

Romans: Verse-by-Verse

Romans 2:7-8 A

Student Notes:

Verses 6-10: A complex set of arguments on Paul's part. The focus: The Moralizers of Paul's day – whether they are Gentiles like the Roman Seneca, or the Jews of whom Paul was the epitome.

The overall point: The ultimate outcome of human works within the sphere of those who know Christ as Savior and those who do not.

A peek at Romans 3:9: "What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin."

- **The Foundation of Judgment according to deeds/works: vv. 7-8**

"To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. 8 But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger."

The same message in reverse order -- Verses 9-10:

"There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; 10 but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile."

- **The Main Point:** The Jews and Greeks (Gentiles) will either receive "eternal life" or "wrath and indignation" – not based on their Jewishness or Gentile-ness – but "according to their works."

The issue that always comes to the surface: "How does receiving eternal life or eternal wrath "according to works" fit with receiving eternal life by faith in Jesus Christ?"

Paul is not asking the question, "How can we be made right with God through the basis of our deeds or works?" He has already emphasized

righteousness or right standing with God exists completely apart from our deeds or the Jewish Law. See: Romans 1:17

Further evidence of that reality: Romans 3:28; Romans 4:5; Romans 5:1; Romans 8:33-34

The Real Question: “What is the relationship of “works or deeds” to Romans 2:6-10? The answer: Our works do not earn us salvation – but they are the evidence of our relationship to Christ.

New Testament verses that express this relationship between grace and works: Ephesians 2:10; James 2:26; Hebrews 13:16; 1 Timothy 6:17-19; Titus 1:16

- Two Possible Outcomes Of God’s Judgment On Human Works: vv. 7-8:

“To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. 8 But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.”

- **Breaking It Down by Verses:**

“To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life.”

Paul is referring to have already been justified by faith. They are not striving to earn or gain eternal life. They already have that. As Jesus put it in John 5:24:

“I tell you the truth, those who listen to my message and believe in God who sent me have eternal life. They will never be condemned for their sins, but they have already passed from death into life”.

The Christian’s Mission Statement: “Persisting in doing good and seeking glory, honor and immortality”.

The Holy Spirit is constantly nudging us towards these things. See: 2 Corinthians 3:18; Romans 6:22.

It isn't a matter of gaining eternal life by our works. No one will be able to accomplish that. It is a matter of our born-again lives demonstrating an ardent desire to pursue God's glory, God's honor, and immortality.

- **Glory, Honor, and Immortality:**

1. **Glory:**

The highest goal any believer can pursue is to give God glory and to embrace glory. 1 Corinthians 10:31: "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."

Basic Theological Language: "Glory is God's essence or nature." Christians set their sights on manifesting God's essence or nature through our lives.

In other words, we seek to be a vehicle through which God's glory can be observed by others.

The flipside to "glory": While we are seeking to display God's glory, the day is coming when God will glorify us with his own glory. He will give "glory" to those who belong to him. See: 1 John 3:2

2. **Honor:**

"To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, **honor** and immortality, he will give eternal life."

Not seeking human honor: We can't seek and take to ourselves that honor that belongs to God; that's what the Bible calls "pride".

Paul is talking about seeking God's honor or approval. In other words, we seek to be honored by God.

Bible Examples:

- 1 Samuel 2:30: "Therefore the LORD, the God of Israel, declares: 'I promised that your house and your father's house would minister before me forever.' But now the LORD declares: 'Far be it from me! Those who honor me I will honor, but those who despise me will be disdained.'"

- 1 Kings 3:13: “Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for—both riches and honor—so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings.”
- Psalms 91:14: “Because he loves me,” says the LORD, “I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name. He will call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him.”
- John 12:26: “Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.”
- 1 Peter 1:7: “These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.”

As a believer seeks to honor God there is a reciprocal process that takes place. **As we honor God, God honors us.**

That process will culminate in eternity for those who seek glory, honor, and immortality: Revelation 21:24, (King James Version)

“And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.”

Next time: The opposite side of God’s reaction to those who do not seek glory, honor, and immortality.