

MINISTRY BY MAIL
Lutheran Conference of Confessional Fellowship
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Sixth Sunday After Trinity, July 12, 2026

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(Hymns found in The Lutheran Hymnal, CPH, 1941)

Hymns: 607, 23:4, 611, 379, 381:3.

Lessons: Psalm 130, Romans 7:7-16, John 4:15-26.

Sermon Text: Romans 2:4-11.

Sermon by Pastor M. H. Eibs

Fellow Redeemed in Christ:

The religion with the biggest following in the world is the religion of salvation by works. The followers of this work-righteousness religion are found in various denominations and organizations throughout the world. We may call these people moralists or do-gooders.

How do people give evidence of their religion of work-righteousness? In several ways. Such people always think of themselves as being better than others. They are very quick to point out the faults and sins of other people, but are blind to their own sins and shortcomings. Such people like to boast about what they have done and delight in being praised for all their good works.

The Pharisees who fought against Jesus during His earthly ministry are a good example of such do-gooders. When John the Baptist preached repentance and baptized people, they did not consider themselves in need of baptism for remission of sins. So also John spoke to them with the harsh Law of God: ***“You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.”*** Matthew 3:7.8. These do-gooders are an example of people who will not stand in the judgment on the Last Day. Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount speaks to all do-gooders today also, saying: ***“I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.”*** Matthew 5: 20.

Those who self-righteously criticize others and themselves do the same sinful things they condemn are the ones who will be judged most harshly on the Day of Judgment. The words of our text are directed to such especially, but also to us, for work-righteousness is a part of the sinful nature that clings to all of us.

Let us, therefore, give careful consideration to our text as we learn of:

THE PUBLIC REVELATION OF GOD’S RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT.

- 1. Despising God’s goodness leads to God’s wrath on Judgment Day;**
- 2. God’s judgment will be righteous, impartial and all-inclusive;**
- 3. God will reward the unrighteous with His lasting anger;**
- 4. God will graciously give the righteous eternal glory, honor and peace.**

Paul’s question in our text is addressed to do-gooders: ***“Do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God’s kindness leads you toward repentance?”*** These words tell us how God in His kindness deals with sinners. He is tolerant and He is patient. He, so to speak, holds up the judgment which is due to fall upon sinners in their guilt. He gives them time to repent. The holy God could justly strike down every sinner in a moment. But because of His goodness He delays His judgment and gives them time to hear the Word of God and come to repentance. The Lord revealed Himself to Moses in these words: ***“The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin.”*** Exodus 34: 6.7

That God is kind and good and patient with sinners does not in itself bring men to repentance. Such repentance is accomplished only by the power of the Gospel Word. But God's kindness gives sinners more than adequate time to hear the Gospel and so to come to repentance.

But if that kindness and goodness of God is despised and the sinner does not make use of his time of grace while he is alive to hear the Word of God, he will experience God's wrath in unrelenting fury. To such our text says: ***"Because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed."*** Because of impenitence God's anger is stored up, and then suddenly on the Last Day it will come down upon the unbeliever like a great cloudburst. There will be no more kindness then, no relief, no rescue, only God's righteous anger.

However terrible that sounds, our text teaches that God's judgment on the Last Day will be righteous, impartial and all-inclusive.

2.

What takes place on the Last Day will be a revelation of God's righteous judgment. Here already in each person's lifetime God knows what is in the heart. He knows whether any person truly believes in Jesus or does not believe. It is as the psalmist says: ***"O Lord, you have searched me and you know me. ... You are familiar with all my ways."*** Psalm 139:1.3. In this life no human being knows what God sees in the heart of every person. But on Judgment Day God will publicly reveal what He has known all along. It will be a public revelation of God's judgment.

God's judgment will be all-inclusive, that is, it will include everyone. Our text says: ***"God will give to each person according to what he has done."*** The Bible in another place says: ***"We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ..."*** 2 Corinthians 5:10

God's judgment on the Last Day will also be impartial, ***"for God does not show favoritism,"*** our text says. It makes no difference if a person is a Jew or Gentile, rich or poor, famous or unknown.

Our text also speaks of God's judgment as ***"righteous."*** It's righteous because God is righteous and holy. He makes no mistakes. The psalmist says: ***"The ordinances of the Lord are sure and altogether righteous."*** Psalm 19:9 The Book of Deuteronomy describes God in these words: ***"A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he."*** 32:4 Therefore, on Judgment Day, the righteous judgment of God will be accepted without question by everyone. The believer will gladly accept it with praise and thanks, and the unbeliever will have no choice in the matter. Then it will be as Paul says it should be, that ***"every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."*** Philippians 2:11

We now learn from our text on what basis Jesus will make His judgment on the Last Day. First we hear of the unrighteous. God will reward the unrighteous with His lasting anger.

3.

"For those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile." This speaks not only of what the unrighteous did not believe, but also of the evil they have done and the good they have failed to do. Our text says: ***"God will give to each person according to what he has done."*** Is salvation, then, by works anyway? No, the Bible clearly says: ***"It is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast."*** Ephesians 2:8.9. Paul also writes: ***"We ... know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ."*** Galatians 2:16.

But in this public judgment Jesus will speak of the evidence of either faith or unbelief. Good works pleasing to God done as a fruit of faith in Jesus are the evidence that the people who did these good works are believers in Christ. Evil works or the lack of good works likewise are the evidence that those rejected in the judgment had no faith in Jesus. This is why the Bible says: ***"We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad."*** 2 Corinthians 5:10

On the Last Day, then, Jesus will publicly reveal the lack of faith on the part of the unrighteous. Our text speaks of the unrighteous as people who ***"are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil."*** They are opinionated people who follow their own human reason instead of listening to God's Word. It is the devil they

serve and their own selfish interests, not the Lord Jesus. No matter how highly they think of themselves, their works cannot please God. The Bible says: ***“Without faith it is impossible to please God.”*** Hebrews 11:6

Such unbelievers will suffer the greatest outburst of God’s anger. No terrible thing on this earth can be compared to the lasting anger of God in hell. They will be forever forsaken of God, for Jesus on Judgment Day will say: ***“Depart from me...”*** Matthew 25:41. Hell is described in Scripture as the place where ***“their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.”*** Isaiah 66:24 and Mark 9:48 This is their due reward, for the unbeliever despises the kindness of God in Christ and rejects the precious Gospel which tells of Christ’s redemption.

But Judgment Day will be a day of great joy for the believer in Christ, for our text teaches that God will graciously give the righteous eternal glory, honor and peace.

4.

The righteous are described in our text as ***“those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality.”*** These are the people with faith in their hearts in Jesus. In such faith they persistently seek to serve the Lord according to His Holy Word. They are believers in Christ, and by faith they are justified. But they also give evidence of their faith by their good works. The Bible tells us how we are saved: ***“He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.”*** Yet, in the same place, the Apostle Paul instructed Titus: ***“I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good.”*** Titus 3:5-8

Our text says there is ***“glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good.”*** To such, our text says, ***“He will give eternal life.”*** Oh, what joy it gives us even now to meditate on what God will give to us as believers in Christ on the Last Day! We who have suffered so much slander, persecution and mockery here on earth will have ***“glory, honor and peace.”*** Jesus says: ***“Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.”*** Matthew 13:43 Then we shall receive that ***“inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade....”*** 1 Peter 1:4 And forever after we shall have undisturbed peace, for all controversies, troubles and fighting will be to an end.

Since the Bible holds out such precious promises to believers in Christ, may we never despise God’s kindness, but always make full use of the opportunities to hear God’s Word, learn, and be strengthened in our most holy faith. Then, when that Last Day comes, we will experience what the psalmist describes as ***“joy in (God’s) presence, with eternal pleasures at (God’s) right hand.”*** Psalm 16:11 Amen.

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