

September 13, 2026 Session 2 Coming Judgment Romans 2:1-13

Judge (v) To form an opinion or estimation of after [careful?] consideration.

Judgment (n) The mental ability to perceive or distinguish relationships:

discernment. The capacity to assess a situation or circumstance and draw sound conclusions. **Judgment Day** In traditional Christian (biblical) eschatology, judgment is God's determination of which human beings shall be sent to heaven and which shall be condemned to hell. Paul delivered a warning to the church in Rome that godlessness and unrighteousness earns God's wrath. Gentiles are not the only ones who have sinned, earned the wrath of God, and are in need of salvation. Even those who might think of themselves as godly and righteous have also sinned. They too are subject to wrath and stand in need of salvation. This included the Jews. They have long had the law but often violated it. They have long known God but have not always obeyed Him. We all live under the burden of sin and are in danger of suffering the wrath of a just God who must judge every person according to his or her response to God and His commands. God's judgment is based on truth and is impartial. All people are guilty of sin and will be judged in the same way. The law cannot justify anyone. It only reveals sin and holds the world accountable to God. The whole world stands guilty before Him. Righteousness must come from God, not human effort.

No Excuses (Romans 2:1-5) p. 21

Most Jewish people in Paul's day considered themselves to be spiritually superior to non-Jews. Some people feel that way today. Paul reminded them that all people are without excuse because all people are sinners before God. Those who condemn others for sinning against God clearly know God's teachings. Therefore, when they commit the same sins as those whom they would label as ungodly and unrighteous, they cannot claim ignorance of God's revelation. It would be like a drunkard, who claims to be a Christian, condemning someone who is drunk. The evaluation of various actions and the determination that they are contrary to God's commands is appropriate. The evil is in the sinful act, not the act of identifying or judging the evil. Recently, I declared that homosexuality was a sin and simply stated that God declared it so in His Word.

1 Corinthians 6:9 *"Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites..."* We are to love the sinner but hate the sin. I condemned the sin, not the sinner. Only God can do that. God's judgment is always just, whereas the judgment of others is often prejudiced by self-righteousness and hypocrisy. God's judgment is truth-based, impartial and based on His character.

Vs. 3 Some Jews actually argued that God would excuse them for their sin, asserting that even if they sinned, they remained the children of God. They used

God's promises to His people as a way to nullify God's promise of judgment on the wicked. Paul warned his readers that God cannot be so easily manipulated and that ultimately all sinners are subject to wrath. God does not delight in wrath nor rejoice in the downfall of sinners. He seeks their repentance. However, a morally good God cannot abide sin, but at the same time, a benevolent God seeks not the punishment but the repentance of the sinner. In order to give people the opportunity to repent, God holds His wrath in check and delays judgment. In contrast, I enjoy killing flies because they make my horses miserable, and I do not delay judgment. Jesus warned us against being judgmental. **Matthew 7:1-3** *"Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye?"* Let's not confuse evaluation and condemnation. When we condemn others, we pass judgment on them for their sin while we may exhibit the same sinful behavior. That is why we must daily come before our Father, ask for forgiveness, and review His expectations for us. I pray, "Father God, show me my sin, forgive me, and strengthen me to obey You." Remember, the law is like a mirror to help us be more Christ-like. It would be like picking the broccoli out of our teeth. Without a mirror, or another person's eyes, we would not be able to see it. **Why** do you think individuals tend to judge others?

Vs. 4 The riches of God's kindness, restraint, and patience must not be misunderstood or abused. Kindness can refer to both the goodness and the benevolence of God. Restraint implies a temporary holding back from a necessary, sometimes unpleasant action. Patience or forbearance refers to remaining tranquil or delaying a reaction in the face of provocation. Riches stresses the abundance of all of the above that God has displayed as He has dealt with humanity. It does not mean material wealth.

Vs. 5 God is patient, but His patience is not endless. A hardened and unrepentant heart would lead to punishment. Hardness of heart in this context refers to the stubbornness seen in persistent sin in spite of the warnings in God's Word. The phrase unrepentant heart uses a negated form of the very repentance that God's kindness is intended to inspire. Hard-hearted and unrepentant describes a person unwilling to change, and is persistently unwilling to follow God's commands. Self-appointed hypocritical judges might think they were getting away with their own evil actions. They might think that by assuming the role as the judge of others (who infer they are worse than them) were excusing their own failings. People "put down" others to elevate themselves. Do not mistake constructive criticism for a "put down." Constructive criticism is a benefit. "Put downs" are not intended to be helpful. Tell me what I can do to be better!

Paul warned the ungodly that their sin would reap the wrath of God. He then warned those so eagerly judging the ungodly that they ought to attend to their own sins and not try to claim a right standing with God by condemning others. For a righteous God will judge each person on his or her own merits, not by comparing him or her to other flawed sinners. **Psalm 63:12** *“Also to You, O Lord, belongs mercy; for You render to each one according to his work.”* When God’s righteous judgment is revealed, hypocritical human judges will not be able to point to others, argue that the trespasses of others are worse than their own, and excuse themselves. God will repay each one according to his works. Repay translates to pay something that is owed or to fulfill something promised. God’s word repeatedly promises punishment to unrepentant sinners, and He always fulfills His promises to those who have earned His wrath. All people will belong to one of two categories when they stand before God in final judgment: those who have received the gift of eternal life through accepting Jesus as their Savior, and those who have deceived themselves and rejected Jesus. Even those who live good lives and try to follow God’s law fall short. Only those who confess Jesus as Savior and Lord will be saved. Anyone who rejects Jesus will be faced with the humiliating reality that they embraced a lie of the worst order. They disobeyed the truth about their need to be made right with God through Jesus.

Vs. 7 Paul contrasted those destined for eternal life and those destined to reap wrath and anger. **Galatians 6:8** *“For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.”* Seeking God is seeking glory, honor, and immortality. Immortality describes achieving an incorruptible state of being. This is a person who looks beyond his or her present existence and seeks more than the things that this life can provide—the life that results from a relationship with God in Jesus Christ. He or she is the kind of person who would see the glory of God’s creation and seek to know Him better rather than ignore Him. This person also hears the gospel with joy and faith, and such people can be recognized by their behavior. They will receive eternal life. A person may live who is devoted to self-seeking or selfish ambition. These people do not want God or goodness getting in the way of enriching or empowering themselves. They do not seek the things of God, and are unconcerned with immortality. They can be recognized by their behavior and will reap the wrath of God.

Vs. 9 There will be affliction and distress for every human being who does evil. This statement pertains more to this earthly existence. Affliction can refer to trouble of various kinds that inflict distress or oppression on its recipient. Distress envisions stressful events that create anguish or anxiety. There will be negative circumstances in this life. Evil deeds create problems for the evil doer now, not just in the future. The problems reaped now by those who engage in bad acts is a part of the judgment of God on everyone who does evil. Wow! Bad choices have consequences. In contrast, glory, honor, and peace are the harvest reaped

by everyone who does what is good. This does not mean those who do good have no problems. Paul certainly knew that was not the case, considering the list of afflictions he suffered for serving Christ. **2 Corinthians 11:24-25** *“From the Jews I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep;”* The list goes on but you get the idea. Following Jesus does not promise a life of wealth and leisure. Glory and honor are rewards achieved in the present life and refers to recognition, the respect accorded to one who has earned a high regard from others. Glory as a reward in the future can refer to the splendor or grandeur achieved in eternity as one shares in the glory of the presence of God. Peace is the absence of conflict or the presence of harmony. The judgment of God falls equally on all people—ethnicity, including being part of the people of Israel, provides no advantage when faced with the judgment of a just God.

One Way (Romans 2:12-13) p. 24

All people will be judged on the basis of their response to the revelation that God has given them. Some might object that they did not have God’s law, so they should not face judgment. But Paul already dealt with such people and explained their guilt. They rejected what they knew of God and chose to live ungodly, unrighteous lives. They did this in spite of the fact that their consciences condemned them. Even though they sinned, without the law (of Moses), they still knew their actions were wrong. Thus, without the law they were still guilty and will perish.

Vs. 13 Both hearing and doing the law reveals a person’s desire to obey God. Such obedience, even when imperfect, reveals a heart that seeks God and is open to His guidance and will be receptive to the gospel. Paul made it clear that even those who try to keep the law will fail. Neither obeying the law God gave to Moses nor doing good works in general will justify anyone before God. None are righteous by their own actions. Jews were not exempt from the wrath of God because they possessed and knew the law, and Gentiles were not exempt from God’s wrath because they did not possess the law. Through Christ we are justified. It describes a person who is declared innocent, upright, or righteous. Only by the substitutionary death of Jesus and faith alone in Him can any person be forgiven and declared right with God. **Romans 5:1** *“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,”* Jesus is the only righteous doer of the law. Only through placing saving faith in Him are believers justified—being permanently placed in right standing before the Father.

Things to think about

Focus on our own sin rather than judging others.

Eternal life is not earned by good works.
Our eternal destiny is based on our response to God in this life.