“God: The Just Judge”

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Isaiah 30:15-21

Please find with me the second chapter of the Book of Romans. Billy Graham tells the following story. “One of the most colorful figures in American history was Robert G. Ingersoll. He was an agnostic who gave dramatic lectures throughout the nation about his doubts concerning the existence of God. One night when he was addressing an audience in a small town in New York, he proclaimed quite eloquently his doubts about a future judgment and Hell.

When he was finished, an old drunk stood up in the rear of the hall and said with thick tongue, *“I sure hope you’re right, Brother Bob. I’m counting on that!”* https://billygraham.org/-decision-magazine/april-2010/the-justice-of-god/

Romans chapter two is an answer to the question, “What kind of judge is God?” I’ve titled today’s sermon “God, The Just Judge.” Shall we pray?

This past week the leaves on the trees in your yard have finally begun to fall. Now, how is it that the leaves on the trees turn green in the spring and in the fall they turn red, purple, orange, yellow and brown and then fall off? Here’s the majesty of the leaf. Inside every leaf is a chemical compound called chlorophyll, which is produced as water is *somehow* drawn from the ground through the tree roots and up through the trunk of the tree to the branch. Chlorophyll *somehow* collects sunshine and takes carbon dioxide from the air and *somehow* transforms it into sugar and starch.

Then, as time passes, the daylight shortens and the temperature around the leaf drops, *somehow* the chlorophyll breaks down. Then, *somehow* a new layer of cells begin to grow just exactly where each leaf attaches to the branch and *somehow* it seals itself. The inability of the leaf to gather anymore sunlight *somehow* occurs and *somehow* the green leaf changes color. And, after a while, *somehow* it simply falls by gravity to the ground.

The “somehow” was very carefully answered for us in the first chapter of Romans. We find that it’s the invention of the Master Designer Whose Name is God. And each tree and each leaf shows to mankind the Invisible God and that the Invisible God Who made everything is visible.

Romans 1:20 *“For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: …”*

The invisible things which are clearly seen are under-stood. And they are understood by the things that are made. Which things? God’s existence and His eternal power.

Now, the context of Romans 1:20, which we recently considered, is the wrath of God. It may be difficult for us to join together God’s wrath with His creation. But that is exactly what we found when we studied the first chapter of this book.

And why? Why does the LORD join together His wrath with His creation? Here’s why (from Romans one).

v. 21 – because, when we knew Him, we refused to glorify Him.

v. 21 – because we became ungrateful.

v. 23 – because we changed the glory of God into images of human beings; of birds; of beasts; images even of reptiles and insects.

v. 24 – because we dishonored our bodies between ourselves.

v. 25 – because we changed the truth of God into a lie.

v. 26 – because we changed the natural use of our bodies to what is contrary to nature.

v. 27 – because we burned in lust; men for men and women for women.

v. 28 – because we didn’t like to keep the knowledge of God in our minds and hearts.

v. 29 – because we became filled with unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, and because of twenty more evil things; as Paul writes in verses 29 through 32.

The beauty and the majesty and the power of the Creator is obvious. God reveals Himself to us through what we see. He’s clearly seen by the things that He’s made. The entire universe is a glorious marvel to behold. Yet, the human race, affected by sin, for the most part, chooses to this very moment, to dishonor and to reject Him. And then we are ungrateful and then to we corrupt God’s program by changing truth into lies. And we change what’s natural into what’s unnatural. And we’ve filled ourselves with unrighteousness.

And still, as trees grow and their leaves collect sunlight and turn green and one season turns into another season, God is patient.

How do you handle it when someone refuses and rejects you? That should tell you a lot about how God responds when His creatures refuse and reject Him.

I think, in large part, we’ve lost a really wonderful thing when we no longer believe in a King. You see, throughout history, a king was sovereign. A king was the law-giver. A king was the final authority. A king was a judge. Yet, he was merciful and kind. And a king, a good king, was a huge blessing to the kingdom. So, today, we’ve lost a wonderful blessing since we no longer believe in a King.

I honestly believe we in America have, for the most part, lost all moral mooring without this sense of a Good King Who is watching over His empire. And He Who is perfectly good; He Who perfectly loves His creatures; He has responded to our rejection and dishonor. He provided His Only Begotten Son as a Savior for the world.

And, I noticed as I re-read Romans one, that the only answer for our rejection of God is the Gospel of God’s Son, the LORD Jesus Christ. It’s found in one place and in one Person. It’s found in the Gospel and in the Person of Jesus Christ.

So, as we begin Romans two, I want you to discover with me “God: The Just Judge.” What’s really on my heart today is this. It’s a precious thing and a very personal thing to believe in the Just Judge. And it’s to your advantage to believe that He is a Just Judge.

The Apostle Paul, you see, is a man with an axe to grind. He’s got something to say about God. He understands God and he knows God. And so, Romans two is Paul’s description of one of the most important attributes of God; that He is our Judge.

What do we find here as far as God being a Judge is concerned? What we see are the specific characteristics of God’s judgment. So, when we read this chapter, we can honestly ask “What kind of judgment is God’s judgment?”

Now, when you read Romans 2:1, you will see that that verse belongs to chapter one. And the new context begins at verse two.

Romans 2:1 *“Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. (2) But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.”*

Romans two is a statement of the characteristics of the Judge, the same Judge that Abraham spoke of when he called him “the Judge of all the earth.” Genesis 18:25 *“Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?”*

I’ve decided to approach today’s study from the viewpoint of a man standing before an earthly judge. And so, I’m asking you this question “What kind of judge would you want as your judge?”

For, example, would you want Him to be fair and impartial? Would you want Him to be merciful? Would you want to say to Him “But, you don’t know the whole story, Judge.”

Here’s what I struggled with this week. How can I possibly show you what the Judge is like in just one sermon? And here’s what I concluded. Is the Judge, God, also a Priest?

You see, the mercy side of the Judge is His Priesthood. Here, for example, is Hebrews 4:15 *“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”*

One big reason why people struggle with the concept of God being their Judge is because they don’t see the whole picture that we have of God given in the Bible. The LORD Jesus is a Judge. But He’s also a Priest. He understands. He’s been touched by the feeling of your infirmities. He was tempted just like you. And since He never sinned, that gives Him the right and the power to judge you. And in God’s case, folks, He’s even got the power to judge your motives.

There are six characteristics of God’s judgment given by Paul here. Let me show them to you one by one.

First, His judgment is truth-based; verse two.

Romans 2:2 “*But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.”*

If you get to stand before a good judge this week (and you might), you will be glad that he’s basing his ruling on the truth, no matter what his ruling is towards you.

Think about this. Not only has the sense of a Sovereign King been lost in America, but also, a sense of truth. We even debate Pilate’s question when Jesus stood in the Judgment Hall when he asked Jesus “What is truth?”

The Bible tells us this. Deuteronomy 32:4 *“He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.”*

The Bible also tells us that God delights in lovingkind-ness, in judgment, and in righteousness. Jeremiah 9:24 *“But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.”*

And listen with me to the words of Jesus. John 3:21 *“But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.”*

What kind of Judge would God be if He dismissed the truth? And in your case and in mine, He even judges our motives. He knows the whole story. He knows all the circumstances and He knows why you did it.

As someone once said “God’s judgments are not when things go wrong; it’s when God starts to put things right.” [Found on [www.crosswalk.com](http://www.crosswalk.com) “Why God’s Judgment Is Actually A Blessing” by [Veronica Neffinger](https://www.crosswalk.com/blogs/christian-trends/)].

First, His judgment is truth-based; verse two.

Second, His judgment is inevitable; verse three.

Romans 2:3*“And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?”*

How many people do you know who think that they will escape the all-seeing eye of the Judge of all the earth? Any-one who thinks that is totally deceived. We might avoid standing before a human judge this week. But would or should the Judge of all mankind let some of us off and we receive no justice? If He’s a Judge, then we must be judged. His judgment is inescapable.

First, His judgment is truth-based; verse two.

Second, His judgment is inevitable; verse three.

Third, His judgment is compulsory; verse four.

Romans 2:4 “*Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? (5) But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; …”*

Do you remember the story of David and Bathsheba and Bathsheba’s husband Uriah? Had you been David, would you be thinking that he could possibly get away with sending Uriah to the front lines of the battle just to cover up his adultery? Do you think that David thought the LORD was a Judge for everyone except him? That's exactly what David thought.

But David’s action were displeasing to the LORD.

And how often do we do the very same thing when we sin and we think that we can get away with it? Doesn’t this make you see how valuable it is to keep the sense in your heart that the LORD is indeed a Just Judge and He must judge every sin and that we can’t possibly get away with it?

Paul is saying. “Think about the riches of God’s goodness, the riches of His patience, the riches of His longsuffering. And when you do, you’ll see that God has been extremely good to you; so good, in fact, that it should lead you to repent over your sins. And further, if you choose a hard heart and an unrepentant heart, you are treasuring up for yourself wrath because one day you must stand before Him. It’s a requirement of life that you stand before God. It’s compulsory.

First, His judgment is truth-based; verse two.

Second, His judgment is inevitable; verse three.

Third, His judgment is compulsory; verse four.

Fourth, His judgment is fair; verse six.

Romans 2:6*“Who will render to every man according to his deeds: (7) To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: (8) But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,*

*(9) Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; (10) But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: (11) For there is no respect of persons with God.”*

His judgment is fair. Everyone everywhere is accountable to God for his or her actions. And God will fairly judge you and me. By the way, this idea here in verses six through nine comes right out of the OT. Psalm 62:12 says this *“Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work.”*

And Elihu says this to Job. Job 34:12 *“Yea, surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment.”*

And Paul adds this in Romans 14:12 *“So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”*

If you stand before the LORD one day and you proceed to give an account by listing all of your good works, expect Him to judge you accordingly. You will stand before Him as one *“who by patient continuance in well doing sought for glory and honour and immortality, …”* or as one who was *“contentious, and did not obey the truth, but unrighteousness …”*

Your works are the expression of your character. So, whenever someone believes on Christ and is saved, he or she then does good works and those good works will be judged. And even though nobody can be saved except through faith, our works will be judged. As you will discover as you read and study the very next chapter in Romans, you will see clearly that there is no salvation with God by works. It’s only by faith. But, as we all know, faith without works is dead. Once saved, works follow.

When we stand before Him, He’ll ask us “Did you do My will?” And we’ll be judged accordingly. Listen with me to Jesus again. Matthew 7:16 *“Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? (17) Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. (18) A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.*

*(19) Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. (20) Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. (21) Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.*

*(22) Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? (23) And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”*

Salvation by faith. Judgment by works.

First, His judgment is truth-based; verse two.

Second, His judgment is inevitable; verse three.

Third, His judgment is compulsory; verse four.

Fourth, His judgment is fair; verse six.

Fifth, His judgment is impartial; verse twelve.

Romans 2:12 *“For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; (13) (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.*

*(14) For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: (15) Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;) …”*

How many times have you heard this question “But what about those who’ve never heard the Gospel? What about people who’ve tried their best and no one told them about Christ?” According to the Bible, the judgment of God is impartial.

For example, the Jew might say *“Aren’t we as a people better than everyone else?”* And the Gentiles might ask *“Is it fair for God to judge me when I didn’t have the same Law the Jews had?”* Well, here’s Paul’s answer. Romans 2:12 *“For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; …”*

Now, did the Jews have a law? Yes, we all know it as the Law of Moses. And do the Gentiles have a law? Yes, we all know in our hearts, attested to by our conscience. So, yes, we are all under God’s judgment because we’ve either listened to the law in our conscience or we’ve listened to His law in the words of the Books of Moses.

First, His judgment is truth-based; verse two.

Second, His judgment is inevitable; verse three.

Third, His judgment is compulsory; verse four.

Fourth, His judgment is fair; verse six.

Fifth, His judgment is impartial; verse twelve.

Sixth, and finally, His judgment is mixed with mercy.

In 1829 a Philadelphia man named George Wilson and his friend James Porter robbed the U.S. mail, and nearly killed someone in the process.  Both men were apprehended, arrested, brought to trial, found guilty, and sentenced to death by hanging. James Porter was executed on schedule.

But, some of George Wilson’s friends intervened in his behalf and were finally able to obtain a presidential pardon for him from then President Andrew Jackson.  When George Wilson was told about the pardon he refused to accept it!  The Sheriff was unwilling to hang Wilson with a presidential pardon. So he contacted the president about the prisoner's unwillingness to accept the pardon and to give him instructions about what he should do, execute him or not?

The perplexed president turned to the United States Supreme Court to decide the case.  The Supreme Court and Chief Justice John Marshall ruled as follows: “The court cannot give the prisoner the benefit of the pardon, unless he claims the benefit of it…. It is a grant to him: it is his property; and he may accept it or not as he pleases.”

“A pardon is an act of grace, proceeding from the power entrusted with the execution of the laws…. (But) delivery is not completed without acceptance. It may then be rejected by the person to whom it is tendered, and…we have no power in a court to force it on him.”

A pardon, folks, is a piece of paper, the value of which depends on its acceptance by the person who it is given to.  If the person chooses to refuse it, then it’s no longer really a pardon!  The Supreme Court ruled that the pardon had to be accepted or the penalty still stood!  George Wilson therefore was hanged, refusing the very pardon that could have set him free!

Oh, how often people today do the very same thing with the pardon offered to them by the work of Christ on the Cross. This is the exact same thing. Salvation through Christ, must be accepted to be valid even though Christ has paid the price. Apart from God’s mercy, we must accept the wrath of God. [Found on www. [http://www.nnedaog.org/sermons/ ESCAPE8.HTM](http://www.nnedaog.org/sermons/%20ESCAPE8.HTM) “Escape From God’s Wrath”]. [Also found on http://www.cbmcint.com/the-man-who-refused-a-pardon].

Folks, because God is Who He is, a Just Judge, He must also be a Merciful Judge. Let me close with this. “A pastor of a Church in Boston met a boy outside the Church who had a rusty bird cage with several birds in it.  He asked the boy where he got the birds, the boy responded, *"I trapped them in my yard."*  The pastor asked the boy what he was going to do with those birds.  The boy responded, *"I am going to feed them to my cat!"*

The Pastor's heart went out to the birds and so he offered the boy some money to purchase the birds and the cage. The boy was perplexed, saying; *"You don't want these crummy wild birds, they don't even sing, they're worthless."*The Pastor, however, offered more money and finally the boy said o.k.  The boy left and the Pastor took the cage out back of the church and opened the cage letting the birds go free!  The next Sunday he used the empty cage in a sermon to illustrate how Christ paid for our freedom, even though our enemy had trapped us and preserved us for destruction.  Though destined for destruction, God offers to pay the price so we can escape!” [Found on www. <http://www.nnedaog.org/sermons/-ESCAPE8.HTM> “Escape From God’s Wrath”].

Folks, there is a judgment to come. And yet, God has provided a way so that we will not enter into condemnation. He gave us His Son. And the moment we believe on Christ, we pardoned and set free.

Today, as we come to His table, remember this. This is His table. We’ve been invited to His table. And so, don’t come to the table unless you’ve come to Him for His free gift of salvation. You won’t get salvation from partaking of the elements of this table. You get salvation by putting your faith in Christ. Will you do that? If so, then come and partake with us.

So, how have you responded to the knowledge that God is a Just Judge? Have you believed on Christ? If not, why not?

Like everyone around you, you’ve broken every one of God’s Ten Commandments and you are in dire need of God’s offer of a free gift; the gift of righteousness. I am offering that free gift to you today. If you will repent of your sin and believe on Jesus Christ today, you will be rescued; and rescued for eternity.

Today is the day of salvation. Today, you need to deal with yourself, your sins, and the Savior today. What do you need to do? You need to Repent and to Believe.

* To Repent = I change my mind about God, Christ, my sin, and God’s free gift of salvation.
* To Believe = I simply trust Jesus Christ alone as the One Who paid the entire penalty for my sins.

Here’s the Salvation Prayer*. “LORD, I admit that I am a sinner and deserve judgment for my sins. I believe Jesus died in my place on the Cross to remove that judgment. Please save me and give me that gift of righteousness. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.”*

Shall we pray?

Now let’s sing Hymn # 153 “Worthy Of Worship”

Whenever you remind yourself that God’s judgment is truth-based, go back to the day Jesus stood before Pontius Pilate. Can you remember why the Jews had brought Jesus before Pilate? Do you remember where Jesus was that day? John 18:28 *“Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the Passover.”*

Here’s what happened.

John 18:33 *“Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? (34) Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? (35) Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done?*

*(36) Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.*

*(37) Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.*

*(38) Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.”*

Pilate was anything but a true judge. He found no legal reason to condemn Jesus. Yet he sentenced Him to death. He must have loved his job and his high position as Governor of Judea more than he loved truth. And Pilate was afraid of what the Jews might do if he released Jesus instead of Barabbas. So, when Pilate asked Jesus “What is truth?” you can be sure he did not know what truth was.

Folks, anyone who stands before the Judge of all men will stand before Someone Who only judges according to the truth.

On May 6, 1980, Joyce Ann Brown was convicted of robbery despite the rental car used in the crime being leased to a different person named Joyce Ann Brown who lived in [Denver, Colorado](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Denver,_Colorado), and she had strong alibi of being at work. The conviction was based on a) eyewitness identifi-cation, b) testimony of a cellmate that she confessed. Following investigations by “[60 Minutes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/60_Minutes),” “the [Dallas Morning News](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dallas_Morning_News),” and “[Centurion Ministries](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Centurion_Ministries),” an appeal was filed and Texas Court of Criminal Appeals set aside her conviction because of prosecutorial misconduct for not revealing that the prosecution witness had been convicted of perjury, and it was not revealed that she received a reduced sentence after testifying. [Found on www. <https://en.-wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_wrongful_convictions_in_the_United_States>].

Folks, no one has yet to stand before the LORD and been wrongfully convicted.

Something more to think about.

First, a man named Jan Hus. Born in a country called Bohemia (now Czechoslovakia), Hus became both a priest and a professor in the University of Prague (Switzerland) in 1396. Then, he discovered the Bible and began to both read it and teach it. He came to reject the divine origin of the Roman Catholic Church and the authority of the Pope. He also came to some conclusions regarding the priests he associated with. He said this regarding then. They are *“worldly, proud, mercenary, pleasure-loving, and hypocritical…. They do not regard their sins as such, do not allow themselves to be reproved, and persecute the saintly preachers. There is no doubt that if Jesus lived among such people, they would be the first to put him to death.”* [Found on [www.encyclopedia.com](http://www.encyclopedia.com) “Jan Hus”].

Hus met his untimely end tied to a stake and burned to death. In the end, Jan Hus sang a hymn as he was being burned at the stake in 1415.

Second, John Calvin. Have you ever heard the name John Calvin? The most important Pastor and Theologian of Protestant Reformation came from France. John, his brother, his sister and two friends had to flee Catholic persecution in 1536.

You see, in the fifteenth century, Johanne Gutenberg invented moveable type and printed a Bible for the common people. John Wycliffe translated the Bible into English for the common people to read. And a man named Jan Hus was excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church for preaching the message of John Wycliffe. Hus Then a German named Martin Luther was charged by the Catholic Church with heresy because he promoted the teachings of Jan Hus. Hus, as you know was burned at the stake. So, by 1536, it was quite common for Christians to be persecuted in France; John Calvin, his family and his friends were among them.

He once wrote *“Preaching is the public exposition of Scripture by the man sent from God, in which God Himself is present in judgment and in grace.”*

Here’s the Apostle Paul on God’s wrath. Romans 3:5 *“Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?”*

I Thessalonians 1:10 *“And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.”*

Here’s the Apostle Peter. II Peter 3:7 *“**But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.”*

Here’s Jude 1:7 *“Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.”*

Here’s Paul preaching in Athens, Greece. Acts 17:31 *“**Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.”*

And here’s Jesus. Matthew 3:7 *“But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?”*

John 3:36 *“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”*

Matthew 7:13 *“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: …”*

Matthew 8:12 *“But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”*