

Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Principles of God's Judgment, Part 4a

Scripture: Romans 2:11-13

Code: 45-20A

Let's look at the Word of God tonight together in Romans chapter 2. We want to continue our examination of the principles of judgment as they appear in the first 16 verses of this chapter. Having just been in a court of law on Friday, this particular chapter has gained a new vividness in my mind as I watched the system that we call justice working out its path. I am reminded that this has been something that men have dealt with throughout the history of humankind, seeking to do what is right, seeking to do what is just, and always finding it extremely difficult.

The traditional view of justice is the picture of the blindfolded statue with the scales in hand, trying to weigh out equity without being influenced by the appearance of anyone. This idea that justice is blind simply means that justice does not want to take into account anyone's looks or anyone's position in life or anything other than the truth itself.

Years ago in ancient Greece and Rome, justice was pictured not only with eyes that were blindfolded but with no hands, so that justice could not see and justice could not receive. It could not choose on the basis of appearance and it could take no bribes. It could not be bought.

Justice is a high goal and justice is an elusive thing, and in our society, we know well about injustice. I heard this week about a man who just finished serving 17 years for a crime he did not commit. They let him go and started the punishment of the real criminal. We work hard at the problem of justice and sometimes there is an infinite price to pay.

There's an ancient story of a man who, in spite of all of the passions of a father, had to pass the death sentence on his own two sons for he was the leader of his country and his sons had conspired to overthrow the government. According to the historian, the youth stood before the man, who was named Brutus the Elder, and they pleaded and they wept and they hoped their tears would be the most powerful defense with a loving father. The men who sat behind the ruler whispered, "What will he do? These are his children." He said, "To you, the executioners, I deliver my sons." And the historian wrote, "In this sentence he persisted inexorable, notwithstanding the weeping intercession of the multitude and the cries of the young men calling upon their father by the most endearing names. The executioner seized them, stripped them naked, bound their hands behind them, beat them with rods, and then struck off their heads, the inexorable Brutus looking on the bloody spectacle with unaltered countenance. Thus, the father was lost in the judge."

That may be a good picture of how it will be someday with God, who offers Himself as a loving father, but someday the father will be lost in the judge. And God's justice is even more inexorable. God always does what is just. In Leviticus 19:15, God indicts the people in anticipation, as it were, of their sins of injustice, which will become a part of their life. He says, "You shall do no injustice in judgment. You shall not be partial to the poor nor defer to the great, but you are to judge your neighbor fairly. You shall have just balances, just weights, and a just ephah" – ephah was a measure of grain – "and a just hin" – another form of measure. "I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt."

He demands of them justice. And as I said, it becomes for them an indictment because they proceeded to be so unjust. In Deuteronomy 16 and verses 19 and 20, it says, "You shall not distort justice, you shall not be partial. I and you shall take not a bribe for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and perverts the words of the righteous. Justice and only justice you shall pursue that you may live and possess the land which the Lord your God is giving you."

In Psalm 82 verse 2, it says, "How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked?" And there we see that they began to proceed directly along the path that was forbidden. And the Proverbs tell us in chapter 17 verse 15, "He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous, both of them alike are an abomination to the Lord." In Amos, the prophet in chapter 5 says, "Therefore, because you impose heavy rent on the poor and exact a tribute of grain from them, though you have built houses of well-hewn stone yet you will not live in them, you have planted pleasant vineyards yet you will not drink their wine for I know your transgressions are many and your sins are great, you who distress the righteous and accept bribes and turn aside the poor in the gate."

Prophet Habakkuk likewise said in chapter 1 verse 4, "The law is ignored and justice is never upheld for the wicked surround the righteous; therefore, justice comes out perverted." God said be just, the people proceeded to be unjust, and God proceeded to chasten them.

Now, the reason God hates injustice is because it is such a deviation from His own character. God is absolutely just. He will judge rightly without favoritism. And someday those who would think themselves to be sons will find that the father is lost in the judge, for He will be just no matter who you are. Now, this is the theme of our text. And I want us to look at verse 11, and that keys the section down through verse 16 that we will examine tonight. "For there is no respect of persons with God." Now, what that verse is saying is that God is righteously impartial. He is not looking at the person on the outside, He is looking at the conduct to see whether it represents righteousness or unrighteousness. The issue is not whether a person is poor or rich, whether a person is a Jew or Gentile, whether a person is a church member or not, a man or a woman, educated or uneducated, wise or foolish. He's looking at the works. God's sentence will be strictly on the basis of character and God will be impartial and cannot be bribed. He judges without respect of persons.

Now, that phrase, “there is no respect of persons with God,” is a most interesting phrase. Respect of persons is basically one word, and the one word is a combination of the word “face,” your face, and the word “to receive.” And with God, He doesn’t receive your face, is what it really says. God is not in the business of receiving anybody’s face, which means – 1 Samuel 16:7 – God does not judge on the basis of an outward appearance but on the basis of the heart. God is not going to judge on the basis of the surface. God doesn’t receive face. And the word, of course, later became the word for partiality. God is not partial. Partiality is the fault of one who gives judgment with respect to the outward circumstances and not the inward merit. To have respect of a person’s appearance is to rule in their favor for what you see on the surface rather than what you know to be true in the heart. And only the vice of an evil judge would so violate justice. God cannot, God will not do that.

In fact, I believe this is illustrated again and again by the reality that we that saw this morning, that throughout history it has been the quote/unquote “wise and prudent,” the erudite, the up-and-inners, if you will, the supposedly religious and God-fearing whom God has not received because they thought they could come on their own terms. And on the other hand, it has been the poor and the naked and the lame and the hauled and the lepers and the blind and the destitute who have come because they were in desperation, knowing they had no resource at all. But they were received because God doesn’t look on the face.

The Old Testament gives this same principle again and again, and I don’t want to take all the time it would take to develop the total concept throughout the Word of God, but I think enough to give you a hint. I would say that the most elevated and exalted creature that God ever made was Lucifer, the son of the morning, who fell and is known as the devil or Satan. And if you were to go back into the 14th chapter of Isaiah, you would read this, “O Lucifer, son of the morning, how art thou cut down to the ground who didst weaken the nations for thou hast said in thine heart, ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will be like the Most High,’ yet thou shalt be brought down to Sheol, to the sides of the pit. And they that see thee shall narrowly look on thee and consider thee, saying, ‘Is this the one who made the earth to tremble who did shake kingdoms, who made the world like a wilderness and destroyed its cities, who opened not the house of his prisoners? Is this the one who had so much power and so much beauty and so much wonder?’”

If there was ever one that God might have dismissed because he was so exalted, it would have been that one, but God cast him rapidly out of His heaven for He has no respect of persons, not even the supreme personage of all of His creation. And if He has no respect against – for him, rather, when he sins against God, He will have no respect of persons toward someone lesser than that being.

This principle is repeated throughout the New Testament, and I just would suggest a few verses so that you’ll be aware of this. In Acts 10:34, Peter opens his mouth and says, “Of a truth I perceive that

God is no respecter of persons.” That’s Peter in Acts. Paul in Galatians says essentially the same thing in chapter 2 verse 6: “God accepteth no man’s person.” In chapter 6 of Galatians and verse 7: “Be not deceived, God is not mocked. Whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap.” Whoever he is is the implication. “He that sows to the flesh shall have the flesh reap corruption. He that sows to the spirit shall have the spirit reap everlasting life.” It depends on what you do, and God will not pass by judgment because of who you are. In Ephesians 6:9: “You masters do the same things unto your servants forbearing threatening knowing that your Master also is in heaven, neither is there respect of persons with Him.” The same phrase is used in Colossians 3:25 and again in 1 Peter 1:17.

Now, that is the thesis of what I want you to understand tonight in Romans chapter 2, so you can look at it again. A phrase repeated at least five, six times in the New Testament is the key to our passage. God is no respecter of persons. Whoever you are, He promises to judge.

In the 16 verses that begin the second chapter are the principles by which God will judge. Now, we’ve said that in verse 1 is the principle of knowledge. God will judge men who give evidence of knowing His law. The second principle in verses 2 and 3 is the principle of truth. God will judge according to the truth. You cannot hide the truth from God. Thirdly, in verses 4 and 5, God will judge according to real guilt, for men are guilty more than anything else of abusing the mercy and the grace and the goodness and the forbearance and the long suffering of God. Then in verses 6 through 10, we learn that God is going to judge men based upon their deeds. He will look at their deeds and by their deeds determine whether in fact they have a right to enter into eternal life or not.

In John 5 verse 28, Jesus said, “Marvel not at this for the hour is coming in which all that are in the grave shall hear His voice and shall come forth. They that have done good, unto the resurrection of life. And they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” Our Lord, in John 5:28-29, is saying exactly what Paul says in verses 6 to 10, that judgment will be made on the basis of an objective criterion of good works.

Now, as we’ve been pointing out to you, good works are not the cause of salvation. It is a gift of God, not of works. But good works are the consequence of salvation for in the same passage it says “not of works lest any man should boast,” the next verse says, “we were created unto good works which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.” So that our works, then, can become an objective criterion by which God will judge.

There will also be a subjective criterion and that is faith. God knows who is a believer because the names are written in the book of life. Those who have put their faith in Jesus Christ will be judged and they will be granted eternal life. That’s the subjective criterion, because they have put their faith in Christ. The objective is that their works will in fact support the subjective and make manifest the reality of that saving faith.

God judges on the basis of deeds, that is a principle in the Old Testament and the New Testament. Verse 6, "He will render to every man according to his deeds." Now, you can't argue with that, that's right there in the Bible. He will judge men on the basis of their deeds. "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, He will give" – implied – "eternal life. To them who are contentious" – or rebellious, really – "and will not obey the truth but obey unrighteousness, He will give" – implied – "indignation and wrath." Then he comes back and says it over again, only reverses the order. "Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, Jew first and also Greek. But glory, honor and peace to every man that worketh good, Jew first and also to the Greek."

In other words, God is going to render – it means to pay what you owe – God is going to pay the proper wages according to the deeds of our life. And we showed you last time that God can judge every person on the basis of his deeds. How? Because you can always judge an unbeliever because his deeds are evil. And you can always judge a believer because his deeds are righteous. It's that simple. The difference is that all of an unbeliever's deeds, in effect, are unrighteous, but not all of a believer's deeds are unrighteous. Did you get that? In other words, it isn't that an unbeliever always sins and a believer always does righteousness, it is that an unbeliever never does righteousness but a believer sometimes does righteousness and manifests the life of God in his soul.

So the righteous deeds that flow from a redeemed life are manifest by a person who seeks glory and honor and incorruption or immortality. In other words, he has a heavenward view. A truly regenerated person, a redeemed person, is going to show it in his heavenward view. He is going to seek glory. He is going to seek heavenly honor. He is going to seek the incorruptible and the immortal. He has a Godward perspective. But the other look only at rebelling against God, not obeying the truth and obeying unrighteousness. And so by the deeds of both, they are obviously made manifest.

Now, at this point – you've got to get this – at this point, this particular standard is devastating because nobody on his own can seek glory and honor and immortality. Man doesn't have the capacity for that. And so in a sense this becomes a total indictment. God says, "Here's the standard. If you want eternal life, if you want glory and honor and peace, then you have to show works in your life that seek glory and honor and incorruption" – not works that rebel against God. You have to be a heaven seeker. You have to be a kingdom seeker. You have to pursue true righteousness.

You say, "Well, does anybody do that on their own?" No. No, nobody does that and, you see, that's the whole point here. Everybody here in chapter 2 is still under condemnation, they're still under judgment because nobody does that on his own. You will be judged on your deeds, my friend, and your deeds don't cut it. You say, "Well, what about my best deeds?" All your righteousnesses are as what? Filthy rags. I mean there is a thing you could call relative human good. I mean it's better to be kind to people than to be unkind to them, and there's a certain good in that. But that is not true

righteousness that pleases God. The reason is because the motive isn't right, see? In other words, you could do good but you could have a wrong motive. And any other motive than glorifying God is a wrong motive. Maybe you did good to save your conscience, maybe you did good because you were pressured by your peers to do good. Maybe you did good because you wanted to relieve some guilt or anxiety. Maybe you did good because you wanted to feel good about yourself.

Maybe you did good for a myriad of reasons and they might even be nice reasons, but if you didn't do good specifically to glorify the God of heaven, then you fell short of the standard of true righteousness. And the man in the natural world doesn't do good for that reason because he doesn't know that perspective, you see? Now, we'll come back to that in a little while.

And so men will be judged on their deeds. And here in this chapter, they're condemned. I mean he's going to get us all before he gets into chapter 3 verse 20, and then he's going to sum it up and say, "Every mouth is stopped." We all manifest the knowledge because we condemn others. We will all be judged on the truth, and the truth is we are sinners, no matter what kind of mask we wear. And we have all been guilty of treading on the grace of God, and none of us can produce the kind of deeds that ought to be produced. We're all really in the same boat. None of us in the natural really seeks after God.

In 3:10 of Romans, "There is none righteous, no, not one, there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God." Man on his own doesn't do that, and so he's condemned in this text because he doesn't produce these kinds of works. Now, we said last time also that these kind of works can be produced and a life can turn heavenward and Godward and a life can seek after glory and honor and immortality, but that will occur only when Christ comes to dwell in that life, right? And then that life will manifest a heavenward seeking. And I said to you last time – and it's something that I've taught for years and you must understand it – that where the life does not seek after those things, there is no reason to believe that salvation has occurred because they are the manifestation of the reality of salvation.

Now, listen to this statement very carefully: Justification by faith alone applies to the time of entrance into salvation, but not to the time of judgment. We are saved by faith alone but we will be judged, says Romans, by our works. You say, "What do you mean by that?" Follow. When God in free grace receives the sinner at the time of his conversion, he asks nothing but that we believe and submit to Him, right? That's it. He asks nothing more. But from that moment on, the believer enters into a responsibility of obedience, and then the mark of that believer becomes the obedient pattern of his life. We call it the fruit of grace. Faith doesn't mean that now I've received Jesus, I can do whatever I want. On the contrary. True faith always results in holy living. Now, there are lapses, there are times when we fail, but there has to be some evidence there, some evidence of a seeking after God and glory, honor and incorruption because that's the standard by which we'll be judged.

I can illustrate this to you in James chapter 2 verse 9. This is such a clear passage and yet people have been so confused by it – needlessly. In James 2:9, it says, “If you respect of persons, you commit sin,” we’re back to that same attitude that we’re seeing in Romans 2 – “you commit sin and are convicted of the law as a transgressor. Whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point is guilty of all.” So if we broke one law, we’ve broken it all. He goes on to give some illustrations.

Verse 14, “What does it profit, my brethren, though a man say he has faith and has no works. Can faith save him?” That’s an important question, isn’t it? Can faith save him? Well, what if he has no works. Is faith enough to save him? “If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food and one of you say to them, ‘Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled’ notwithstanding you give them not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit?” In other words, if somebody comes across your path and they have nothing and you say, “Well, I sure wish you well.” Does that prove your faith? Hardly. “Faith if it hath not works is” – what? – “dead, being alone,” and there’s no saving faith that is alone. That’s what he’s saying. “Yes, a man may say thou hast faith and I have works. Show me thy faith without thy works and I’ll show thee my faith by my works.” And that, of course, is the true faith. The only way to demonstrate true faith is by works.

I hear people say this all the time, “Well, you know, I know they’re not living it and I’ve never seen the evidence, but I remember the day they put their faith in the Lord.” You know what that was? That wasn’t saving faith because faith without the product is dead. Not living faith, dead faith. Verse 20 sums it up: “Faith without works is dead.” Then it goes on to say that “Abraham our father was justified by works.” You say, “Oh, my word, heresy.” Martin Luther choked on the epistle of James. He called it a very “strawy” epistle” He didn’t like it very well because he didn’t understand that as he should have. Abraham was justified, not by God, but he was justified by those about who said, “He truly is a righteous man, it is evident in his works that God has changed his life.” “By works his faith was made perfect,” it says in verse 22.

Sums it up in – well, you can read every verse clear to 26, but 26 is a good sum. “As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.” The point is that men are going to be judged by their works, and the only way that you or anyone else on the face of the earth could ever produce one single righteous work would be when your spirit was energized by the indwelling presence of God through salvation. And then when salvation truly occurs, you will produce the works which become the attestation to the legitimacy of your faith. So God will judge by works.

And when it comes to God’s judgment, we come into the next element of principles of judgment, and that is: God will judge with impartiality, verses 11 through 15. Verse 11 sets the section in motion. It says, “There is no respect of persons with God.” When God goes about judging men by knowledge, by truth, by guilt, and by deeds, He will do so absolutely, without favoring anyone, based only on the subjective reality of their faith in Christ and the objective confirmation of that in their works.

Now, someone might immediately say, “How could God judge everybody the same?” Well, what it says is that God will not be unfair, it doesn’t necessarily mean that everybody will get the same reward or the same punishment. We know there are degrees of reward. We know that when we face the Lord Jesus Christ at the Bema Seat, some of our works will be gold, silver, precious stones, some will be wood, hay, and stubble. And some of us will have a lot of wood, hay, and stubble and very little gold, silver, precious stones, and some will have very little wood, hay, and stubble and a lot of gold and silver and precious stones. There are crowns promised to believers who are faithful in the Scripture, and some of us will have some of them and some of us will have all of them. And so we know there are degrees by which God will reward, and the same is true in punishment.

God is fair. He doesn’t favor people, nor does He hold people responsible when they didn’t know as much as someone else knew who is more responsible. So bound up in the statement “there is no respect of persons with God” is the fact that He doesn’t favor certain people, and secondly, that He deals fairly with everyone according to the light or the knowledge they have had. And someone is going to say, “Well, does God judge everybody the same?” No – no, and that’s what we find beginning in verse 12, God without respect of persons will judge. Verse 12. Now watch this amazing verse. “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 think with me. The fact is there’s no respect of persons with God. If you don’t have the law, you’ll be judged as one who didn’t have the law. If you have the law, you’ll be judged as one who had the law. God will be utterly, absolutely fair. And the basic idea of the verse is that in the final eternal judgment, God will show His equity and God will show His impartiality by dealing with men according to the light they possess. Did you get that? If they did not possess the law, they’ll not be judged as those who possess the law. If they possess the law, they’ll be judged as those who possess the law. That’s the basic principle. He has just said that men will be judged according to their deeds, Jew or Gentile, and here he really is saying much the same. The Jew has the law, the Gentile does not have the law. If a man has the law, he’ll be judged on that basis; if he doesn’t, he’ll be judged on that basis.

Now, notice in verse 12, then, we have two distinct groups of people. First of all, “As many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law.” Take the little phrase “without law.” That’s group one. They don’t have the law, anoms, without law, that’s what it means. They don’t have the law. What law? The law of God, the Mosaic law. This is a term to designate Gentiles who do not have the written Scripture. They had no prophets, they had no biblical writers, they did not have the written revelation of God, the law of God. He doesn’t mean they’re without any law, he doesn’t mean they have no sense of what is right and wrong, he’ll get to that in verses 14 and 15. Of course they have some. They have a law written in their hearts, he says that. But they are without the law in the sense of the Mosaic law. They are without special revelation – Moses, the Scripture, the prophets.

And let's face it. You'd have to agree with me, wouldn't you, that throughout history most people who have lived in the earth have been in that category, right? I mean just statistically speaking, most people that come into the world don't ever hear the gospel of Jesus Christ. In modern times, with development of media and the translation work that is wonderfully being done today, we're really getting the Word out. But most people who have lived on the face of the earth have not had the law of God. They have not had the written Scripture. What about them? What about them? Will God judge them when they never had the law? Yes, but He'll judge them as those who never had the law. "Well, if they never heard the gospel, will He hold them responsible?" Well, let's find out.

Back to verse 12. It says the people without the law shall also – what's the next word? – perish. Perish, *apollumi*, basically means to destroy, to put to death. It is used of eternal death in Matthew 10:28, Luke 4:34. It does not mean annihilation, even though it can be translated "to destroy." Annihilation is not what it means. It doesn't mean they go into an unconscious existence. Basically, the best way to understand that is when something is *apollumi*, it is ruined so that it no longer can serve its intended purpose. And all people were created for the glory of God and for fellowship with Him, and when they do not come to God, they are then *apollumi*, they are ruined as to that purpose and intention.

Our Lord, for example, uses the word *apollumi* when men put new wine in old wineskins and the wineskins *apollumi*, they were ruined by the new wine. They perished, they ceased to have any function or usefulness. The noun form is used by the disciples when they saw the woman anointing the feet of Jesus and putting all that precious ointment and they asked, "Why this waste?" And that is the noun form of *apollumi*. Why are you just letting the stuff perish? Or be rendered useless? It didn't go out of existence, it just was used for a useless purpose in their mind. So the word came to mean useless or ruined, put to death, wasted. Does not mean to go out of existence.

This is no better place illustrated than in the book of Revelation. In speaking of the doom of the antichrist, we read this in Revelation 17:8: "The beast that thou sawest was and is not and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit and go into perdition." Same word as perish here, a form of *apollumi*. So the beast is going into perishing, the beast is going into *apollumi*. A verse or two later, it says, "The beast goes into perdition" – verse 11 – so twice in the 17th chapter, it says the beast goes to *apollumi*, the beast goes into perdition or perishing or destruction.

Now, if we want to find out what that is, all we have to do is go to chapter 19, and it says, "The beast was cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone," Revelation 19:20. So perishing, *apollumi*, being destroyed, did not mean that that beast goes out of existence, it meant that he was sent into a living judgment, cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. And by the way, in Revelation 20:10, we find he is still there as a conscious being 1,000 years later. And I only point that up because there have been people who say that this is teaching us that the unbelieving people who've

never had the law simply go out of existence. That is not what it teaches. They are ruined as to their intended purpose, they are put to death, but it is a casting alive into the lake of fire, as graphically illustrated by the use of the same term in reference to the beast. So God will condemn those who have never heard, and even without the Scripture, they will perish.

Their perishing, it says in verse 12, will be without law. What does that mean? It means it will be commensurate with them not having the Scripture, which means that it will not be as severe as it will be for those who had the Scripture, but it is nonetheless perishing. It isn't less than hell, it is hell. It is that those who had the law do not receive hell while the others receive less than hell, it is that they receive a greater hell than the hell the others receive. Why? Verse 12 again: "For as many as have sinned without law." Even though they didn't have the law of God, they sinned, and the wages of sin is what? Death. People say, "Will those people who never heard perish?" Yes. What does perishing mean? It means the same thing to them that it meant when it was said in Revelation of the beast, they will be cast alive into a lake burning with fire and brimstone. Why? Because they've sinned.

You see, man does sin, even though he doesn't have the written law of God because he has in him a sin principle and because he chooses a lifetime and a lifestyle of sinfulness. Specially revealed law, Scripture is not the precondition of sin. Men sin without Scripture. They're guilty and they're perishing.

Let me give you an illustration that might help in Luke 12:47, the end of the parable relating to the servants, and all you really need to know is Luke 12:47 and 48. "The servant who knew his lord's will" – get that? He knew his lord's will, that would be the one who had the law, in a sense – "and did not prepare himself, neither did according to his will shall be beaten with" – what? – "many stripes. But he that knew not and did commit things worthy of stripes shall be beaten with" – what? – "few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required, and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more." They both get beaten. They both are punished. They both perish. But the greater punishment comes to those who knew the most.

Now go back to Romans 2. Those who sinned without law shall perish. And their punishment will be a perishing, a damnation, for they have sinned against God. But it will be a lesser judgment than group two. Look at group two in verse 12: "As many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law."

What does it mean "as many as have sinned in the law?" This refers to those who received the special revelation, those who had the Word of God, particularly Israel and anyone who is attached to them who knew the truth of God. Those who heard the prophets, those who read the law and the holy writings, those who had the special revelation. It refers to people today who sit in the church, people who know the truth, people who are in a Christian society or Christian environment. They will be judged according to greater light and greater privilege and greater liability. Jesus said in Matthew 11, "How much greater will be the punishment of Chorazin and Bethsaida and Capernaum," because in those places Jesus walked and lived and did His miracles. "It will be more tolerable for Sodom and

Gomorra and for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than it will be for those cities." Why? Because they knew so much more and the greater perishing will belong to them. They'll be judged by the law. That refers to final judgment. They'll be judged in accord with full knowledge of God's law.

So God is very fair. He's very fair. The hottest hell is reserved for the people who knew the most. That is why, beloved, it is such a fearful thing to be an apostate. It is such a fearful thing to know the truth and constantly turn your back on it. You would be better off eternally if you never knew than to know and turn your back. But God is fair and He will judge those without law as without law, and those with law as with law.

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