on his Life when he disbelieves in Jesus; and refuses to trust in WHATEVER God says or does. God is NOT on Trial when He acts in a Way that sinful people have a hard time understanding. The people who reject what God says or does are proving that they haven't been chosen at all and are NOT God's people.

"**The person who sins will die**" is true- even for a Jew. And God is NOT speaking out of both sides of His Mouth by *rejecting* the Jew. If the Jew were chosen- he would gladly submit to God and God's Ways. But because, for the most part, the Jew *didn't* submit gladly- they were NOT proving that Sovereign Election was only temporary- they were merely proving that they had never been part of those Jews that God did choose.

So, the Judgment of God on the Jews does NOT do damage to the "*Doctrine of Election*". It merely proves that those Jews who sinned by refusing to believe in Jesus were never part of the Jews who were chosen. Jesus told us who the "sons of Abraham" are in **John 8:34-59**:

**34 Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.**

**35 The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever.**

**36 So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.**

**37 I know that you are Abraham's descendants; yet you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you.**

**38 I speak the things which I have seen with My Father; therefore you also do the things which you heard from your father."**

**39 They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you are Abraham's children, do the deeds of Abraham.**

**40 But as it is, you are seeking to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God; this Abraham did not do.**

41 You are doing the deeds of your father." They said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father: God."

42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me.

43 Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot hear My word.

44 You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

45 But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me.

46 Which one of you convicts Me of sin? If I speak truth, why do you not believe Me?

47 He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear them, because you are not of God."

48 The Jews answered and said to Him, "Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?"

49 Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me.

50 But I do not seek My glory; there is One who seeks and judges.

51 Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he will never see death."

52 The Jews said to Him, "Now we know that You have a demon. Abraham died, and the prophets also; and You say, 'If anyone keeps My word, he will never taste of death.'

53 Surely You are not greater than our father Abraham, who died? The prophets died too; whom do You make Yourself out to be?"

54 Jesus answered, "If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; it is My Father who glorifies Me, of whom you say, 'He is our God';

55 and you have not come to know Him, but I know Him; and if I say that I do not know Him, I will be a liar like you, but I do know Him and keep His word.

56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad."

57 So the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?"

58 Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am."

59 Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple.

So, here, these Jews, who could trace their Genealogy directly from Abraham, were proving that they were NOT the “sons of Abraham” by their Words and Actions.

- Those “sons of Abraham” seek to kill Jesus (v.37)
- The Word of Jesus has NO place with those “sons of Abraham” (v.37)
- The true “sons of Abraham” will do the Deeds of Abraham- they will Believe (v.39)
- The true “sons of Abraham would NEVER kill a man who tells the Truth. (v.40)
- The true “sons of Abraham” will rejoice to see Jesus (v. 56)
- Those who are “of God” hear and believe the Words of Jesus (v.47)

... and so, those Jews who are guilty of the things that Jesus said here- are NOT the “sons of Abraham”; and they are NOT God’s chosen people; while the Gentiles, who believe (do the “Works of Abraham”); and who rejoice to see Jesus- are God’s people and are the true, *spiritual* Jew!



**Romans 2:28&29**

**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.**

But then the Apostle warns us about the terrible Consequences of refusing to repent.

**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.**

So, first, Paul says, “*There IS a Day of God’s Wrath against ALL Sin in the Future*”. And Paul is referring here to God’s *final* Judgment of *all* Mankind. The Apostle Peter referred to it as,

**... the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men (2Peter 3:7b)**

... and in the last part of verse 6 of his Epistle- the half-brother of Jesus (Jude) called it,

**... the judgment of the great day**

Paul also was “moved” by God the Holy Spirit to write that this terrible, frightening Judgement will happen when Jesus returns:

**2Timothy 4:1**

**I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom:**

**2Thessalonians 1:7b&8**

**7 ...the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, 8 dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.**

This final Judgment is also recorded in great Detail by the Apostle John:

**Revelation 20:11-15**

**11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them.**

**12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.**

**13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds.**

**14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.**

**15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.**

... and Jesus Himself taught about this final Judgment:

**Matthew 13:41-43**

**41 The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness,**

**42 and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**

**43 Then THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.**

Many people teach today about a “*Rapture*” that will supposedly occur at some point in our Future. And the “Rapture” is taught as being a separate Event where all the saved on the earth will be “caught away” BEFORE Jesus comes back.

**Thessalonians 4:13-18**

**13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope.**

**14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.**

**15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.**

**16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.**

**17 Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.**

**18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.**

... and there is great Controversy about this Subject. But, in my opinion, that Controversy is centered around the wrong Issue.

Most of the Controversy surrounding the so-called, “Rapture” is the Timing of it. Some believe that the Church will be “caught away” BEFORE the “great Tribulation”; while others teach that the Rapture will occur AFTER the Tribulation. And still others teach that the Rapture will occur after the first 3-1/2 years of the Tribulation.

But when we analyze the Words of Jesus- especially right here in **Matthew 13:41**- we see that it is the Unsaved- who are “taken out” of the world.

**The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness,**

... and, in **Matthew 13:30**- Jesus said those Tares will be gathered and bound in bundles to burn- FIRST!

**Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn."**

So, it seems to me that God wants His people to not only be able to go to Heaven with Him- but He *also* wants them to inherit the earth.

### **Matthew 5:5**

**Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.**

... so, it is the Tares who will be "gathered out" of God's Kingdom- FIRST- so that the earth will be made Pure! So, it seems to me that those people have it all backward. And it is AFTER the Tares are removed that the Saved are going to be gathered into the "Barn of God"- the "Kingdom of God"- which will be here on the earth. And that is represented by the City of New Jerusalem that will come down OUT OF HEAVEN and will sit on a *purified* earth:

### **The Revelation 21:1-7**

**21 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea.**

**2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.**

**3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them,**

**4 and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."**

**5 And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true."**

**6 Then He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost.**

**7 He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son.**

### **God's Criteria for Judgment**

We went over the first three of the six Criteria God will employ in the Final Judgment when we were in Chapter 1. The second three are found here in Chapter 2:

1. Deeds (**Romans 2:5-10**)
2. Impartiality (**Romans2: 11-15**)
3. Motive (**Romans 2:16**)

### **1. DEEDS**

**Romans 2:5-10**

**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.**

Now even though this is simple and straightforward- what God “moved” on the Apostle Paul to write here embraces several Truths that are easily misinterpreted if not studied carefully.

**The Revelation 20:12&13**

**12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.**

**13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds.**

... so, we see here that ALL people will be judged by God, “ACCORDING TO THEIR DEEDS”!

And this is *exactly* what Paul is teaching here.

**Romans 2:6**

**who WILL RENDER TO EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS:**

Here, the Apostle is making a single Statement from two different Old Testament Passages:

**Psalms 62:12**

**And lovingkindness is Yours, O Lord, For You recompense a man according to his work.**

... and ...

**Proverbs 24:12**

**If you say, “See, we did not know this,” Does He not consider it who weighs the hearts? And does He not know it who keeps your soul? And will He not render to man according to his work?**

... and...

**Job 34:10-11**

**10 “Therefore, listen to me, you men of understanding. Far be it from God to do wickedness, And from the Almighty to do wrong.**

**11 “For He pays a man according to his work, And makes him find it according to his way.**

The Jews were made aware from the Old Testament that God judged people based on their Deeds, or their Works. For example, Yahweh told the Prophet to say this in **Isaiah 3:10&11:**

**10 Say to the righteous that it will go well with them, For they will eat the fruit of their actions.**

**11 Woe to the wicked! It will go badly with him, For what he deserves will be done to him.**

... and God spoke to Israel through the Prophet about this in **Jeremiah 17:10:**

**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.**

... and then in **Matthew 16:27** the Lord Christ Himself verified that this is the Way God will judge:

**For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and WILL THEN REPAY EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS.**

**John 5:28&29**

**28 Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice,**

**29 and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.**

The Apostle who heralded God’s Salvation by Grace alone through Faith alone the most (Paul) also taught this same Truth:

**1Corinthians 3:8-15**

**8 Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor.**

**9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.**

**10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it.**

**11 For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.**

**12 Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw,**

**13 each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work.**

**14 If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward.**

**15 If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.**

**2Corinthians 5:10&11**

**10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.**

**11 Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men, but we are made manifest to God; and I hope that we are made manifest also in your consciences.**

**Galatians 6:7-9**

**7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.**

**8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.**

**9 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.**

We must always remember that God does not judge on the Basis of religious Profession; religious Relationships; or religious Heritage. God judges on the Basis of the Products of a person's Life. So, an Issue on the Day of Judgment will NOT be whether a person is a Jew or Gentile; whether he is a heathen or orthodox; whether he is religious or irreligious; or whether he attends church or does not. An Issue will be whether or not his Life has manifested an ongoing Striving to humbly and joyfully obey God. Later in this same Epistle Paul said,

**Romans 14:11&12**

**11 For it is written, "AS I LIVE, SAYS THE LORD, EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW TO ME, AND EVERY TONGUE SHALL GIVE PRAISE TO GOD."**

**12 So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God.**

The subjective Criterion for Salvation is, "Faith alone", with nothing added. But the objective Reality of that Salvation is manifested in the subsequent godly Works that the Holy Spirit leads and empowers believers to perform. For that reason, Good Deeds (Godly Fruit) are a perfectly valid Basis for God's Judgment. John MacArthur said,

"A person's actions form an infallible index to his character. "You will know them by their fruits," Jesus twice declared in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 7:16,20). The works of a person's life are one of the unchanging bases upon which God will judge men. Every man will one day face the divine Judge, who has a comprehensive record of that man's deeds, and by that record, the man's eternal destiny will be determined."<sup>1</sup>

So, even though the Bible clearly and repeatedly teaches that God's Judgment will be "by Works"- NO WHERE does the Bible say that God's Salvation is "by Works".

Whatever Good a person has or does; and whatever godly Fruit he may bear- we must always understand that it comes by God's gracious Provision, and only God should be given Praise and Glory for those things.

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<sup>1</sup> John MacArthur; *Commentary on Romans*; Copyright © Moody Press and John MacArthur, Jr., 1983-2007

**Isaiah 48:9-11**

**9 “For the sake of My name I delay My wrath, And for My praise I restrain it for you, In order not to cut you off.**

**10 “Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.**

**11 “For My own sake, for My own sake, I will act; For how can My name be profaned? And My glory I will not give to another.**

**Ezekiel 36:16-28**

**16 Then the word of the Lord came to me saying,**

**17 “Son of man, when the house of Israel was living in their own land, they defiled it by their ways and their deeds; their way before Me was like the uncleanness of a woman in her impurity.**

**18 “Therefore I poured out My wrath on them for the blood which they had shed on the land, because they had defiled it with their idols.**

**19 “Also I scattered them among the nations and they were dispersed throughout the lands. According to their ways and their deeds I judged them.**

**20 “When they came to the nations where they went, they profaned My holy name, because it was said of them, ‘These are the people of the Lord; yet they have come out of His land.’**

**21 “But I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations where they went.**

**Israel to Be Renewed for His Name’s Sake 22 “Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord God, “It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went.**

**23 “I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am the Lord,” declares the Lord God, “when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight.**

**24 “For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land.**

**25 “Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.**

**26 “Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.**

**27 “I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.**

**28 “You will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers; so you will be My people, and I will be your God.**

**Persevering in “Doing Good” Versus “Storing Up Wrath”**

**Romans 2:5-8**

**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.**

Now again, in Context- Paul was talking about the Jews- who thought they were “Right with God”- BY BIRTH- but who, by the Way they lived their daily Lives- were proving that they were NOT God’s people at all.

But today- we may certainly apply this Truth to our Lives- as we see that Paul was dividing People into one of two Groups:

1. Those who were persevering “**in doing good**”
2. Those who were “**storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath**”

The Reality is that a person simply “saying” they are saved- means little or nothing. What matters is the Way they live their daily Lives. And here, Paul taught that there are people who “say they are saved” and yet are “**selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness**”; while there are also those who are, “**those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality**”. And yet, BOTH groups *think* they are Right with God!

But we need to always remember that true Salvation is proved unmistakably by the individual’s Perseverance in “doing Good”. And Paul taught here that the *highest* and *best* “Good” he can “Persevere for” is to “seek for” Glory, Honor, and Immortality.

Now even though all three of these Terms are practically synonyms, they DO carry very distinct Meanings. And when put together- they describe a genuine Believer’s heavenly Perspective and Aspirations.

## **2. God’s Judgement is Impartial**

### **Romans 2:11-15**

**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,**

The Greek word that the Apostle Paul originally wrote down in verse 11 and that was translated into English as “**partiality**” (*prosoepolepsia*/Strong’s # 4382) has to do with “*receiving a face*”. It means to: “*give Consideration to a person because of who that person is.*” In our judicial System- the Founders created a Statue of a blind Woman holding scales. This is to say that, supposedly, our Justice System is blind to who the person is; and his Innocence or Guilt will be weighed in the “balances of the Evidence presented to the Court”. At other times, that



same Woman is portrayed a having her hands bound- signifying that she will NEVER take a Bribe.

The Reality is that, in spite of great Effort to make our judicial System “Fair” and a System of laws and not men- there is Partiality in the Courts of the United States. And guilty people go free as well as innocent people are wrongly convicted. We have less of that Corruption here than in most other Countries- but Partiality exists.

But NOT with God. Because of WHO God is and because of God’s perfect Knowledge of every Detail- it is simply NOT possible for God’s Justice to be anything but perfectly Impartial. Such things as Position; Education; Influence; Popularity; or physical Appearance will have absolutely no bearing at all on God's Decision concerning a person's eternal Destiny. As God has said,

**The person who sins will die... (Ezekiel 18:20a)**

... and as the Apostle wrote:

**Romans 2:12-15**

**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,**

The most beautiful and musical Angel God made was named, “Lucifer”. And this arch-Angel was the “star of the morning, son of the dawn.” But because of his prideful Ambition to raise himself even above his Creator, to make himself "like the Most High," even the high-ranking, majestic Lucifer was cast out of Heaven by God to Sheol.

**Isaiah 14:12-15**

**12 “How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, You who have weakened the nations!**

**13 “But you said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north.**

**14 ‘I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’**

**15 “Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, To the recesses of the pit.**

... and in an instant- the most exalted one became the most debased.

If ever there was a Being, whose Position merited “Special Favor” before God it was Lucifer. But his high Position made him MORE accountable for his evil Rebellion and so, he will receive the *greatest* Punishment of any creature in Hell!

When Peter saw how God was working in the Life of Cornelius, he was finally able to understand and “turn from” (repent) his Jewish Prejudice against Gentiles and confess,

**The Acts 10:34-43**

34 ... I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality,  
35 but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him.  
36 The word which He sent to the sons of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all)—  
37 you yourselves know the thing which took place throughout all Judea, starting from Galilee, after the baptism which John proclaimed.  
38 You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.  
39 We are witnesses of all the things He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross.  
40 God raised Him up on the third day and granted that He become visible,  
41 not to all the people, but to witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God, that is, to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead.  
42 And He ordered us to preach to the people, and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead.  
43 Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins."

Contrast Peter's Sin with the Apostle Paul- who was NEVER impressed with a person's elevated, religious Position.

## **Galatians 2**

1 Then after an interval of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also.  
2 It was because of a revelation that I went up; and I submitted to them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but I did so in private to those who were of reputation, for fear that I might be running, or had run, in vain.  
3 But not even Titus, who was with me, though he was a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised.  
4 But it was because of the false brethren secretly brought in, who had sneaked in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to bring us into bondage.  
5 But we did not yield in subjection to them for even an hour, so that the truth of the gospel would remain with you.  
6 But from those who were of high reputation (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality)—well, those who were of reputation contributed nothing to me.  
7 But on the contrary, seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been to the circumcised  
8 (for He who effectually worked for Peter in his apostleship to the circumcised effectually worked for me also to the Gentiles),  
9 and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, so that we might go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.  
10 They only asked us to remember the poor—the very thing I also was eager to do.  
Peter (Cephas) Opposed by Paul 11 But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned.

**12 For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision.**

**13 The rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy.**

**14 But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in the presence of all, "If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?"**

**15 We are Jews by nature and not sinners from among the Gentiles;**

**16 nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.**

**17 But if, while seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves have also been found sinners, is Christ then a minister of sin? May it never be!**

**18 For if I rebuild what I have once destroyed, I prove myself to be a transgressor.**

**19 For through the Law I died to the Law, so that I might live to God.**

**20 I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.**

**21 I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly."**

Paul also taught this in **Galatians 6:2-7:**

**2 Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.**

**3 For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.**

**4 But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another.**

**5 For each one will bear his own load.**

**6 The one who is taught the word is to share all good things with the one who teaches him.**

**7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.**

... so, who a person is- or what status they hold in this Life will have no bearing at all on what he reaps on the Day of God's Judgment.

### **Galatians 6:8**

**For [because] the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.**

When the Apostle warned "Masters" to be considerate toward their Slaves, Paul reminded them that

**... both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.  
(Ephesians 6:9b)**

... and this same Apostle gave the saints of Colosse great Comfort by saying this in **Colossians 3:18-25**:

**18 Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.**

**19 Husbands, love your wives and do not be embittered against them.**

**20 Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.**

**21 Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart.**

**22 Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters on earth, not with external service, as those who merely please men, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord.**

**23 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men,**

**24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.**

**25 For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without partiality.**

... and Peter also agreed with this in **1Peter 1:17-19**:

**17 If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth;**

**18 knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers,**

**19 but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.**

But even though all of this is true- it is also true that God's Impartiality does not exclude His taking into Account the varying degree of "*spiritual Light/Understanding*" that different people have. And so, he discussed two different "groups" of Sinners:

1. Those who have NOT had an Opportunity to know God's Law
2. Those who HAVE had an Opportunity to know God's Law

... and, primarily, those Sinners, who HAVE had an Opportunity to know God's Law back in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century were the Jews. And those Sinners, who did NOT have an Opportunity were the Gentiles. And the "Law" referred here is the Law that God gave through Moses to the people of Israel. So, what constitutes a Jew- is that he has been given the Law; while the Gentiles did NOT have such a Privilege.

Yet we must understand that, even though the Gentiles did NOT have access to the Law- they DID have an "Awareness of God"; as well as a moral Sense of "Right" and "Wrong".

### **Romans 1:20**

**For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.**

### **Romans 2:5-16**

**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.**

So, all Gentiles, who have sinned without the Law will therefore also perish without the Law. In other words, they will be judged according to their more limited Knowledge of God. And that includes the vast majority of the entire human Race- at all Times. Because even with the increased Ability we have today- to distribute God's Word in the various Languages of the world; along with new Technology that allows for the preaching the Gospel to go to more people than ever before- most people in the world today have never heard sound Teaching from the Bible. And an even smaller Group than that is able to grasp a clear Understanding of its saving Truths.

But, because they have God's "*natural Revelation*" throughout all Creation, as well as the inward Witness of "Right" and "Wrong" in their Hearts and Consciences- they are Guilty and will be held Accountable. And that's why these people will, "perish without the Law."

#### **Romans 2:17-29**

**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.**

The lost Jew will perish just as the lost Gentile- but, as Paul has already intimated (v. 9), the eternal Tribulation and Distress of the Gentile will be less than that of the Jews, because God gave the Jews so much under the Old Covenant. Jesus Himself agreed with this Principle in **Luke 12:46-48:**

**46 the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know, and will cut him in pieces, and assign him a place with the unbelievers.**

**47 And that slave who knew his master's will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, will receive many lashes,**

**48 but the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few. From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.**

It is Jews, those to whom the Lord had entrusted much, whom the Apostle addressed next, declaring that all who have sinned under the Law will be judged by the Law. The person who has not had the Benefit of knowing God's Law will be judged according to his *limited* Knowledge of God. But the person who had access to God's Law will be judged according to his *greater* Knowledge about the Lord.

But those who have Knowledge not only of the Old Testament Law but also of the New Testament Gospel are also included in this second Category of those who are judged. And because they have even greater Knowledge of God than the ancient Jews, they will be held still more Accountable. They will be like the Jewish cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, which had heard Jesus' Teaching and witnessed His Miracles but had rejected Him as their Messiah and King. They not only had God's Law but had been privileged to meet God's only Son. And so, the Lord told them,

**Matthew 11:20-24**

**20 Then He began to denounce the cities in which most of His miracles were done, because they did not repent.**

**21 "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.**

**22 Nevertheless I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you.**

**23 And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will descend to Hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day.**

**24 Nevertheless I say to you that it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for you."**

So, even though ALL Unbelievers will be in Hell- the worst parts of Hell are reserved for those who have squandered the greatest spiritual Opportunity. That is *why* it is such a fearful thing to be an "Apostate"- a person who has known and even acknowledged God's Truth but ultimately turned his back on it.

### **Hebrews 6:1-6**

**1 Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, 2 of instruction about washings and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment.**

**3 And this we will do, if God permits.**

**4 For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit,**

**5 and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come,**

**6 and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame.**

### **Hebrews 10:26-31**

**26 For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,**

**27 but a terrifying expectation of judgment and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES.**

**28 Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.**

**29 How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?**

**30 For we know Him who said, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY." And again, "THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE."**

**31 It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.**

## **3. God's Judgement is Based on our Motive**

### **Romans 2:16**

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

The Reason that God can base His Judgment on our Motive- is because He is “Omniscient” and is able to know the, **secrets of men**. And Paul is quick to say that this omniscient Knowledge will be “**through Christ Jesus**”. So, God understands fully the Motive behind WHY we do what we do. And this has ALWAYS been the Case:

### **1Chronicles 28:9**

**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.**

### **Psalm 139:1-3**

**For the choir director. A Psalm of David. 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.**

### **Jeremiah 17:10**

**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.**

### **Jer 17:10**

**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.**

**NASU**

**Romans 2:6-16** teaches us that a redeemed Life will produce holy Living and 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. Therefore, a lack of right Living is the unmistakable Proof that the individual is Lost.

## **FALSE Security**

### **Romans 2:17-29**

**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.**

Back in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century- when **Romans** was written- the Group who had the MOST Confidence about their Salvation was the Jew. Yet, based on what the Apostle wrote here- the Jew of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century should have been the Group that were the MOST troubled about their Relationship with God.

The Jew of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century honestly believed that, since God had graciously chosen their fore-Fathers- that they were *automatically* chosen as well. So, to them- Salvation was NOT a matter of Faith; Repentance; Believing; and Obedience- it was simply a Matter of them being born- as Jews! So, to the 1<sup>st</sup> Century Jew- being “saved”; or “rescued” was NOT a Matter of being mercifully delivered from God’s Wrath against their Sin- it was God moving to rid them of their Gentile Roman Tormentors.

So, here- the Apostle Paul- who himself was a Jew who had actually been a Pharisee and a Member of the Sanhedrin Court- gives his Readers- some very *radical* Divine Truth that *culminates* in him *infallibly* writing:

**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.**

So, to prove that God’s Judgment is NOT partial- the Apostle begins to list all the Advantages that the Jew had with both God and Man:

#### **Romans 2:17-20**

**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,**

So, here are about nine things that Paul said the Jew supposedly had- that no one else had:

1. They (supposedly) rely upon the Law
2. They boast in God (about being God's chosen)
3. They know God's Will
4. They approve or verify the Things which are Essential
5. They were instructed (taught) from the Law of Moses
6. They were confident that, because they were chosen- they were Guides to the Blind and Lights to those who have no Knowledge of God (Gentiles).
7. They were "Correctors" of the "Foolish" (evil ones)
8. They were Teachers of the "Immature" (those weak in their Faith)
9. They had the Law literally in their Flesh (Circumcision)

.. and with all these Advantages- Paul summed it all up by saying that the Jew was literally,  
**... the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth,**

But then Paul begins to show that God *requires* of those He calls:

**Romans 2:21-27**

**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?**

So, now- Paul is saying, *"If you are chosen by God- then act like you have been chosen by God! Live your Life as though being chosen by God means something! Don't be hypocritical as though being chosen allows you to sin with Abandon. Instead, prove, by the Way you live your Life, that being chosen by God- allows you unfettered Access with God!"*

And so, the Apostle goes through a litany of Examples of where the Jew was acting as though he was NOT chosen by God- all while claiming he was:

**Romans 2:21-23**

**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?**

There is a Logic that exists in the World that is very Destructive and very Wrong. And people use this Logic to excuse their Bad Behavior. It is called, “*Circular Logic* or *Circle Reasoning*”. And this “Logic” is a Contradiction of Terms. It comes from the Latin, “*circulus in probando*”- which literally means: “*circle in proving*”.

But instead of being a Way to see Life- it is a logical Fallacy. “Circle Reasoning” says, “*Because of WHO I am; or because of what Position I hold- I am able to do things that others can't do*”. So, “Circle Reasoning” is one of the most obvious forms of Hypocrisy.

For example, Mohammed could have six Wives- even though the Qur'an limits every other Man to “only” four Wives. So, because of WHO Mohammed supposedly was (the great Prophet of Allah)- he didn't have to obey the Commands that he said Allah gave him. Sadly, some Church Leaders think that, because of the Position they hold- they can prey on the Congregation- either sexually or financially- and it's okay. Others in Church Leadership don't think they have to give to God or to the Church- precisely because they are in the Service of God and the Church.

So, for the most part- the Jews of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century had fallen into the Trap of “Circle Reasoning”. And so, they said to themselves, “*Because I am chosen by God- I don't have to obey the Law- even as I instruct others to obey!*” Paul is teaching here that their Logic was incorrect. Being chosen by God should cause a person to love God MORE; obey Him MORE; and submit to God MORE! But, because they were NOT loving; obeying; and submitting to God MORE- they had CAUSED the Nations of the World to blaspheme against God:

#### **Romans 2:24**

**For "THE NAME OF GOD IS BLASPHEMED AMONG THE GENTILES BECAUSE OF YOU," just as it is written.**

Because God DID “Set His Love” on the Jew under the Old Covenant- the entire World knew it. But because, for the most part, the Jew did NOT rejoice in God; because they did NOT find the fullness of their own Joy in obeying God; and because they did NOT celebrate God in graciously choosing them- they became hard-hearted; and they gladly began to commit “spiritual Adultery” and worship other gods.

And this Sin caused the Gentile Nations to say, “*If the chosen people of God don't enjoy being chosen- God must not be that big a deal!*” Now this is Blasphemy, to be sure. But the Cause of the Nations saying that- was the Fact that the people God had chosen- lived their Lives in two Ways:

1. They lived as though they had NOT been chosen
2. They lived as though being chosen was a Curse

... which caused the Nations of the World- who were NOT chosen- to blaspheme God! Look what God said to His people in **Ezekiel 36:22-28:**

**22 “Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord God, “It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went.**

**23 “I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am the Lord,” declares the Lord God, “when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight.**

**24 “For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land.**

**25 “Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.**

**26 “Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.**

**27 “I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.**

**28 “You will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers; so you will be My people, and I will be your God.**

Even in our Day- when people chafe at the straight and narrow Path; when people dread reading the Bible; when they pray to God reluctantly; or when they try to find every Reason as to why they can't go to Church- they are making God look like a Monster; and they are making the “Way of Life” look like a Prison. And that *dishonors* God and it causes the Lost to blaspheme Him.

#### **Romans 2:23&24**

**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.**

The Divine Indictment of verse 24 reveals that the Question of verse 23 was rhetorical. Many hypocritical Jews were blatantly breaking the Divine Law- even as they were boasting about having that Law and of being chosen to keep that Law. And the Apostle is teaching that by doing this- they brought Dishonor to God and caused the Gentiles (Unbelievers) to blaspheme God.

Now it is true that ALL Sin by ANYONE dishonors God. But it is also true that Sin committed by those who say they have been chosen to know and love God- dishonors God the *most*.

#### **Jonah 1**

**1 The word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai saying,**

**2 “Arise, go to Nineveh the great city and cry against it, for their wickedness has come up before Me.”**

**3 But Jonah rose up to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. So he went down to Joppa, found a ship which was going to Tarshish, paid the fare and went down into it to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.**

**4 The Lord hurled a great wind on the sea and there was a great storm on the sea so that the ship was about to break up.**

**5 Then the sailors became afraid and every man cried to his god, and they threw the cargo which was in the ship into the sea to lighten it for them. But Jonah had gone below into the hold of the ship, lain down and fallen sound asleep.**

**6** So the captain approached him and said, “How is it that you are sleeping? Get up, call on your god. Perhaps your god will be concerned about us so that we will not perish.”

**7** Each man said to his mate, “Come, let us cast lots so we may learn on whose account this calamity has struck us.” So they cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah.

**8** Then they said to him, “Tell us, now! On whose account has this calamity struck us? What is your occupation? And where do you come from? What is your country? From what people are you?”

**9** He said to them, “I am a Hebrew, and I fear the Lord God of heaven who made the sea and the dry land.”

**10** Then the men became extremely frightened and they said to him, “How could you do this?” For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them.

**11** So they said to him, “What should we do to you that the sea may become calm for us?”—for the sea was becoming increasingly stormy.

**12** He said to them, “Pick me up and throw me into the sea. Then the sea will become calm for you, for I know that on account of me this great storm has come upon you.”

**13** However, the men rowed desperately to return to land but they could not, for the sea was becoming even stormier against them.

**14** Then they called on the Lord and said, “We earnestly pray, O Lord, do not let us perish on account of this man’s life and do not put innocent blood on us; for You, O Lord, have done as You have pleased.”

**15** So they picked up Jonah, threw him into the sea, and the sea stopped its raging.

**16** Then the men feared the Lord greatly, and they offered a sacrifice to the Lord and made vows.

**17** And the Lord appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the stomach of the fish three days and three nights.

Now as serious as this was with the Jew- this Principle applies even *more* strongly to people who say they are “Christians”. Because they not only have greater spiritual Light through the New Testament; but they have greater spiritual Resources to obey that Light through the indwelling Holy Spirit. So, when a Believer falls into Sin, his Witness is ruined; and the Name of His Lord is dragged through the mud.

### **1John 3:1-10**

**1** See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

**2** Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.

**3** And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

**4** Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness.

**5** You know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin.

**6** No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him.

**7** Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous;

**8 the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.**

**9 No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.**

**10 By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.**

During Paul's Ministry- in many Synagogues- the Teaching of the Rabbis did NOT focus on "Scripture" (the Old Testament)- but on the Man-made System of Traditions that the Rabbis had developed over the Centuries since the Exile. So, God's Word in the Old Testament was merely read and listened to- without Explanation or Application or holding people accountable to what the Scriptures actually said. So, most Jews of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century were simply "hearing the Course". They were "hearers of the Law"- but not "doers of the Law".

And the first Pastor of the Church of Jerusalem knew this. And that is why he wrote this in **James 1:22-25:**

**22 But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.**

**23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror;**

**24 for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was.**

**25 But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.**

... so, God does NOT want His people to merely "hear" what He has said and not "do" what He has said.

Because the more a person hears God's Truth, the more he is responsible for believing and obeying it. So, unless there is humble and joyful Obedience- there will be much greater Judgment and Damnation- if the person has heard God's Word much.

Those who believe that they are in "Right Standing" with God because they attend church; listen to sermons; participate in a Bible study; and listen to Christian music "delude themselves," James warned.

In other words, the person who is satisfied with superficially knowing God's Word is living in spiritual Deception- thinking he is saved when he is not. And because he looks in a mirror and not in God's Word- he judges himself "by himself" rather than by the Word of God that he has heard but which he does not take to heart. So, his Failure to obey what he hears proves he does not really believe it or trust in it. His ongoing Disobedience proves he does not trust in the God whose Word he has heard. And the more he hears without obeying- the more he piles up Guilt against himself for the Day of Judgment. And that's why Jesus said this in **Matthew 7:24-27:**

**24 "Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock.**

**25 And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock.**

**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."**

The "Doers of the Law" are those who come to God in Repentance and Faith- understanding that it is impossible for him to keep God's Law- perfectly- in Thought; Word; and Deed- 24/7. It isn't hard or difficult. It is impossible. And it is also NOT a matter of trying harder or putting forth more Effort. It is a matter of being human. No one can keep God's Law- without failing in one or more of its Tenets. And therefore, all that the Law of God does- is to condemn us.

So, the genuine "Doers of God's Law" are those who come to Jesus Christ in Faith- precisely because the whole Purpose of the Law is to bring people to the Need for a Savior- who can save them to the "uttermost".

### **Galatians 3:16-24**

**16 Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ.**

**17 What I am saying is this: the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise.**

**18 For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise; but God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise.**

**19 Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the seed would come to whom the promise had been made.**

**20 Now a mediator is not for one party only; whereas God is only one.**

**21 Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law.**

**22 But the Scripture has shut up everyone under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.**

**23 But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed.**

**24 Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith.**

And even though we must come to Jesus "by Faith" for Salvation- those who have been truly saved- prove that their Salvation is genuine by being humble and joyful "Doers of God's Word" through them striving to obey. The person who genuinely and honestly strives to obey God's Word- proves by that Striving- that he is saved and thereby will be recognized as completely "Justified" (Forgiven and made Righteous) on the Day of Judgment.

### **James 2:17-26**

**17 Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.**

**18 But someone may well say, "You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works."**

**19 You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.**

**20 But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless?**

**21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar?**

**22 You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected;**

**23 and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS," and he was called the friend of God.**

**24 You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone.**

**25 In the same way, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way?**

**26 For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.**

Now at this point, many ask, *"Does this mean that the Gentiles are excused from Eternal Judgment and Damnation because they have not had the Advantage of having the Law and therefore had no Basis for obedient Living?"*

No! Because Paul has already established, that the Gentiles, that is, those who never had the Law nor were taught the Law- nevertheless have God's "General" or "Natural Revelation" of Himself in Creation. And so, those people instinctively know they are guilty Sinners- worthy of Death.

#### **Romans 1:18-20**

**18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,**

**19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.**

**20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.**

But didn't Paul teach,

**... where there is no law, there also is no violation. (Romans 4:15)?**

... and ...

Rom 4:15

**for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. (Romans 5:13)**

... and ...

**I would not have come to know sin except through the Law (Romans 7:7)?**

... and if he taught this- then why does God judge the Gentile- who never had the Law of God?



God the Holy Spirit “moved” on the Apostle Paul to also teach:

**Romans 2:14-16**

**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.**

And that tells us that there are at least four Reasons why the Heathen (Pagans/Barbarians/ Gentiles) are Lost and will be judged by God.

1. Their Rejection of the Knowledge of God that is available through God’s Creation condemns them
2. Their Conduct- based on the Knowledge of the Law written in their hearts- condemns them
3. Their Conscience condemns them
4. Their Contemplation, their Thoughts accuse them

Throughout human History there have been many Unbelievers who have been Honest in Business; respectful of their Parents; faithful to their spouses; caring of their Children; and generous to those in Need. And these are “Good things” that God’s Word commends. God’s sovereign “Standard of Justice” is reflected in many secular judicial Systems- where Stealing; Murder; and other Forms of Immorality are considered to be “Wrong” and made Illegal. Many pagan Philosophies, both Ancient and Modern, teach certain Standards of Ethics that closely parallel those in Scripture.

The Bible reports many “Good Deeds” done by pagans such as Darius (**Daniel 6:25-28**); the city clerk of Ephesus (**The Acts 19:35-41**); the Roman military Officers who protected Paul (**The Acts 23:10,17-35**), and the natives of Malta, who befriended Paul and his shipmates (**The Acts 28:10**). And the fact that those people did “Good Things”- while agreeing that they were, in fact, ethically Good- simply proves they had Knowledge of God’s Law written in their hearts. Now that alone does NOT save them. And it also means that if those people never come to trust in Jesus Christ for Salvation- their “Good Deeds” will actually witness against them on the Day of Judgment- making their Damnation even *worse*.

The Bible teaches that Gentiles, who do not have the Privilege of knowing God’s Law, nevertheless have a Conscience bearing witness to His Law. But the word, “Conscience” literally means: *“knowledge with,”* or *“co-knowledge.”* And synonyms of that term, most with the same root meaning, are found in many ancient Languages. The very idea behind the word testifies to the fact that men recognize they have an instinctive, built-in sense of “Right and Wrong” that activates Guilt.

But the Reality is that human Conscience is only as reliable as what it has been feeding on. And so, Conscience varies in Sensitivity and Effectiveness- depending on the Degree of one’s Knowledge of and Feeling about “Right and Wrong”. The person who has considerable Knowledge of God’s Word will have a more sensitive and effective Conscience than a person who has never had opportunity to know the Scriptures.

But the Bible also teaches that Consciences also vary in Sensitivity and Effectiveness- depending on whether it is obeyed or resisted. Some years ago, it was discovered that, contrary to long-held medical thinking, the gross Disfiguration of the Extremities that is so common in Lepers is NOT caused directly by the Disease itself. Leprosy does not deteriorate or eat at the flesh. This horrible Disease desensitizes the nerves. And when the Extremities of that individual experiences no Warning of pain- the person simply wears down his Extremities or suffers cuts, burns, and infections without knowing he has been injured.

So, in the same Way- the neglected and the resisted Conscience becomes more Insensitive and eventually may stop giving Warning Signals about Sin. And that's why the Apostle wrote about Heretics and Apostates- whose Consciences will be so Desensitized that it resembles something that has been cauterized by a hot iron. And this happened to them as a Result of their ongoing Rebellion to God and His Truth.

#### **1 Timothy 4:1-5**

**1 But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons,**  
**2 by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron,**  
**3 men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth.**  
**4 For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude;**  
**5 for it is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer.**

God does use the Consciences of His children as Vehicles for His Guidance. So, Paul makes many Appeals for genuine Believers to remain faithful to the "Leading" of their own Consciences; and to respect the Consciences of other Believers in **Romans 13:1-5:**

**1 Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.**  
**2 Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.**  
**3 For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same;**  
**4 for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.**  
**5 Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake.**

... and in **1 Corinthians 8:4-13:**

**4 Therefore concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that there is no such thing as an idol in the world, and that there is no God but one.**  
**5 For even if there are so-called gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords,**

**6 yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him.**

**7 However not all men have this knowledge; but some, being accustomed to the idol until now, eat food as if it were sacrificed to an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.**

**8 But food will not commend us to God; we are neither the worse if we do not eat, nor the better if we do eat.**

**9 But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak.**

**10 For if someone sees you, who have knowledge, dining in an idol's temple, will not his conscience, if he is weak, be strengthened to eat things sacrificed to idols?**

**11 For through your knowledge he who is weak is ruined, the brother for whose sake Christ died.**

**12 And so, by sinning against the brethren and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ.**

**13 Therefore, if food causes my brother to stumble, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause my brother to stumble.**