

The Greatest Letter Ever Written

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

Romans 2:1-29

7-There is NO Partiality with God

February 11, 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 1st 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 1st 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 1st 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 21st 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:

Psalm 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."¹

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.

¹ 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.

Jesus declared that at that time,

Matthew 13:41-43

"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 will cast them into the furnace of fire; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father"

The highest and best Desire of a genuine Believer is: Glory- and specifically, God’s Glory. Saved people “do all that they do” for one main and primary Reason: It is to the Glory of God. A person who does not have such a Desire deep within him simply is NOT a true Believer.

1Corinthians 10:31

Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God,

To live to the Glory of God is to manifest the very Nature of God Himself- as a willing vessel for His own divine Working.

But a genuine Believer also seeks Glory for himself- NOT in the fleshly, Self-seeking Way that is common to fallen human Nature- but by looking forward to his “sharing” God’s own Holiness some day when his Salvation is perfected.

Romans 8:21&30

21 That the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

30 and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified He also glorified.

2Thessalonians 2:14

It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Psalm 17:15

As for me, I shall behold Your face in righteousness; I will be satisfied with your likeness when I awake.

We also know that any,

"momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison" (2Corinthians 4:17)

... and that,

"when Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then [we] also will be revealed with Him in glory" (Colossians 3:4).

In seeking this heavenly Glory- it is really a seeking of Christlikeness. Paul had it in mind when he penned **Philippians 3:10-14,20,21:**

10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;

11 in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

12 Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,

14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

15 Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you;

16 however, let us keep living by that same standard to which we have attained.

17 Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us.

18 For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ,

19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things.

20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;

21 who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

Secondly, a true Believer also seeks Honor, again not the worldly honor that most men long for but the Honor that comes from God- the Honor of His saying,

Matthew 25:21

Well done, good and faithful slave; you were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things, enter into the joy of your master

Thirdly, a true Believer seeks Immortality, the Day when this perishable Body **"must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1Corinthians 15:53).**

Paul is not discussing here how a person comes initially to Salvation or how God produces Christlikeness in him. He is describing what the Life of a true Believer is like, pointing out that those divinely-bestowed Qualities will end in the *final* Glory of the divinely-bestowed Eternal Life.

John beautifully states that basic Truth at the end of his 1st Epistle:

1John 5:20

We know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding, in order that we might know Him who is true, and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

Eternal Life is not simply a *better* quantity of Life than what others have- even though, by definition, it lasts through Eternity. We must remember that, even the Unsaved will have eternal Existence- which will be everlasting Death and Punishment.

2Thessalonians 1:6-10

**6 For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you,
7 and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when 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.
9 These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,
10 when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed—for our testimony to you was believed.**

The Revelation 14:9-12

9 Then another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand,

10 he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

11 "And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

12 Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus.

But Eternal Life is- first of all- a Quality of Life, the Life of God in the Soul of Man. Speaking of his own eternal life, Paul said,

Galatians 2:20

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 delivered Himself up for me.

Paul's point here is that a person who possesses the Life of God will reflect the true Character of God, and that it is on the Basis of that reflected godly Character that he will be judged. It is just as impossible for a person having Eternal Life to indefinitely Fail to reflect something of God's Character as it would be for him to indefinitely hold his Breath.

Eternal Life induces spiritual Breathing just as surely as physical Life induces bodily Breathing. The Puritan, John Murray said,

"Works without redemptive aspiration are dead works. Aspiration without good works is presumption."

But we must understand that Justification by Faith alone does not negate Works of Righteousness in the Believer's Life. The Scriptures makes it clear that just as surely as we are saved BY our Faith- we will be judged BY our Works. When God receives a Sinner at the time of his Conversion, He asks nothing but that he believe in Jesus Christ and submit to Him. But from that moment on, the Believer enters into a Responsibility of joyful and humble Obedience. And the Mark or Sign or Proof that his new spiritual Life is real- is his ongoing striving to be Obedient to God.

So, Faith in Christ does not produce a "Freedom to Sin" and to "Do what is Right in our own eyes". Instead, it produces a "Freedom from Sin" and a new, God-given Desire and Ability to do what pleases Him.

The half-brother of Jesus (James) made the Relationship between Faith and Works crystal Clear:

James 2:14-26

14 What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him?

15 If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food,

16 and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that?

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.

... and in **Romans 2:3-11** Paul was focusing on the completed, fulfilled Eternal Life that comes after the Final Judgment, when the Eternal State begins. This completed Eternal Life will be rendered according to the Salvation evidenced by those Good Deeds a Believer has manifested during his Life on earth.

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.

