

*“The Justice of God Repays with Retribution
Those Who Do Not Obey the Gospel”
2 Thess. 1:5-10 (part 2)*

Finding Peace in the Midst of the Storm

Remember, Paul writes to bring comfort to the afflicted. How does he do this? First, he reminds them that because God is just, He will bring relief to those who are afflicted. Second, he reminds them of God’s judgment against those who are afflicting His people.

The Church in Thessalonica is a persecuted church; and Paul says, “Be encouraged, God will judge them.”

- I. The justice of God brings relief to those who are afflicted (v.6).

- II. The justice of God repays with retribution those who do not obey the gospel (vv6, 8, 9).
 - A. Because God is just, He will repay with affliction those who afflict His people (v.6).

“There is no action which He takes that violates any code of morality or justice.” (Ryrie, Basic Theology, 42).

God will punish the unbeliever in kind.

The Lord will give the unbelieving exactly what they deserve, not one penny more or less. It will be a perfect reckoning.

- B. Because God is just, He will deal out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus (v.8).

The two statements are in parallel: the ones who do not know God and those who do not obey the gospel are the same. What does it mean to know God? What does it mean to obey the gospel?

The Scripture provides us with two word pictures:

- John 1:12 tells us that the gospel is a gift received.
- John 3:16 tells us that the gospel is an object believed.

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C. Because God is just, the unbelieving will pay the penalty of eternal destruction (v.9).

The word "pay" in verse nine comes from the same root word as "righteous" in verse five and "just" in verse six. The price or payment of the penalty will be just or right. There are three descriptive statements concerning this payment.

1. The price of unbelief is an eternal destruction.
2. The price of unbelief is separation from the presence of the Lord.

All that you and I enjoy as an expression of His common grace will be gone. The unbeliever will truly be, for the first time in his life, left alone. He will finally get what he deserves; he will finally have justice.

3. The price of unbelief is separation from the glory of His power.

The opposite action to what is described in verse nine is Calvary. There is, in a sense, a balance between what our Lord endured at Calvary and "the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power."

The unbeliever rejects the grace of God in the sacrificing of His Son. He is assuming he can do what only God can. God had to do it, or all would be lost.