

# Romans 2:1-11

Sunday 4/20/2008

SEC: The Nature of Judgment: Jews, Gentiles, and Human Nature

It depends on what perspective you are looking at. The Gentiles just flat out have nothing to do with the true God, nothing to do with Him all down through the Old Testament. They were totally against the nation of Israel and everything that God did for the most part. And yet the Jews, who had God, the oracles of God, and all that God and the blessings of God, turned into a self-righteous nation that rejected God just like the Gentiles did. But yet, they held Him in the context that they pretended they were still doing all that He wanted to do.

I think one of the greatest phrases that explains the nation of Israel during this time is the fact that they had a form of godliness, but they denied the power thereof. I think that is really so true. We saw how that the Jews judged the Gentiles, yet, as I already said, they commit the same things themselves. And really, it was a great study on human nature. I never tried to just give you the historical application. I always try to show you how the practical application applies in your own life.

We learned some great things about how the Jews judge the Gentiles, but yet how it applies to me and you because the practical application in Romans is very important for you and I to get. Remember, we talked last week about how that as a Christian, I took you over to 1 Corinthians 2:15, and I showed you how that a Christian is not to judge other people. We talked a lot about the Jews judging the Gentiles and how people like to judge other people. That is the first thing they throw up to you, "Don't judge me!"

But I took you to the Pauline epistles in 1 Corinthians 2:15, and I showed you the New Testament principle or concept for you and for me. I told you that I am not to judge other people. My judgment of you, whether you are... I may have an opinion, but I keep that to myself. But you know what? I do not have a right to judge you in anything. You stand before God just as I do, and I do not have a right to judge you in any way, shape, or form.

But the Bible says, "He that is spiritual judges all things." I showed you how that as a Christian, I do not judge people, but I do have a right, and so do you, to judge the things that people do if you want to have them in your life or not. There are some things that are not conducive to Christianity that people do. Though I do not make a judgment on the person, I can make a judgment as it is my own personal responsibility and my relationship with God, how it pertains to me.

I showed you over there in 2 Corinthians 2:13 that it talks about comparing spiritual things with spiritual. The spiritual things are what you allow in your life that you let in, and you compare those with the spiritual things in the Word of God, comparing what your life is to what the book says. That is really a good guide, a good practical guide for every Christian in this room and Christian in general. You do not have a right to look at somebody and judge that person, but you do have a right to judge what they do, how it pertains to your own personal relationship with God if you want to be involved in it or not.

## SEC: The Three Applications of Scripture

We learned another great truth as we opened up chapter 2, verse 1, and that was in the first verse where he says, "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man." I showed you that "O man," that man in the Bible in Romans chapter 2, will always be a picture of the nation of Israel. I think one of the hard things about the Bible, or if you are going to put the Bible in a hard deal, I think one of the hardest things for young Christians to get is how the Bible lays itself out in three applications.

The Bible obviously has a historical application, and that is what you get very frankly most of the time. You go to churches someplace, and many times you will get the historical perspective of it. But then the Bible has what we call a practical application or a spiritual application. That means how does it apply to you in your everyday living? Of course, many times you will find that people will get up and they will give good teaching on what the spiritual application is.

But there is a third application which is really like the key to all the Bible. I call it the spark plugs of the Bible. You can have the fastest engine in the world. It can be the most... you build engines, it could be the hottest race car engine in the world. I hope I am right on this, but if you do not put spark plugs in it, that engine does not work, does it? No. I walk out on those limbs sometimes, and even if you know where I am going, any of you, and you know where I am going and I am wrong, just play along with me so I do not look dumb, okay?

When it comes to the Bible, the engine is made up by the practical and the historical, but the spark plugs of the Bible are the doctrinal. The word doctrine in the Bible is to teach. The Bible says over there in Timothy that the Word of God is profitable. The first thing that it is profitable for is doctrine. When you look at this concept of "O man," or this man in the Bible, doctrinally it is going to be a picture of an unsaved man.

I want you to see these because we are going to talk about, and I want you to get not only the historical out of this today, I want you to get the practical, but I want you to see how the doctrinal fits into this thing too. Inspirationally, this "O man," or the man in here, is a picture of any Christian. That would be your practical application. But from a historical application, the man here is the nation of Israel.

## SEC: The Man at Bethesda: A Case Study in Biblical Application

I thought of a passage last week, and I am going to give it to you. Turn over to John chapter 5. I thought of this last week, but we did not have time to get into it. We had a time factor as always, and I did not have time to add it in there. But here is what I consider the greatest example of what I mean when I say that when you find the word "man" in the Gospels. I know we are not in the Gospels in Romans, but we are dealing with the nation of Israel.

When you find that word in the Gospels, it is talking about a man, or maybe a woman. All the examples, the Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, are filled with stories. Somebody asked Thursday night a question, and the answer was that after the book of Acts, there are no more stories in the Bible. Why is it that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are filled with stories about people? When you get into the Acts, you do not really find the same kind of stories. It is more

direct of what he is dealing with. But when you get into the Pauline Epistles from Romans on, there are no stories. No more stories in the Bible.

Why is it that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are filled with stories about men, women, children, animals, all of those things? I will tell you why that is. Because all of the stories in the Bible in one form or the other represent Israel's spiritual condition. So if you just have that key right there and start reading Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and you apply that, you are going to learn more about the nation of Israel and your Bible than probably any other way you try to study it at this point in your life.

I want to show you, here is one of the greatest examples. John 5:1-5. Now bear with me as I read this.

*John 5:1-5*

*After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.*

*Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.*

*In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.*

*For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.*

*And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.*

Now watch this, verse 5. "And a certain man," see that thing? "And a certain man was there which had an infirmity thirty and eight years." Now let us pretend you are reading that. I want to give you this example because if I do not show you how to do this, then me getting up and telling you all that I am going to tell you in Romans chapter 2, 5, or 9, or whatever, really does not do any good for you. You have got to see examples and learn how to apply them.

Now, if I was reading that passage for myself, and I was coming down through that, I would know that this story somehow, some shape, some form, is a picture of the nation of Israel's spiritual condition. Let us look at it. When you come down here, first of all, and it is a very interesting passage. First of all, you are going to find that this is a picture, and I am going to show you here in a moment. This man, this man represents the nation of Israel and their spiritual condition when Christ shows up.

Now I have got to throw this out to you. If you go get a commentary that is put out by the big wigs today, and you go buy a commentary on the Gospel of John, you go to most seminaries or most Bible colleges, here is what they will tell you. When they read John chapter 5, verses 1 through 5, they will tell you that verses 3 and 4 were added later by somebody else, that they really were not in the original writing. I will tell you why they do that. First of all, they do not know their Bible. Second of all, they have come up against a story in the Bible, and because they

do not approach the Bible from a practical standpoint of seeing what you have got here and trying to elevate it to some scholarly concept, they lose the great teaching.

They say down here in verse 4 that, "For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had." They say that that does not fit with what is going on in the Old Testament. Of course, that is a typical statement of somebody that does not know their Bible. First of all, you were told that there is nothing wrong with an angel coming down here and troubling the waters, because you are told that the nation of Israel got the law by the disposition of angels. God used angels all the time.

Another situation is this: once you see this, and this is where they fail, once you see this man as the nation of Israel, once you see this man here as impotent, you know what impotent means? He is powerless. It talks about the fact that he is blind. He is blind spiritually, Israel is. He is halt. He has no walk with God. He is withered. He has no work for God. If that was not enough, Jesus goes to Jerusalem, and this man gets healed in Jerusalem. That is a picture of the Jews getting healed when Christ comes back in the millennium.

If that was not all, the Bible says that it was by a sheep market. Now, why the details? Why did God tell you that this took place by the sheep market? I will tell you why, because it is built around the sacrifice, and the only sacrifice that can solve your power and his problems has to be found at the sheep gate. That is where they brought the sheep in to be sacrificed. It says Bethesda. You know what Bethesda means? It means mercy.

We have everything in this story to show you historically that this man represents the nation of Israel, who is powerless, blind, no walk with God, no work with God. When you come down and look at this passage, you find that an angel went down in a certain season, and it shows you that when the waters got troubled, the first person that got in was the only one that got healed. You know what somebody said? That should not fit. You are nuts if you know your Bible.

You know what that shows you? That shows you that the Old Testament law was a failure. Under the Old Testament law, only one person could get in. Under grace of the New Testament, everybody can get in. It is showing you the difference between the Old Testament setup, which was limited. This is the book of Hebrews, by the way. The whole concept of the book of Hebrews is that the New Testament is better than the Old Testament. The story about this man, only one person getting in, shows you the failure of the Old Testament law.

I will tell you something else. "And a certain man," verse 5, "was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years." Now there is a little key there. Because if you go back to Deuteronomy 2:14, I know what you are taught. It is generally true. But God counts things differently than we do. You see, we talk about him wandering in the wilderness for 40 years, and he did. But God cuts that time level down, and he looks at it differently. In Deuteronomy 2:14, you are going to find that the Bible says what Israel wandered in the wilderness, 38 years.

You know who that man is a picture of? He is a picture of the nation of Israel. He is a picture of the nation of Israel, and it shows that Israel could not get healed under the Old Testament

economy. So Jesus shows up, and he heals the man without him getting into the water. That is a great picture of Israel's spiritual condition at the first coming of Christ, when you see it. They are all laying around there waiting for the moving of the water. That will be found in Ezekiel chapter 40 through chapter 48, when the water comes out of the Holy Oblation and comes down through the south end of Jerusalem, into the Dead Sea, and then out to all the other waters, and the whole earth gets healed by the moving of the waters.

Now, doctrinally, we could take that same story. Boy, this is a great message. I mean, not the one I am preaching, what I am about to give you. Well, the one I am preaching is not bad either, if you stop and think about it. But doctrinally, this is a great sermon, because doctrinally, this man, here it comes, historically, doctrinally, and inspirationally. Doctrinally, this man is a picture of the Laodicean church period. He is a picture of a man that has no power, the church, today. He is a picture of the Laodicean church that has no spiritual insight. He is a picture of the Laodicean church that has no walk with God and no work with God.

You see, that is how your Bible goes together. There is a historical application. There is a doctrinal application. And then there is an inspirational application. Inspirationally, that is a picture of you and me. Some of God's people sitting in this room, even though you are saved and on your way to heaven, you have no power of God in your life. Even though you are saved, you are sitting in this room, you have no walk with God, you have no work for God, and you are blind spiritually.

Now, I say all of that to kind of preface where I am going here, because when we start to read in chapter 2 and start to go through these verses we are going to go through here in a moment, and we look at this man who he says, "O man," who he makes a statement to, I want you to remember:

*Historically, we are dealing with God, dealing with the nation of Israel, and their unrealistic and their self-righteous attitude toward the Gentiles.*

*Doctrinally, we are going to see today that this is a picture of any unsaved man you are going to meet in your life, deal with at work, or maybe have in your life that you meet someplace and you have some kind of relationship with. This is a picture of unsaved people.*

*Inspirationally, it is a picture of messed up Christians. It is a picture of Christians who always go through life with no power of God in their life, no spiritual insight, no walk, and no work.*

SEC: The Judgment of God and Its Applications

With that little introduction, I want to begin reading here in chapter 2. We are going to go back to the beginning of the chapter, even though we studied that last week so we can put the context together, and then we are going to break down verses 4 through 11. So here we go.

*Romans 2:1-11*

*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.*

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

*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?*

*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;*

*Who will render to every man according to his deeds:*

*To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:*

*But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,*

*Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;*

*But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also of the Gentile:*

*For there is no respect of persons with God.*

Now Father, we thank you today for all that you have given us. We pray, Lord, that you will bless us as we come through your word, open up our hearts, open up my heart, my mind, and let the Holy Spirit of God lead and guide in all that I say and all that these people take in. We will thank you and praise you in Jesus' name for a sake we ask of, Amen.

Now in verse 3, he asked a great question. That question is this, "And thinkest thou, O man, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" Now the answer to that obviously is no, you are not. But this chapter is loaded, but not only where Israel is at historically and how they reject God and what God gave them, but it also fits right into an unsaved man. It also fits into your life and my life. I want to kind of go back and forth this morning that you can grasp this great chapter, but you never forget that historically, he is writing this dealing with the nation of Israel, directly to them. But there is an application because of the parallels between Israel and you and me as a Christian.

Yet you are going to find that Israel, the same thing that she does in rejecting God and coming up with the reasons why she rejects God, it is the same thing you are going to find unsaved people doing all the time when you try to talk to them about the Lord. Now in the Bible, it says the judgment of God, here, "escape the judgment of God." In the Bible, we know there are seven judgments. Three of those judgments have to do with the people that we are talking about today in historical, doctrinal, and inspirational.

1. Historically, the judgment of God for Israel would be the tribulation period. They are going to go through a time here where they go, the Bible says there has never been a time on the history of this planet that is like the time they are going to go through with the tribulation.

2. An unsaved man, his judgment is going to be a great white throne, Revelation chapter 20, where he is going to stand before God. The Bible says the books were open, another book was open, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.
3. The third judgment is the judgment of, judgment seat of Christ. That is where the Bible says in 1 Corinthians chapter 3 and 2 Corinthians chapter 5, that we are all going to stand before the judgment seat of Christ and we are going to give an account as Christians.

You see, three distinct judgments, really seven judgments in the Bible, but these three fit up the way we are at today. We have been through that many, many times. I even taught you the seven judgments when we come through our seven series. But with that in mind, now let us look at verse 4. We are going to come back and forth and put these things together.

SEC: The Riches of God: Forbearance, Longsuffering, and Goodness

Now look at verse 4. "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" Now there is Israel's problem. There is Israel's problem. Yet it is the same problem that every unsaved man has, and yet it is the same problem that we have as Christians many times in our life. You know what it is? We despise the riches of God.

Now in an overall concept, we know that the riches of God is the Word of God. Luke 16:11 talks about, and I love it, Luke 16:11 talks about the true riches. In an overall general context, we know that to be the Word of God. But within the Word of God, the Bible talks about in this passage here that there are things that are talking about, that are riches.

The first one is forbearance. You know what forbearance is? I am going to give these in a very non-theological way that everybody can understand it. You know what? When God says that one of the riches of Christ is forbearance, you know what that is? That is, God does not come down and kill you and me when he should. He forbears. There are times in your life and in my life when God is facing it. God just had to come down and whack us on the spot. He just had to open up a little bit of light coming from heaven and make us a grease spot on the sidewalk. But he does not. You know why he does not? Because God, one of the greatest gifts, one of the greatest riches, one of the greatest treasures of God is his forbearance.

Then he goes down through there and he says something else. He says that longsuffering. Now, we talk about patience. And patience and longsuffering are not the same. Patience is what you have with your kids. Longsuffering is what God has with you throughout your lifetime. It means suffer long. See, when you have to be patient with your kids or when I am patient with you, my wife says all the time, "You are the most patient person in the world," and because you deal with people. Well, that is patience, you see. In the ministry, you have to have patience. You have to have patience with your family. Husbands have to have patience with their wives. Wives have to have patience with their husbands. That is patience.

God has patience with me, but greater than patience is longsuffering. You know what longsuffering means? God is in for the long haul with me. He suffers long. He suffers long. You

as a Christian need to move through patience in your spiritual growth and get to the place where you can suffer long with people. We are so quick to judge somebody or cut somebody off. We are so quick to make an opinion about something that if God treated us the way we treat each other, we would all be in a hurt. We would all be in a hurt. Sometimes it is a situation where you have got to learn to suffer long, longsuffering. That is a riches that God has.

Then another one he says is his goodness. Of course, his goodness is Christ. The goodness of God is Jesus Christ. People say, "My God." Some people say, "My goodness." One and the same. Goodness, the only goodness in this world is Jesus Christ. He is God's goodness. When you say, "My goodness," you are talking about Jesus who is God's goodness. The goodness that comes with that is all of the things that God wants to do in your life and Israel's life.

Really, you have got the riches of God, which are the true riches, which Psalms 119 says is, David loves above gold, above fine gold. Then the antecedent to that is the false riches of this world. Really, that is what life is all about. It is about the riches of God, somebody despising those things and loving the riches of this world. Of course, we talked about that all the way back in Ecclesiastes chapter 1, where we laid out the 10 vanities here a while back.

SEC: The Parable of the Vineyard: God's Longsuffering Illustrated

I like definitive chapters. I want to show you, come over to Matthew chapter 21. I want to give you a definitive passage in the Bible that illustrates what I am talking about, about the longsufferingness of God, about the patience of God, about the forbearance of God. This is a great passage, a credible passage. This is one of the single most important passages to me in all of the Bible to help me put everything together.

I told you last week, wait, let me give you that, give me that little book back there I just gave you on church. I told you last week, I brought that book in on the Ears Dispensable Jews. I told you how that there is a little book that you have got 60-some pages in it, you can read it in an hour or so, and it has got more information in it than you ever find. I found another one, I gave one to some more back over there. I gave Ray this one we talked about this week. This is one on church history. I mean, it is, woo, this is good. This one has got pictures in it, man. I really love them. 24 pages. It is such a concise concept. I love things like that.

I said all that to say this, the verse I am about to give you is like this book or the book I gave you last week. It is a concise picture of really the Old Testament. It shows you in what, 12 verses, what God is doing in the Old Testament. Man, I like passages like that. I like passages that I can sit down and read in five minutes and then spend two hours trying to grasp it. But in five minutes, I get a complete overview of what God is doing. In this particular case, it shows the longsuffering of God, the forbearance of God, and the goodness of God.

Let me read for you Matthew chapter 21, picking up in verse 33.

*Matthew 21:33-40*

*Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country:*

*And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.*

*And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.*

*Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise.*

*But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son.*

*But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.*

*And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.*

*When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?*

Now, if you would go out and buy a little commentary on Matthew, you would be told that the parables, or how does it go? The parables are earthly truths in a heavenly language. Oh, I love that one. I do not call them the parables. I call them the terrible parables. The terrible parables are not heavenly language and earthly truth. The terrible parables are absolutely a doctrinal statement of God on what is going on.

Now, I am going to show you what you have here is your Bible from Genesis to Revelation. What I am trying to show you here is the longsufferingness of God. I am trying to show you that throughout the Bible, when God is dealing with the nation of Israel, he exercises that forbearance. He exercises that longsufferingness, and he exercised that goodness, and Israel despised it. Then what I am getting ready to come back and show you as an unsaved man or woman, he does the same thing to you while you are alive and you despise it. Then what I am going to show you as a child of God, he does the same thing in your life as his child and we despise it sometimes. That is where I am going.

Now, look what it says here. Verse 33, Matthew 21:33. Oh, I read it already, did I not? Now look at verse 33. It says, "Hear another parable: There was a certain householder." Now, let me break down the characters for you and you can go into the Bible. We do not have time. This would be a great Thursday night question. I can go into great detail, but you have got a householder.

*The householder is God, the Father.*

*You have a vineyard, that is Israel. I could take you to, I do not know how many places in the Old Testament and Isaiah show you that the vineyard is the nation of Israel.*

*Then you have the husbandmen. Those are the leaders of Israel.*

*Then you have the servant. They will be the Old Testament prophets.*

*Of course, you have "my son," who is the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Now, what you have got historically is a picture of God dealing with Israel. Verse 33 would run you to Genesis to 1 Samuel. Let us read it. "Hear another parable, there was a certain householder," God, "which planted a vineyard," Israel, "and hedged it round about." He had taken care of it there in Joshua in all those places, bringing them up, "dug the winepress in it, built a tower," established them in the land, "and then let it out to husbandmen and went into a far country."

You know what that is a picture of? That is a picture of the Bible from Genesis to 2 Samuel. You realize after 2 Samuel, God does not come down and do the great miracles like splitting the Red Sea anymore. You realize once you get into 2 Samuel, God, you know why he does not? Because God turned it over to somebody. The kings of Israel, the husbandmen. He turned it over to them and he goes into a far country. He takes his hands off and says, "Hey, now you run it, but I am watching."

Verse 34, "Now when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise." Now, the Bible says when the time of the fruit drew near. You see, Israel was supposed to be a vineyard that bears fruit. Under the kings, God and the kingdom of heaven, God intended for them to be a fruitful nation and bear the fruit. They did not. That is why they are likened to a fig tree that is barren. That is why they are likened to a vine tree that is barren. They did not bear the fruit.

When the servants show up, that will be the Old Testament prophets. You can go back and read it for yourself. They go to Israel and they say, "Where is your fruit?" "And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants," Old Testament prophets, "to the husbandmen," the kings of Israel. You can read all this in 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles. "Thus he might receive the fruit." "And the husbandmen," the kings of Israel, that would be Ahab, Omri, that would be Isaiah, that would be all of them, Manasseh, all of them. "And the husbandmen took his servants," the Old Testament prophets, "and beat one." You can find that in the Bible. "Killed another," you can find that in the Bible. "And stoned another," you can find that in the Bible. "And again, he sent other servants." These will be the prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Micah, Malachi, Zechariah. They go to Israel, the leaders of Israel, when they say, "Why have you not bore fruit?" That is the question.

Finally, verse 37. "But last of all, he sent unto them his son," here is the first coming of Christ, "saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen," scribes and the Pharisees, "saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard." He is crucified outside the city, "and slew him." Verse 40, second coming of Christ. "When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do to those husbandmen?"

Now you have just got a story that runs you from Genesis to the second coming of Christ, showing you in the Old Testament increments, and we could break it down even better than that, how it goes through if we have the time and breaks down that whole section. My point is this,

when you recognize that that is Genesis to the second coming, the book of Revelation, you know what you see in there? Well, I will tell you what I see, if I was God, I would have killed him the first time he screwed up. If not the first time, surely the second time.

Do you know how many prophets you have got in the Old Testament? You know they were all persecuted. You know they were all beat. You know they were all hated. I do not know of one prophet in the Old Testament that anybody liked. They hated him. They hated him. But God, what you see through this is God's longsuffering. God should have killed him a million times, should have wiped him off the face of the planet long before 606 BC. But God, you see his forbearance, his longsuffering, his goodness toward them. Verse 40 shows that even God's goodness runs out sooner or later. Even his forbearance comes to an end. Even his longsuffering has a day when it stops. Of course, that will be when Israel gets judged in the tribulation period. That is what verse 40 is talking about. "When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do to those husbandmen?" They are going to go through the tribulation period.

But I want you to see when they are, what we are talking about under the treasures of God in Romans 2, the patience, the goodness, the longsuffering, the hand of God in every scenario. You put this in a practical sense, you know what? Basically this is what I do every Sunday. Some of you do not like me. Every Sunday I ask you a question, maybe not directly but indirectly. No matter what I preach, you know what I ask you? "Where is your fruit?" Every time we get up, I do not care where I start. What comes through, whatever message, whatever I am preaching at the end of the day is simply, "Where are you at? What are you doing for God? Are you despising the things that God has given you? Are you taking for granted his longsuffering and his forbearance? Are you taking for granted the goodness of God?" Israel does, unsaved men certainly do. Unfortunately, many times God's people do. Many of you, verse 39 says that they took him and they threw him out of the vineyard and crucified him. You know what? Some of you have thrown him out of your life just as surely as they threw him out of that vineyard. You see how that thing works historically, doctrinally, and inspirationally? Great stuff, man.

SEC: God's Unwillingness for Any to Perish

All this is true of Israel. It is also true of an unsaved man. The longsuffering of God, the goodness of God, the forbearance of God. He says in verse, he said down there, it leads us to repentance. You know why God does that? This is one of the greatest concepts of God. The Bible says in 2 Peter 3:9, that God is not willing that any should perish. If you are here this morning and you are an unsaved person, and I do not know where you are at with the Lord, it is hard in America today to get a crowd this size that you do not have somebody that is lost without Christ. I do not know who you are, I do not know where you are at, where you are coming from. But I want to tell you this, I want to tell you this. God is not willing that you perish.

In fact, God is so unwilling that you perish that when he originally created hell, the Bible says he created for the devil and his angels in Matthew, he never had you in mind. Because God is not willing that you should perish. He is not. Many times we look at Noah in the flood and how wicked that time was. It was, a very wicked time. In fact, the Bible says, "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the coming of the Son of Man." The Bible says back in Genesis 6, that

all the imagination of man was wicked. We preach that all the time, and we say that all the time, and we put the emphasis on all the time, and that is all true.

But you know what thing most of the time we miss? God, who is holy, who hates sin, who hates ungodliness, who rejects everything that is unclean, put up with that ungodliness for 120 years before he brought the judgment on. You know what he says in Genesis 6:3? "But my spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years." The Bible says that Noah was a preacher of God's righteousness. He was preaching the coming judgment, 2 Peter 2:5, and God gave old Noah 120 years. He gave the wicked world a God who hates sin, who hates disobedience, who is against everything ungodliness. He forbears 120 years.

The Bible says in 1 Peter 3:19-21, "When once," talking about this same time period, "when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah," the longsuffering of God. He waited 120 years every day, overlooking, hearing the ungodliness of people, rejecting him, making fun of him, laughing at him, but his spirit strove with man for 120 years. Why? Because God is not willing that any should perish. That is a national treasure today. That is a treasure.

Listen, if you wind up in hell, and I hope you do not, but if you wind up in hell, or as a Christian, you lose all your rewards at the judgment seat of Christ. You do not go to hell, an unsaved man does, but we are talking about the three applications here. Or the nation of Israel, as a nation, if they have to go through that terrible time called the tribulation, you can rest assured of one thing, ladies and gentlemen, whether you are a child of God here this morning, that you are going to lose everything in the judgment seat of Christ, whether you are an unsaved man and woman, going to wind up in a lake of fire, or whether the nation of Israel goes through the tribulation period, a time unlike any other time, you can rest assured. One thing is absolute sure, God has done everything he could to keep you out of hell.

I guarantee you he has done everything he could to make sure you had a full reward as a Christian at the judgment seat of Christ. I guarantee you, he has done everything to Israel through his forbearance, his longsuffering, and his goodness. He has done everything that we might not face the judgment as an unsaved man, as an out of fellowship Christian, or as a nation of Israel. Verse 4 says, "he who despiseth his riches."

SEC: Wrath Against the Day of Wrath

Look at verse 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." You know what life is? Life is the treasures of God in your life, or the treasures of wrath in your life. The investment of your life, the investment of your life is what you do with the treasures of God or the treasures of wrath. The treasures of wrath is the reason why you have got every problem you have got in your life. Proverbs 16:6 says, "The house of the righteous is much treasure: but in the revenues of the wicked is much trouble."

Now it says the treasures of his wrath. It says, "wrath against the day of wrath." What does that mean? What does it mean when it says, a man gets into wrath against the day of wrath? I will tell

you what it means. It means that all your life, you go through hell on earth. All your life, you have failed marriages, failed businesses, failed expectations. All your life as an unsaved man, you go through this life and you think, you think you are happy. You think you have it all. I do not care what you have. That Bible says in the book of Romans, there are two things. There is the peace of God and there is the peace with God. The peace with God is salvation. When you get saved, you make your peace with God. That peace leads to peace of God. That is your daily walk.

There is no amount of money on this planet that can buy those two. That is why you have got people that have millions of dollars, millions and billions of dollars that wind up committing suicide, wind up killing themselves, wind up burning their lives out, wind up wasting their life, wind up with so many problems it is unbelievable. You know why? Because with all your money, you cannot buy the two things that man wants so desperately to have, and that is peace with God and the peace of God. That comes from the treasures of God from understanding his longsuffering, his forbearance.

If that was not enough, you go through everything. The wrath up against the day of wrath. You go through the bad time, all this and all that. Then at the end of your life, what do you have to look forward to? You go to hell for eternity. Wrath in this life against the day of wrath when you are dumped in a lake of fire. Wow.

As a Christian, do not get too high and mighty about the fact that, "Well, you know what? I will just go to the judgment seat of Christ." I have actually had some people tell me this. Saved people. Saved and faced with the judgment seat of Christ. "Well, you know what? I know I am saved. I am going to live my life the way I want to and then I know I am saved. So I will just take my chance at the judgment seat of Christ." You are an idiot. Absolute idiot. Idiot. That Bible in 2 Corinthians chapter 5 called the judgment seat of Christ, the terror of the Lord. You think you are going to walk up there and he is just going to say, "Huh, bad boy. Come on now, it is heaven. Come on." I have got news for you.

I will tell you something else. He says, "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God." The key to this whole thing is, God told you already what is going to happen. No surprise. No surprise. You are not going to get to the judgment seat of Christ and say, "Oh, I did not know." Because God is not going to hold you there for what you know or what you did not know. He is going to hold you accountable for what you could have found out but did not. He knows how we play the game.

Verse 6 says, "Who will render to every man according to his deeds." Remember last week, this is why I told you, we do not have to judge people. I do not have to judge people. I told you last week, I showed you in Romans 2:2, "But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things." So I do not have to judge anybody. I do not have to look at somebody's life and say, "Well, they are unsaved or they are lost." That is not for me to judge them. I do look at what they do and I say, "That is not for me. I do not want that in my life." I judge things, I do not judge people.

But I will tell you something. He is going to render every man according to his deeds. Years ago, I heard a great preacher. He is dead now, been dead for many, many years. He was back in the 1980s. He was one of the last of the great Philadelphian preachers and his name was R.G. Lee. R.G. Lee came out of the Southern Baptist Convention early in his life. He preached the Word of God. He was an evangelist. He just was an incredible, incredible guy, even right up to the point when he died. You know what? He is remembered for one message that he preached. I guarantee you, he preached thousands of great messages. But the message that he is remembered for, and I look at it this way, back in the 80s, the church was fast moving into the Laodicean church at a rapid pace. He is one of the last voices that called out to men and women to understand, and his great message was simply "Payday Someday."

"Payday Someday." Boy, he could preach it. "Payday Someday" for the nation of Israel is going to be the tribulation period when you go through that dark, terrible time. "Payday Someday" for the unsaved man is going to be the great white throne judgment or the unsaved woman. "Payday Someday" for the child of God is going to be the judgment seat of Christ when they stand there and look at the one that died for them and look at the one that agonized for them and then they look back so frivolously at their life or they threw it away. "Payday Someday."

This is why I do not judge people. This is why you should not judge people. God's judgment is sure and it is fixed. God will make sure everybody out there gets what they rightly deserve, and I guarantee you, he will make sure we get what we rightly deserve. You know, that is one of the great things and a great, now maybe to you that is not a comfort. To me that is a comfort. Because down here people judge you when they do not know you. People down here lie about you when it is not true. People down here will spread rumors and do everything to do against you and me and everybody else. You have no recourse to that many times. But the great thing about God's judgment, good or bad, at least I am in a place now where I know what I get is exactly what I deserve. I can deal with that. I can deal with that. As long as it is right, as long as it is righteous, I can handle that.

SEC: Making Good Spiritual Investments

Verse 7, "To them," all three of them, Israel, unsaved man, and Christian, "who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life." You know what that verse says? That is a great verse. That verse says you follow the light that God gives you and he will always lead you to the truth. That is the best advice I can give anybody in this world. Somebody comes to me and says, "Bob, I want to really build a relationship with God in my life. What can I do?" Read the Bible? Obviously. Study the Bible? Sure. Come Sunday morning, Sunday, come Sunday morning and Thursday night and get into all the classes that you have. Yeah, it is, you grow, yes, absolutely. But all those are important.

But I am telling you, the greatest thing you can do, the greatest thing you can do, the greatest single thing you can do as a child of God is to always stay with the light that God has given you because it will always lead you to truth. The moment you get outside that book, the moment you get outside those principles, the moment you get outside the Word of God, whether it is Israel,

whether it is the unsaved man, whether it is the Christian, you are in trouble. You stay with the light that God has given you.

We are living in economic upheaval times. I told you a little bit a couple of weeks ago, it was last week, how that you can really look at this thing and see where this thing is going. I think gas is going to be \$4 a gallon by the time we get into the summer. It just gets crazy. I went to, we went to the grocery store the other night and I used to go into the Hy-Vee grocery place over there, which I love Hy-Vee, and go get a cup of coffee, it was 52 cents. This time it was \$1.07. Doubled, over doubled its price. The coffee was not that good. So I take my thermos, I get my money's worth out of the thing, you know? I am just kidding.

But we are in a bad time. People think we are in a recession. People think we are heading for a depression. It is a terrible, terrible time. Everybody is quivering, the stock market is up and down. I mean, the stock market is left and right. Every day, if you have got a 401k or any kind of investment, you look at that thing, it just gets eroded more and more every day. Where once we had a time of prosperity where it was all going up, now it is coming down. That is just the way it is. People get very unsettled in times like this. Personally, I think it is a great time to win people to Christ. So sometimes they have to lose a little treasure before they really get a reality of life.

But we are in a mad, bad state. But I want to tell you something. Now I am not an investment counselor. Well, I am kind of. It just is not with the world's investments. But a lot of truths are parallels here. You know what? If you would toss it out and talk to an investor, say you have got money invested in something, or you are going to invest money in something. And you want to prepare for your retirement or whatever. And you are looking at the times around you, or maybe you have an investment. And you are nervous because every three months you get that statement and you are less money than you had last time. Pretty soon, you know, you are going to owe them money. And you get worried about that.

If you were to go down and sit down and talk to an investor, a good guy, a guy, somebody that really is a good investor. Here is what he would tell you. Here is what he would tell you. He said, first of all, make good investments. Get somebody who knows the investment world better than you. Get somebody who understands what is going on and understands the market. Obviously, nobody is 100% wizard in this thing, but you have got to have some expertise and some common sense. The first thing he would tell you, he says he would make good investments. Get somebody who knows more about it than you do, sit down with them, find out what your options are, and based on the information you get, make the best investments you can if you are going to invest your money.

The second thing he would tell you is this. No matter what the market does, stay with what you have. If you have made good investments, the standard idea is that ride it out with the good investment that you have. The standard idea is that the market is always up and down and it is going to come back up. What he is saying is the last thing you want to do is run around and start, "Oh, I lost \$50 on this stock. Invest at someplace else." "Oh, ride it out." If you made good investments, stay with the good investments that you made unless something tragically happened that it becomes not a good investment anymore. But do not run all over the place and let your

emotions drive you that I am going to go do this. "Oh, I am down \$1,000. Oh, sell everything we got, buy something out over here. Oh, it is down now, \$2,000. Let us go back to this one, it is up now." Now some people do that. You make good investments, get somebody to help you that set out and understand the investments and then you stay, ride it out with what you have based on the information you have that it is a good investment.

Let me tell you something. That is the same kind of advice I give people when it comes to your spiritual life and it comes to riding out this storm to the rapture of the church. First thing, make good investments. I am not talking about your money now. Make good spiritual investments. Make good investments. He said that if you follow the light God gives you, it will lead you to truth, all right? Then make good investments, make the right kind of investments, make them in eternal things, set your affections on things above, put your treasure up in heaven, make good investments and then when the storm comes, ride it out with the truth you have got. It will get you through. It will get you through better than any economic stimulus. It will get you through better than anything that any investment land can give you because these things, these investments are eternal, not your 401K. These things are eternal. These are the true riches. You make the right investments and then you stay with what is right. You follow the light that God gave you. It will always lead you to the right path and the right truth and do not ever deviate from it.

You know why? Some people get all messed up. They cannot do that. Some of you are emotionally basket cases and unstable spiritually, just like people out there in the stock market are financially. When they run back and check the stock market five times a day, you are constantly asking for verses in the Bible that will hold you up. You are the same crowd. You just have got the world's riches over here and neither one of you can believe in what you have got. God gave you the book. You have been safe in the Word of God three or four years. You ought to be at the place now where you are actually making good investments in your life, spiritually speaking.

#### SEC: The Consequences of Disobeying Truth

Look at verse 8 and 9. "But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man." Now here it comes. Here is the principle of Galatians 6:7, "whatever you reap, you sow." God's people are famous for sowing their wild oats and then praying for crop failure. It does not work that way. When the band plays, the band wants to get paid at the end of the night. When you rent the building, the landlord wants the rent due on the building. You reap what you sow.

It says tribulation and anguish. When a person comes to the place that you are contentious, they will not obey the truth, but they obey unrighteousness, they forsake, they despise the principles, the longsuffering, and they build to themselves the revenues of the wicked. Then upon their soul comes the tribulation and the anguish. Now for Israel, that will be the tribulation period. It is also their whole life. They have never had a moment's peace since 606 BC. At the first coming of Christ, it only got worse when they looked at their Savior hanging on a cross and they made the

stupid statement, "Let his blood be upon us and our people." Man, anything would have been better than saying that because God took him at his word. For them, the anguish and the tribulation of the soul is going to be their tribulation encounter.

For an unsaved man or woman, it is going to be wrath against the day of wrath. You live your life totally pretending you are happy. But when you go to sleep at night, it is empty. When you go to a funeral or you hear about somebody die, you get afraid inside. When things get all out of whack, you do not have anything to turn to. Oh, sometimes we put on a great front on the outside, but inside we are like water poured out on the ground. We are afraid. We do not know how to deal, how to cope. We try to put on a front so everybody will think we are strong, but inside we are really not. Or there is nothing there. You are powerless. No walk with God, no work with God. Your life is unfulfilled. You have one problem after another, all a few little bright peaks, but all for the most part, it is emptiness, it is loneliness. All kinds of problems. You make bad choices, bad decisions. You get in bad relationships. You get into this, you get into that. After a life of anguish to your soul, wrath, against the day of wrath, you get to die and go to hell for all of eternity. Wow.

Saved person, lives their life outside the principles of the Word of God, doing their own thing. Oh, they get to go to heaven. Yes, their sins have been washed under the blood, but it is a life of grieving the Holy Spirit of God. Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man. It affects them emotionally, physically, spiritually, your children, your marriage. Then for you at the end, you show up in the judgment seat of Christ and you lose everything that God had for you.

We have all had this experience. Where we really wanted something really bad, and we went out and bought it, and it cost a lot of money. A month later, you could kick yourself in the rear end for going out and buying it because you now need the money for something else and you see how stupid it really was when you bought it. We have all been there. We all can understand that analogy. Well, I want to tell you something. Know at the judgment seat of Christ, you never have to go to hell as a Christian. The judgment seat of Christ is for you and for me, and that judgment is not based on you dying and spending an eternity in the lake of fire like an unsaved man.

But I want to tell you something. If you think, if you could just take that simple illustration I just gave you and put it and magnify it 100 million times and think of standing at the throne of God and your new glorified body with the mind of Christ, when you fully now in an instant realize everything that God did for you, it is not clouded by all that you have in your life now. You cannot brush it away because you love somebody else or something else more than you do God. You are standing there confronting the one that died for you and in the first time in your life, it should have been done down here, but you refuse to do it. For the first time in your life, you are looking at the eyes of the one that died for you. You understand the fullness of how he agonized on the cross for you. There is no more brushing it over and rationalizing it. You now fully understand the agony on the cross that was paid for you and for me and then you see all that he did and you see in an instant all that he had for you. Then in another instant, you see what you gave it up all for. God help us. God help us.

Verse 11 says, "For there is no respect of persons with God." You know, life is really not complicated. We like to make it more complicated than it is. God has one standard by which it all runs by, one standard. That standard is the Word of God. You are either going to make the investments in the true riches or you are going to make the investment in the worldly riches. One is going to lead to the peace of God and peace with God. The other one is going to lead to the going in a wrath against a day of wrath and upon every soul of man, tribulation and anguish. It is just that simple. It is just that simple.

SEC: The Universal Need for God's Handbook

Now you can see in Romans, and I hope by this, how this thing lays itself out. This is why Romans is such a marvelous book. We start by looking at chapter 1 and chapter 2, the Jews versus the Gentiles, both in a mess from two different angles. Now we continue on with that, but we see where he is writing beyond that. He is not writing just from a historical perspective. He is showing you and me that the things that got the Jews in the mess that we get in is the same thing that is going to lead an unsaved man to the lake of fire and going to lead a saved person to be naked at the judgment seat of Christ.

We are all here today and we are all in one category or the other. We either say that we are lost, and I am not here to judge whether you are or not. That is between you and God to work out. Then the saved people are in another two categories. You are either what God wants you to be or you are not. I am not here to judge you on that either. That is between you and God. But I am here as an Old Testament prophet was sent to the nation of Israel to ask you a question. "Where is your fruit?"

Now, if you hate me for that and you are mad for that or you do not like that, then I am in good company because that puts me with Isaiah, Jeremiah, and all the boys back there. You know what they did to Jeremiah? They put a rope under his arms and lowered him down into a dung pit to his arms and left him there. Now that is a ministry, is it not? In a dung pit up to his armpits, lowered him down because he did not like what he said. Left him down there. Up there having a great time. That is what they did with the prophet of God in the Old Testament, Jeremiah. Those guys had a tough time of it. But they had the truth of God and they were going to a people of God that did not want to hear the truth anymore and they preached the truth anyhow. My favorite one is Micaiah when he spoke to over there in 1 Kings 22:14. You know what he said? He got smacked for what he said. He looked back and he said, "Look, I will tell you something, bud, with the Lord sayeth unto me, that will I speak." Tough guy. Tough guy. Tough guy.

Say I come home next week. My wife says to me, "Honey, the washing machine is not working. We are going to have to call the repairman." I say to her, "Well, I do not have a problem doing that, but you know what? Sometimes those things have to recycle. Sometimes they have got a button on the back and something makes the button pop out and it does not work. It is like some cars, if you hit them in the back end too hard, they shut off and you have got to find a button underneath, you know, all those things are." I said, "We have got an owner's manual here and it has got a thing to troubleshoot and it has got an 800 number you can call to get help." I am going to do that because you know, a repairman comes out, he is going to cost us \$200, you know, and

he is going to say, "You need a new one." Now it is going to cost another \$500. I said, "Let us just try it. It does not cost anything."

You know, I am so mechanically inclined to say, "Let me see this thing." So our house is probably, you know, like yours. Maybe your house is bigger, smaller. Maybe you live different color paint, but in one sense, it is all the same. In your kitchen someplace, you have one or two drawers that are filled with all kinds of owner manuals from everything you bought since 1956. We have got them. We have got stuff now that we have not had for 30 years, but I still have got the owner's manual. So I go over to the drawer, you know, start pulling them out, trying to find everything. I found everything, you know, but I cannot find the one for the washer. But I looked at my wife and I say, "I cannot find the one for the washer, but you know what? I have got the owner's manual for the dishwasher. Now I am going to go through that and going to see if I cannot fix the washer."

Now let me ask you a question. How stupid is it for me, a 20th century modern educated man, to think that I have a chance to fix my washing machine by going through the handbook for the dishwasher and using the troubleshooting points for the dishwasher to fix my washing machine? You know why it will not work? Because there are two different designs involved, ladies and gentlemen. One design was designed for the washer, the other design was designed for the dishwasher, and the two are not compatible. The books are not the same, the parts are not the same, though I could make them fit if I really had a mind to do it. They are not the same. There are two different designs involved.

It is just absolutely ludicrous for me to stand up here and say to you, that is how you fix your washer with a handbook from your dishwasher. But it is just as also absurd for you to take and not understand that God made you and designed you. You are God's creation. You are maybe not all God's children, but you are all God's creation. When God made you, he gave you a handbook that fixed every problem that you have got. That handbook will tell you how to troubleshoot yourself. It will tell you how to get rewired, refired. It will tell you how to get reconditioned. It will tell you how to get a new paint job. It will tell you how to get new rubber belts on. It will tell you how to fix your hoses. It will tell you how to do everything about you you need to know to do. It will take this carbon 14 unit that God made, and it is the handbook that will fix every problem you will come up with.

How absurd it is for you and me to think that we can fix you with some other book or some other method other than what God designed. I would have a better chance of fixing my washing machine with a dishwasher handbook than you will fixing your life outside this book right here. God is longsuffering. God is forbearing. God's goodness. God does not want you to be in the condition you are in today. Maybe you are deep down inside, you are going through some struggles, or you are going through some heartache, or you are going through your own emptiness. God does not want you there. God does not want you there.

I think one of the greatest messages you can give to the men down on the missions, and you have all given some really great messages, and I am sure that they will tonight. But one of the greatest messages you can convey to those guys is, you know what guys? You are here, and you know

what? God never intended for you to be here. God did not put you here. Some of you have got attitudes like God put you here. Some of you have got attitudes like somebody else put you here. The truth of the matter is you need to adjust your attitude and find out that you put yourself here. Now God does not want you here, and God can get you out. I mean, he may want you here, but he does not want you to stay here. He wants you to get out. He wants you to bear fruit. He wants you to be everything that God has for you. He wants to give you everything. He has got the longsuffering, the forbearance. God should have killed us years ago. The first utterance out of our mouth that was defiling to God. God should have just stamped on me like a cockroach. But he had forbearance. He had longsuffering.

The key is, wherever your investment is today is what your life is. Your life is the product of investing it in the true riches, or it is the product of investing it in whatever you invested it in. But God does not want you to be in the condition that you are in today. He wants you to be profitable. He wants you to be everything that he wants you to, has for you. He wants your life to be a life of fruit bearing and a light to everybody else in this world. It only comes by fixing your problems with the handbook God gave you. Every head bowed and every eye closed. Now maybe you are here this morning.