

# THE RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT OF GOD

Think about it. Who  
besides God could get  
us out of the mess  
we're in ...



Why God is our only hope ...

## 1. We need to answer this question ... What is the righteous judgment of God?

- (2 Thessalonians 1:5a ESV) This is evidence of **the righteous judgment of God**.

A. We learn the basic meaning of the phrase by studying the words—righteous, judgment and God.

B. Righteous means to be right and to do what is right.

Righteous ... δίκαιος [dikaios] – one who is right and does what is right; just, upright, moral; innocent, faultless, guiltless; thinking, feeling, and acting wholly conformed to the will of God.

- (1 John 3:7 NIV) Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. **The one who does what is right is righteous**, just as he is righteous.

C. A judgment is a decision.

Judgment ... κρίσις [krisis] – a legal decision, verdict; the official decision of a court on issues of fact or law; a decision or evaluation; a sentence of condemnation, damnatory judgment, condemnation and punishment.

D. God is God.

God ... θεός [theos] – spoken of the only and true God.

E. God is the Uncreated one.

Everything else in the heavens and the earth including humans and the angelic, spiritual realm is created. God is unlike anything or anyone we could ever know or imagine. He is one of a kind, unique and without comparison. Mere words fall short of capturing or describing our holy God.

F. God reveals who he is in the Bible.

- (Isaiah 45:5–6 ESV) **I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God**; I equip you, though you do not know me, 6 **that people may know**, from the rising of the sun and from the west, **that there is none besides me**; I am the LORD, and **there is no other**.
- (Isaiah 46:9 ESV) Remember the former things of old; for **I am God, and there is no other**; **I am God, and there is none like me**.

G. God clearly reveals himself through creation and humans are without excuse to not honor him as God.

- (Romans 1:19–21 ESV) **For what can be known about God is plain to them**, because God has shown it to them. 20 For **his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived**, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. **So they are**

**without excuse**. 21 **For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him**, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

H. This is a partial summary of what we may learn of the nature and character of God from the Bible.

God is righteous, just, holy and infinitely wise. God is omnipotent (all-powerful), omniscient (all-knowing), omnipresent (everywhere, always). He is holy, sovereign and light. God is infinite, eternal, gracious, merciful and kind. He is self-existent, infinite, and never changes. God is loving, merciful and gracious. God is truth. God is Spirit and he exists in three persons - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He is perfectly trustworthy.

God is faithful and true. God is good. God is right and perfect in all he does.

God is glorious and is infinitely beyond the scope of our minds in beauty, majesty and greatness.

**I. Summary statement:** The righteous judgment of God is the official, legal decision made by God himself that proves to be the exact right thing to do in giving proper attention to the matter at hand.

**J. Summary question:** So who could possibly be more qualified than God to provide a way out of our mess?

## 2. The growing trust and confidence in God and the ways of God in the lives of the Thessalonians was evidence that God's plan was working and right.

- (2 Thessalonians 1:5a ESV) This is **evidence of the righteous judgment of God**.
- (2 Thessalonians 1:3–4 ESV) We ought always to give **thanks to God** for you, brothers, as is right, **because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing**. 4 Therefore we ourselves boast about you in the churches of God **for your steadfastness and faith in all your persecutions and in the afflictions that you are enduring**.

A. God's plan was to provide true hope to the human race through our obedience to the gospel of Jesus.

B. Evidence is just what we think it is—evidence, proof.

The Greek word ... ἔνδειγμα [endeigma] means evidence, proof; all the means by which any matter of fact is investigated and either established or disproved.

The changes in these people provided true to life, real world, evidence of their belief in something better and other and beyond what this world offers.

- C. God determined that the only way to help us was to deal with our main problem ... our sin that keeps us in a perpetual state of falling short of a truly better life.
- D. The gospel is God's right and effective action to free us from sin and restore us to the hope of life with God in and beyond this world.

The gospel is what God in his infinite wisdom decided upon and acted upon to change people's lives so that we could be restored to a place of glory in his presence and to be with him in heaven one day forever.

**E. The gospel is this—1 Corinthians 15:3-4.**

- (1 Corinthians 15:3-4 ESV) For I **delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins** in accordance with the Scriptures, **4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day** in accordance with the Scriptures.

**F. The gospel is the power of God.**

- (Romans 1:16 ESV) For I am not ashamed of **the gospel**, for **it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes**, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.
- (1 Corinthians 1:18 ESV) For **the word of the cross** is folly to those who are perishing, **but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.**
- (1 Corinthians 1:23-24 ESV) **But we preach Christ crucified**, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, **24 but to those who are called**, both Jews and Greeks, **Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.**
- (2 Timothy 1:8 ESV) Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, **but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God.**

Faith growing abundantly and love increasing in the lives of the Thessalonians was evidence of the power of the gospel and thereby the righteous judgment/ decision of God. Ditto for the steadfastness and faith of the Thessalonians in persecutions and afflictions.

This evidence proves the sincerity of our faith and the power of the gospel in our lives thereby authenticating our worthiness as members of the kingdom of God.

- G. God will one day give us rest and repay those who afflict us.

**3. So let's continue to try to answer the question ... What is the righteous judgment of God?**

The righteous judgment of God is the official, legal decision of God who always does what is right because

he is God and cannot do otherwise in determining his actions toward those who know God and believe the gospel of the Lord Jesus ... and in determining his actions toward those who refuse to know God and refuse to believe the gospel of the Lord Jesus.

God has made a decision from his infinite wisdom and by his grace to offer us an alternative to the lives we now live ... an alternative to lives that are apart from God and will always fall short as we hunger for something more that is buried deep in our hearts.

- (Ecclesiastes 3:11-13 ESV) He has made everything beautiful in its time. **Also, he has put eternity into man's heart**, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. **12 I perceived that there is nothing better for them** than to be joyful and to do good as long as they live; **13 also that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil—this is God's gift to man.**

**4. There is a day of judgment and wrath in God's plan.**

- (2 Thessalonians 1:7b-9 ESV) ... **when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels 8 in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction**, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might,
- A. Jesus will be revealed from heaven bringing judgment on those who refuse to accept his offer of redemption and the forgiveness of sins.
- B. Those who refuse God's offer of life will suffer an eternal punishment.
- C. They do not know God and do not obey (believe) the gospel of the Lord Jesus.
- D. They will suffer the punishment of eternal ruin— forever removed from the presence of the Lord and so forever removed of any the hope of being restored to the glory of which they fall short.

**5. God in his righteous judgment sends his Son to be the wrath taker for those who obey the gospel.**

- A. The righteous judgment of God is to send his Son to take our punishment is an act of love.
  - (1 John 4:10 ESV) **In this is love**, not that we have loved God but **that he loved us** and **sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.**
- B. If we believe the gospel of the Lord Jesus then he will take the wrath of God in our place—he will be the

propitiation (the satisfying sacrifice) for our sins.

- (Romans 3:23–25a ESV) For all have sinned **and fall short of the glory** of God, 24 and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God put forward **as a propitiation by his blood**, to be received by faith. **This was to show God's righteousness.**
- (1 John 2:1b–2a ESV) Jesus Christ the righteous. 2 **He is the propitiation for our sins.**

C. Jesus' act of propitiation directly confronts the human problem of God's wrath necessarily abiding on us because of our sinful state.

- (John 3:36 ESV) **Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.**

D. Jesus' act of propitiation on the cross demonstrates the love of God in providing a satisfactory solution to the wrath of God for those who believe the gospel.

E. In his righteous judgment God provides the means for us to escape the wrath of God for our sins while God remains faithful in his holiness.

- (Hebrews 2:17 ESV) Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, **so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.**
- (John 3:16–18 ESV) **For God so loved the world**, that he gave his only Son, **that whoever believes in him** should not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. 18 **Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already**, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

6. **The grand finale: This is that indescribable day when Jesus is glorified in his saints and marveled at by all who have believed.**

- (2 Thessalonians 1:10 ESV) When he comes on that day **to be glorified in his saints**, and **to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed.**

A. This is the day when Jesus' saving work in our lives results in praise and glory and honor to him.

- (1 Peter 1:7 ESV) **So that the tested genuineness of your faith**—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—**may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.**

B. This is the day when we are filled beyond our wildest dreams with the limitless hope and the joyous expectation of the glory of heaven.

C. This is the day when the mysterious, puzzling, unsolvable mystery of eternity set in our hearts is finally resolved and finds release and explanation and expression in the glory of Jesus Christ.

- (Colossians 1:27b ESV)27 ... the riches of the glory of **this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.**

D. This is the day when the Lord is glorified in us by the powerful and very evident testimony of his finished work in our lives.

### **CONCLUSION: A prayer for ending well ...**

7. **The Apostle Paul prays that the Thessalonians will not miss the fullness of their opportunity to live worthy and bring glory to the name of the Lord.**

- (2 Thessalonians 1:11–12 ESV) **To this end we always pray for you**, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, 12 **so that** the name of our Lord Jesus may **be glorified in you, and you in him**, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

A. Prayer for ending well ...

That our God will enable us to live worthy of his calling ... that our God will give us the power to accomplish all the things our faith prompts us to do.

B. Ending well so that ...

So that the name of our Lord Jesus will be honored in the way we live ... so that we will be honored in him in the way we live.

C. Ending well because of ...

The grace of God ... all made possible only by the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.