

God Is Perfectly Impartial

by Alan Martin

God's judgment is fair and righteous, and He repays each person according to their actions, with the good news that He forgives those who confess their sin and seek to please Him.

Scripture: Matthew 7:21-23, John 3:16, Romans 2:6-7, Romans 2:9-12, Romans 2:16

Topics: "God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of actions aligning with one's values and beliefs. He highlights that God sees and knows what a person truly values based on their actions, not just their words. The speaker uses examples such as a young person's interest in music or a parent's observation of their child's behavior to illustrate this point. He also mentions the significance of continuance in seeking glory and honor from God. The sermon concludes with a reminder that on the day of judgment, the secrets of men's hearts will be revealed, making it evident who truly knows and follows God.

Transcript

Thank you, Eli. We're still going through Romans. Romans chapter 2 is where we are.

Paul spends a good bit of time on one subject. And to be faithful, we spend the same kind of time that he intended for us to, so that we get what he is seeking for us to really fully grasp. So, the message today is from Romans 2, 6-16.

And it's that there's good news that God is perfectly impartial. And this is really good. His impartiality means His decisions and His dealings with us will be exactly according to what we have done.

No prejudice, no misunderstandings. Exactly according to what we have done. Let's read the passage and then we'll discuss it in depth.

Romans 2, 6-16. It says, God will repay each person according to what they have done. To those who by patient continuance and doing good seek glory and honor and incorruptibility.

Some of your versions will say immortality. But that immortality is incorruption. People that seek incorruption.

He will give to these that are seeking glory and honor and incorruptibility. He will give eternal life. But for those who are self-seeking, who reject the truth and obey in righteousness, indignation and wrath.

Tribulation and anguish on every soul of man who does evil. Of the Jew first and also of the Greek. But glory, honor and peace to everyone who works what is good.

To the Jew first and also to the Greek. For there is no partiality with God. For as many have sinned without the law, without law will also perish.

As many have sinned in the law will be judged by the law. For it's not the hearers of the law who are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified. For when the Gentiles who do not have the law by nature do the things in the law.

These, although not having the law, are a law to themselves. Who show the work of the law written in their hearts. Their conscience also bearing witness.

And between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them. In the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel. Now that's interesting.

That God will judge the secrets of men according to my gospel. Do you notice that judgment and gospel together in the same passage? Does our gospel include God's judgment? Think about that. When you think of the gospel, do you think of God's judgment? Paul's did, didn't it? Paul's gospel included God's judgment.

And you know why that's good news? Because God is good, right? All the time. So will His judgment be good? Absolutely. Even His judgment will be good for us and good for His creation.

And that's a part of the good news that Paul said. And here's what that judgment will be. Paul stressed this in verse 6. That God will repay each person according to what they've done.

And repay comes from the Greek word apodosai. Apodosai is where something comes from. And dosai means to give.

So it literally means that God will give back to you from what you have been doing. That's the idea. That's why some versions translate it, He'll pay or repay.

It just means He's going to give back to you from what you've done. And this is good news. Why is this good news? I want you to think of these things with me.

Because the good news of this is it's a very righteous judgment. There is no guilt by association. You realize, Clemente, you're not going to be judged by anything your son does.

You're not going to be judged by anything your father did. You're not going to be judged by anything your neighbor did. The son stands alone.

The father stands alone. The mother stands alone. The daughter stands alone.

You're not judged by your associations. That's good news. There's no unfair comparisons.

You know, even parents can do that. You're not like your sister. I wish you were like your brother.

You're like your sister always. Look, God's not that way. God's not going to compare you with your sister or your brother.

He's not going to compare you. His judgment is fair. It's you.

Just you. There's no blame for someone else. Isn't that nice? He's not going to blame you for what someone else did.

You're not going to answer for what your father did. Or a father's not going to answer for what a son did. That's what it says.

And that was even in Ezekiel. Where it says, No longer shall it said this proverb be said in Israel. You can find this in Ezekiel 18.

No longer shall it be said that the father eats sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge. No more. Uh-uh.

Every man will die for his own sin. You'll be judged for your own sin. And even a beautiful passage, if you want to look at it sometime, that's in Ezekiel 18.

But there's also going to be no assumptions. Have you ever been judged when someone assumed you did something? And you know what? When someone assumes you've done something and they judge you for it and you deny it, you know what you are? They think you're lying. To be honest, you'd have to admit to their assumption.

God doesn't judge like that. His judgment is perfect and just. There's no assumptions there.

And there's no misperceptions. And that's a big one. Because when someone thinks you said something, when they perceive that you had said something or they perceive you have done something and they approach you about it and you go, I didn't say that.

What do they think you're doing? They think you're lying. Someone told me this one time, perception is the cruelest form of reality. But God's not going to judge us based upon some misperception.

His judgment is good. One criteria. One.

His judgment with us will be exactly according to what we have done. That's fair, right? It should be. You know why that shouldn't scare us? If we have been reconciled with God, we're already on good terms, right? That shouldn't scare us.

We should look forward to His judgment. Because we've already been reconciled with Him. We have nothing to fear.

We just do what He says. We do what pleases Him. And it's all good.

That should be our heart's attitude. You know, to all seven churches in Revelation, if you know that the book of Revelation, right after John describes the glorious revelation of the risen Christ in heaven, he's told to write this down. There's a message for the churches in Asia Minor.

They were literal churches. They were literal cities in Asia Minor. And John receives the message from Christ.

And to each individual church, all seven of them, after Jesus describes one part of Himself, He begins every single direct address to them by saying, I know your deeds or your works. Same Greek word. I know

your works.

I know what you're doing. See, He was speaking to them from what they were actually doing. Not some perception on His own part.

He was speaking to them exactly according to what they were doing. And that's good. He commended them for the things they were doing well, right? And He addressed them directly for the things they were not doing well.

Or that they were doing wrong. Perfectly fair. You see it.

This is the risen Christ dealing with His church. So knowing that Jesus will deal with us based entirely upon what He has seen us doing, you know what that allows us to do? That allows us to live our life like His eyes are directly upon us. You know what? A lot of us had wished that those things that we did in our past, we had been conscious that the eyes of God were upon us, weren't we? Because we wouldn't have done what we did if we had been conscious that the eyes of God are upon us.

David said, I have set the Lord continually before me, and I will not be moved. There's a story, sad story, true story by the way, of a youth minister who heard the report about a couple, a young couple in his youth fellowship that were committing fornication in a vehicle late one evening before church that weekend. And so he approaches them and said, listen, it's awkward for me to approach you about this, but I want you to know that someone saw what you were doing, and they were horrified.

Who saw us? God. I want you to think about that. Why did it horrify them that the eyes of God were upon them? Do you think about that? Whose opinion are we seeking? Whose pleasure are we seeking? The eyes of men? Are we satisfied that just people think we're good? See, God sees everything.

And if we lived our lives like we are literally before His eyes, oh, it would keep us from doing so many things. Listen to what Paul said in verse 7. Paul said this, To those who by patient continuance in doing good seek glory and honor and immortality, He will give eternal life. Now, you know, these scriptures weigh together.

Let's talk about John 3, 16. Let's say that together. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.

Well, this talks about everlasting life too. How many times do we quote this one? Yeah. To those who by patient continuance in doing good seek glory, honor, and immortality, He will give eternal life.

That's in the Bible too. But how come very few of us could quote that? Does it have just as much weight as John 3, 16? Do you know that God sees what you do? And the word is continuance. Those who are continuing to do, if they're seeking glory and honor and immortality, you know what? God knows that's what you're seeking.

And you know how He knows it? You know how God knows what you're seeking? He simply watches what you do. You know, I can tell whether a young person likes music. I don't have to ask them.

What do they do when they get in their car? What do they have in their ear? You know, growing up, I knew what was going to happen at 10 o'clock. And the older I got, I didn't really remember. My dad had a body clock.

And at 10 o'clock, from whatever stage of sleep he was in, he was up and Channel 5 was coming on. And we were going to watch it. He enjoyed watching the news.

I could tell. God knows. That's why the Bible says, for the person who just listens but doesn't do, the only person he deceives is himself.

He's not deceiving God. It's obvious to God. But sometimes we end up tricking ourself.

You know how, and how, you remember the verse of Jesus? I had this on the slide. Can you, can you finish it for me? For wherever a man's treasure is, ah, there will his heart be also. How come it becomes obvious to a parent when any young man begins to have an interest? He certainly takes care of what he looks like.

He starts talking on the phone with someone when he never talks to them and he's talking on the phone to someone else. And you can tell. You can tell what a person's value, because they always do what they value doing without anybody telling them they have to.

I don't, you don't have to tell people to turn on the television. You don't have to tell, you don't have to tell people to research things they're interested in. They naturally do what they value.

And God knows where, yes, it is true. The Lord doesn't look upon the outward man. He doesn't need to.

He looks upon the heart. But you know what the heart does? The heart always pursues the things it's interested in. And we can tell what's in a person's heart by simply watching what they do.

It's simple. That's what Jesus meant by that. So those seeking glory, honor, and incorruption, you know what they're demonstrating? They're demonstrating what's important to them.

They're demonstrating what they're seeking. Glory, honor, and immortality. Let me ask you a question.

Whose glory do you think they're seeking? They're seeking God's glory. They're seeking His honor. And God can tell.

God can tell what they're seeking. Then he goes on in verse 8. But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and obey in righteousness, indignation, and wrath. You see, the difference is in who we seek.

Self-seeking. The Greek word is *eritheos*. And here's what it means.

In many translations, it's translated selfish ambition. Oh, they have an ambition. But it's not God's honor.

It's not God's glory. It's not to please God or do His will. Their ambition is their own self-interest.

And it says that this is the definition the Greek scholars gave to this word. It's one who places self-interest ahead of what the Lord declares right or what is good for others. Do you think God knows when that's going on? Do you want me to give you an example? Mother's Day.

You know, Mother's Day, we had some good kids, don't we? Never in church all year long. Good old Mother's Day. They're going to be right there by mom.

Why? What's on their heart? God? Mom. Mom is. You understand? How about that person? Is never late for work.

Never and never on time for church. I can't get there that early. Would you tell your boss that? Would you tell your boss that? Some people were on time for their job their entire career and they cannot make it to church on time.

Does God know? You know what's happened is that person has placed a very low value on punctuality is what's happened, right? We're not judging them for it, but we can tell it is as it is, right? Now, I do understand that as we get older, we're slower, it's not as easy to be there on time. So we just need to start an hour earlier, right? A friend of mine was a bus driver. Actually, he was the head of a bus driver for the city of Detroit.

And, of course, he had drivers miss their route time all the time, showing up late. And, of course, you know what that happens. The buses are late and he gets the calls.

So when he would call these guys into his office, he would ask them, now, when were you late? Let's say if they were at 8 o'clock, well, about 8, 10. No, no, no, no, no. When were you late? A wife? No, no, no.

When were you late? And they would just get this puzzle and he would keep pressing them and they'd go, I'm not sure. And he goes, well, this. How far do you live? How long does it take you to get from where you are to here? Well, about this time.

So when were you late? They get it. You see, they get it. But the person who places value on what he does, he works that out for himself.

And you can tell how he works it out. It's something that we need to help one another see. Now, the issue.

What's the real issue? The issue is really about motive, isn't it? It's about motive. The question is, what motivates us? Is God's honor our motivating factor or my pleasure? Wow. Is God's honor my motivation or my pleasure? Is it His way or my way? You know what? Some men work all week long and the only day they have off is Sunday.

So it's justifiable, isn't it, to say, look, I just have one day off. This is my day. So is it obvious who gets the value of that? It's understandable, isn't it? God understands, doesn't He? Oh, no, He does understand.

He understands that their day for them is more important than His day for Him. That's what He understands. Isn't it simple? It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure this out.

God knows. Who is it we are working for? See, the person we care most about is the person we're working for. Right? This is what God sees clearly.

And you know why men don't see this? It's so obvious. You know why men don't see it? Because you can't see God when you're looking at yourself. When you're thinking about what's the easiest for you, or what's the most convenient, or how you should be treated, or how it relates to you, or how you'll be affected, then suddenly, there's not room in there for every... I mean, I can't... Oh, you know, can you see why Paul said, in the day when the secret thoughts of men are revealed? Don't you look forward to that day? When the reasons you gave to yourself and the secret thoughts that they revealed, people will tell me and convince me.

You know how many people we give food to and say, we'll see you tomorrow. We'll give you free services, Pastor. We have more food to come, Pastor.

You think God knows, really? You think He knows? He does. He's not the one deceived. Men deceive themselves.

And someday, someday, all that they're doing... You know, there's some people that might be doing things the pastor doesn't know anything about. Sitting right out there in the pew saying, Amen. Amen, Pastor.

Amen, Pastor. God sees every single thing you do. God sees everything you watch on your computer.

God sees every show you watch on television. God sees every magazine and picture you linger over. And He knows why you do it.

That's just truth. And if you live your life in that consciousness, it will affect how you live. In a wonderful way.

But men don't see it. Proverbs 14.12 says this, There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death. Well, the reason it seems that right to them is because it feels right.

I mean, it feels right for them. They convince themselves that it's right. And God's opinion is really not primary.

That's not their main focus. So Paul says, he uses this term about these men that are self-seeking. Men that are self-seeking, he says, obey unrighteousness.

How do you obey unrighteousness? I thought you simply obeyed God. But here he says they obey unrighteousness. Well, the Greek word for obey actually means persuaded.

You're being persuaded by. So these men that are self-seeking, they're not persuaded by the truth. They're actually persuaded by unrighteousness.

And this is critical. Romans. Remember Romans 1.18, Paul said, the wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men.

Suppress the truth in unrighteousness. The very reason God's wrath is being revealed is what they're persuaded to live by. Wow.

That's scary. Can you tell what the end is going to be for such? They reject the truth and instead are persuaded by unrighteousness? Wow. You know what it shows? It shows that they have not been reconciled with God.

Because those that agree with God and love what He says and love His honor and love His glory don't disagree with His opinion. Isn't that simple? You can't value God Himself and devalue what He says in His Word. God has no more value in your life than the weight you give His Word.

Isn't that clear? You don't separate who God is from what God says. So Paul says this, that there's going to be, he goes on, there's going to be tribulation and anguish on every soul of man who does evil. Of the Jew first and also the Greek.

Now here's the good news. Does evil is a present tense. Don't any of you fear that God is going to judge you for a thing you've done? If we confess our sin, He's faithful and just to forgive us our sin and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

But there's one thing. If I'm seeking to please God and honor God and love God and I'm walking, I want to honor Him, and I trip and I fall. Does He see that? He forgives that? Now is that the same as I'm seeking myself? I'm seeking the world.

I don't care about it. I'm going this way and I fall. Is there a difference in those two? The difference is who you are seeking.

We'll all stumble, but God knows whether we're stumbling, attempting to please Him or stumbling because we're disinterested in pleasing Him. Big difference, isn't there? So for everyone who is doing evil, it's just how God describes them because they're continually doing it. There's nothing but tribulation and anguish that's awaiting them.

Men do evil because they disagree with God. They not only choose to do or continue to do what He calls evil. Remember what Paul said? They suppress it.

They suppress it. How do men try to suppress the truth? Think about it. These are ways that men try to suppress the truth.

They suppress their conscience. You know, there's a conscience that God gives men. Does a man who's committing adultery know it's wrong? So in order to continue to do it, what does he have to do? He has to suppress his conscience.

To someone stealing, even little children, little Joshua back there or even Jake, if they took something, why does a little child take something and do this? They know. They know. God has given men a conscience.

If you suppress it, you're saying you don't want it. You don't want what your conscience is saying. Or they suppress the evidence of creation.

The heavens declare the glory of God. The skies proclaim the work of His hands. Day after day they pour forth speech.

Night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. The Word runs to the uttermost parts of the earth.

Wisdom calls aloud in the streets. She raises her voice to all mankind saying, Leave your simple ways and live. Come.

If you turn to Me, I'll pour out My Spirit on you. I will make My thoughts known to you. But you have to suppress what creation is saying.

Paul said men suppress it and they're without excuse. The things that may be known of God are evident to them in the things being seen so that all men are without excuse. Men suppress the message of the church.

You know how they do that? It's simple to suppress the message of the church. You know all you have to do? Stop coming. Stop tithing.

Simple. Who will ever know it? No one will ever know it except God. Isn't that interesting? And sometimes they suppress correction.

It says the corrections of discipline are the way of life, Proverbs says. But you know what fools hate? Fools hate to be corrected. You know, son, you shouldn't be hanging around that person.

Don't tell me who my friends are going to be. See? Then you end up in some horrific situation simply because you suppressed the correction that you were being offered. And I have this there so you'll see.

Suppression doesn't have to be always loud and defiant. It can be very quiet, very passive, just simply ignoring you. You know how they do it nowadays? I don't care.

I used to hear that all the time. I was an in-school suspension teacher for 10 years. I don't care.

I was a bus driver too. Some kid's spitting on another student and I have to make him come up sit in the front so they can't spit on anyone else. And of course they don't like being embarrassed in front of their peers and so they come sit up front and say, well, you're going to have to sit there until you learn how to obey the rules.

Well, I don't care. Okay, well, neither do I. You can stay there all you want. If you don't care, why should I? When you decide that you care, we can talk again, okay? Until then, you sit right there.

It's amazing how quickly the next day, I am so sorry I did that. God knows what we care about. He sees.

He's not fooled by anything. And it doesn't have to be loud and defiant. You know where most men suppress the truth? Here's the thing.

God's elect, those God has reconciled to Himself, those who God's are His, they don't suppress the truth. They embrace it. They submit to it.

You know why? They have been reconciled with God. They have God's Spirit living inside them. And when God's Spirit inside us hears God's Word speak to us, we say, yes, thank you.

Thank you. That's how we respond. If we really have been reconciled with God, if we're God's elect.

Because our submission to God's Word shows our true heart's attitude. We've got a new heart. God's taken away the old heart of stone and He's put in there a heart of flesh.

It shows that He's put His Spirit in us and He's written His laws right on our hearts. Right there. And He actually inspires us to walk in Him.

I love it. Eli quoted the Scripture this morning. Those who are led by the Spirit, what are they? They're the sons of God.

So what are those who are led by their lust? They're the sons of the devil. They're controlled by the Spirit who is at work in the sons of disobedience. It shows that they've not been reconciled to God.

We show our heart attitude toward our Father by embracing everything our Father seeks to work in our life. Right? So God will give those... Well, let me just say this. This is what demonstrates our love for God.

This is what 1 John says. This is love for God. To obey His command.

I don't have the Scripture up there, but one of my favorite Scriptures about love is this. Do you see a man who keeps God's Word? Verily, in such a man is the love of God perfected. You see what he's saying? Do you see someone who's constantly seeking to do what God says? You can tell that person has a great love for his God.

Isn't that beautiful? This is love for God. To obey His commands. You know how you can tell that there's an evil heart of unbelief that the Scripture warns about? The Scripture warns about the evil heart of unbelief.

Here's the language that comes out of the mouth. Because the Bible says that out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks. To the unbelieving heart, when there's an evil heart of unbelief, here's what you hear.

Oh, it's too hard. It's too strict. No one can do that.

It's always on my case. Makes me feel bad. You know what the heart of Jesus is? For lo, it is written in the volume of the book, I, can you finish it? I delight to do Thy will.

And the person who delights to serve the Lord, that person shows a heart for God. That's how you can tell. And what does God do? That's why Paul mentions in verse 10, Glory and honor and peace to everyone who is working what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

So God will give those who work from what they've done. Is that wrong? Isn't that good? You know what that means for you and I? That means if we will respond to the Spirit of God in us, and do His will and seek to please Him, He'll forgive us for our stumblings along the way. And when we stand before Him, you know what we'll hear? Well done, thou good and faithful servant.

He's going to give to us exactly... He forgives our stumblings. But to the people that really only profess to know Him, but were really self-seeking, what's He going to say? When they say, Lord, Lord, what's He going to say? Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you. Wow! It's going to be obvious that day.

It may not be obvious now, but on the day of judgment, the secrets of men's hearts are going to be revealed. Okay? I want to stop right there, just so we can have time to reflect. Let's bow our heads.

Father, your eyes see everything. Just this week and this morning, there's not a thought that's been in our mind that you're not aware of. Every single word that we spoke this week, you heard.

And we are grateful that standing before someone who has such knowledge, whom your Word says, nothing is hidden before the eyes of the one that we are going to give an account to. We're grateful that you with your great ability are so merciful, and that you're so kind, and that you're so patient, and that you don't delight in punishing men. We're so grateful because there's none of us could stand before you completely innocent or blameless.

You've already seen too much. But we bless you that along with your great justice and your great ability to hold every man accountable, you have provided a way for us to receive mercy. And you provided grace to change us.

And your grace actually teaches us to begin to deny what's wrong and love what's right. You are so good. You don't just tell men to be good.

You enable men to be good. You don't just tell men what pleases you. You give them power to live in a way that pleases you.

And so it's good news to us, Lord. We look forward to the day when we're going to stand before you and hear it like it really is. And thank you for moments like now, this morning, that we can stop and get a reality check.

And that while there's time, we can do what's necessary to take care of the issues in our life that are not pleasing to you. Thank you. May we not treat such patience and kindness lightly, but may we take full advantage of it.

In Jesus' name, amen.

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