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Romans

But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,... Romans 2:5

Verses 1-4 have laid out the argument for deserved judgment for those who should know better based on the nature of God that was revealed in the previous chapter. Verse 4 then said, "Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?" Verse 5 now begins with "but." This is to contrast an acceptance of the "goodness of God."

"In accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart" shows that instead of softening one's heart and their stand on sin, they take the alternate course. The heart is hard and unyielding even in the presence of the mercy God offers, the blessings He provides, and the election He made. The Jew had received all these things and yet they walked heavily upon the good graces that were granted. The Greek term for "impenitent heart" is used only in this verse in the New Testament and it reveals the height and epitome of unrepentant sin.

As noted in verse 2:3, this same logic must now apply to the Church. We have likewise been grafted in to the commonwealth and have received the same goodness. But how many in the church flagrantly tread heavily upon these

graces? This despicable attitude, in Jew or gentile, can only have one logical outcome – we are “treasuring up” wrath for ourselves.

We treasure up things that we desire the most. We may treasure up family photos. If we love sports, we may treasure up memorabilia. If we love money, we may treasure up silver and gold. We put these things in store because they are precious to us and they have our heart buried with them. Paul is saying that those who fit this verse’s description are “treasuring up wrath.” Based on his argument thus far, we know – without a doubt – that wrath is due for our belligerence and uncaring attitude toward the sins we commit. But we continue down the same path, actually storing up more and more of God’s wrath, knowingly and willingly.

This will be poured out “in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.” It is not a question of “if” but of “when.” The things that God abhors based on His unchanging nature of goodness, justice, righteousness, etc. must be judged and it will come out in a terrifying way when it does. The cross of Jesus Christ proves it. The horror which He suffered to remove our judgment is reflective of what all people deserve. Therefore, it can be meted out in Him as our Substitute or it will be meted out in each of us directly. No other option exists and the judgment is final.

For those who have trusted Christ, the punishment is past. Judgment for the believer will be based on their life after accepting Christ – for rewards or losses (see Romans 14:10 & 2 Corinthians 5:9, 10). For all others, there is but one possibility – a finite crime against an infinite God requires an infinite punishment – the Lake of Fire. This will be executed in all remaining humanity as is noted in Revelation 20:11-15.

Life application: What treasures are you storing up? In the end, there is only one thing of eternal value, a relationship with your Creator. And this is only possible through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Treasure up for yourselves the knowledge of Him by reading your Bible each day, talking to Him each moment, and sharing Him with others always. This is true treasure; this is Jesus.

... who “will render to each one according to his deeds”: Romans 2:6

Care needs to be taken when looking at today’s verse and the verses that follow lest error come into our thinking about the nature of salvation or condemnation. If these verses are taken out of proper biblical context, one could make the case that “deeds” somehow affect our standing before God; that what we do brings about our justification. This is contrary to the entire tenor of Scripture and is not at all what Paul is speaking of. However, this has led to heresy within the church and in many denominations. Below will be listed several of the actual canons from the Council of Trent in 1546. These are antithetical to the intent of Scripture and are actually heretical, but yet they are primary theological tenets of the Roman Catholic Church.

Although you may not fully understand each of these, it is good to know what denominations teach. Does their instruction line up with the Bible or not? If not, is it merely error or is heresy involved? These are actually eternity-deciding principles concerning salvation if they involve heresy.

What Paul is saying is in today’s verse (in context with the surrounding verses and the rest of Scripture) is that we are either justified or condemned by God’s grace through faith (Ephesians 2:4) by calling on the name of the Lord for salvation (Romans 10:9 & 13). When this occurs, we are sealed with the Holy Spirit which is a “deposit” or “guarantee” of our eternal state (Ephesians 1:13, 14). However, our “deeds” will determine our amount of rewards, or what loss we will suffer, if saved (2 Corinthians 5:9, 10), or they will determine our level of punishment when condemned (Luke 12:42-48).

The equation for each person to remember is:

Grace through faith = salvation

Works = judgment

The judgment of the believer is a judgment after salvation (which, once granted, is eternal) based on works. These works have no part in further justifying a person; justification comes by the work of Christ alone. The judgment of the non-believer comes based on the life they lived, having never been saved.

Life application: Take time to read the following canons which are still in force and effect today in the Roman Catholic Church and see if they are complimentary or contradictory to the teachings of Scripture. After doing so, ensure that you obtain, study, and comprehend the principle tenets of your own church or denomination. You may be surprised, or even appalled, at what your time, talent, and money is being directed towards. You alone are accountable for your actions and allegiances. It is far better for you to remove yourself from a body which promotes tenets contradictory to God's will than it is to stay because of friendships, alliances, or convenience. These are either eternity-making decisions concerning your salvation if heresy is involved, or decisions which will affect your rewards and losses for all eternity if non-heretical doctrinal error is involved. Stand fast on Jesus Christ and His word.

Canon 10. If any one saith, that by faith alone the impious is justified; in such wise as to mean, that nothing else is required to co-operate in order to the obtaining the grace of Justification, and that it is not in any way necessary, that he be prepared and disposed by the movement of his own will; let him be anathema.

Canon 11. If any one saith, that men are justified, either by the sole imputation of the justice of Christ, or by the sole remission of sins, to the exclusion of the grace and the charity which is poured forth in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, and is inherent in them; or even that the grace, whereby we are justified, is only the favour of God; let him be anathema.

Canon 12. If any one saith, that justifying faith is nothing else but confidence in the divine mercy which remits sins for Christ's sake; or, that this confidence alone is that whereby we are justified; let him be anathema.

Canon 23: "If any one saith, that a man once justified can sin no more, nor lose grace, and that therefore he that falls and sins was never truly justified; or, on the other hand, that he is able, during his whole life, to avoid all sins, even those that are venial,- except by a special privilege from God, as the Church holds in regard of the Blessed Virgin; let him be anathema.

"Canon 24: "If any one saith, that the justice received is not preserved and also increased before God through good works; but that the said works are merely the fruits and signs of Justification obtained, but not a cause of the increase thereof; let him be anathema."

Canon 30: "If any one saith, that, after the grace of Justification has been received, to every penitent sinner the guilt is remitted, and the debt of eternal punishment is blotted out in such wise, that there remains not any debt of temporal punishment to be discharged either in this world, or in the next in Purgatory, before the entrance to the kingdom of heaven can be opened (to him); let him be anathema."

Canon 33: "If any one saith, that, by the Catholic doctrine touching Justification, by this holy Synod inset forth in this present decree, the glory of God, or the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ are in any way derogated from, and not rather that the truth of our faith, and the glory in fine of God and of Jesus Christ are rendered (more) illustrious; let him be anathema.