

## Romans: Verse-by-Verse

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### Romans 2:7-8B

- **Seeking glory, honor, and immortality:** "... Those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life."
  - A life that seeks to be honored by God and not men.
  - A life that is a longing for an immortality that isn't tied to this world.

All of this speaks to a response to God's grace. God gives these believers eternal life at their rebirth – but he also promises them eternal life in the ultimate sense of the word.

A better definition of eternal life: "Eternal life is the life of God that comes in us at salvation and remains with us forever." See: I John 5:20

"Eternal life is more than quantitative – it is qualitative": It's not just living forever – it is a quality of life that can only be found in Christ.

Our works are a response to His love. Our labors for the kingdom of God are the natural extension of the eternal life that has entered us at rebirth.

John Murray: "Works without redemptive aspiration are dead works. Aspiration without good works is presumption."

- **The Negative Side:**

The Jews believed the Gentiles would be shut out of the kingdom of God: 1. They had the premiere rights to salvation. (Jesus: I have come only to the lost house of Israel." – Matthew 15:24)

Chronologically, the Jewish people were first in line to have the opportunity to accept Christ as their Savior: “First to the Jew, then to the Gentiles”.

The flipside: Greater revelation results in greater judgment. Amos 3:2: “You only have I chosen of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your sins.”

The Impact of Verses 8-9: “But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.”

Three terms or phrases that describe them:

- **Self-Seeking**

Greek word for “self-seeking”: “eritheia”. Probable meaning: “Hireling” - a slave or employee who cares more about themselves than the one he works for. (Self-seeking). See: 2 Timothy 3:2. For the opposite attitude, see 2 Corinthians 5:14-15

- **Rejecters of The Truth:**

On the heels of “those who are self-seeking” we have “and who **reject the truth...**” These are people who have rejected the truth – not those who are ignorant of it.

Drawing a line back to Romans 1:18-20:

“The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.”

Paul is pointing to those who have chosen to reject God’s revelation to the world. See: Hosea 4:6-7; John 8:44; Ephesians 2:1

- **Followers of Evil**

John MacArthur: “No man lives in a vacuum, you either do right or wrong, you just don’t go down the middle. This is the flow of life.”

The pernicious lie; that we are independent agents, that we can choose one thing without denying the other.

To reject the truth is to follow evil; God’s Word does not give us a “neutral path” between the two.

Luke 11:23: “He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me, scatters.” Later on, he plainly told them:

Matthew 25:31-33: “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.”

Revelation 21:12,15: “And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. 15 If anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.” –

Humans either accept God’s rulership in their lives and seek God’s glory – or they reject the truth and follow evil. Many do not realize their true spiritual condition: See: 2 Corinthians 4:4; Romans 10:1-4;

- **The Ultimate Outcome:**

“Those who are “self-seeking, reject the truth, and follow evil, will find “wrath and anger.”

-- **Wrath:** Greek the word carries the connotation of rushing along, as if in a hurry. It can also mean to breathe violently.

Used in Hebrews 11:27 to describe Pharaoh’s desire to kill Moses.

Used in Luke 4 to describe the rage of the crowd when they attempted to crowd Jesus and push him off a cliff.

Greek word denotes fury. Paul ties it to the coming judgment: God's end times judgment against those who reject the truth and follow evil will be fury.

### -- **Anger (wrath):**

In Koine Greek the word "anger" speaks to the culmination of God's fury. It is when God's fury reaches an apex. (It is the end of grace or mercy.)

Verse 9: "There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile..."

### • **"Trouble and Distress":**

--**"Trouble"**: From the Greek word "thlipsis", meaning to put pressure on something or to press something:

- Used in Acts 11:19 to describe the persecution of the early Church.
- Used in Romans 12:12 to describe the struggles of believers.
- Used in Colossians 1:24 of Christ's sufferings.

--**"Distress"**: Basic Greek word for "narrow". Refers to a narrow, confined, or restricted place. (We might use the word "prison".)

The Composite: "Those who reject the truth, accept the lies, and follow evil will eventually find themselves pressed and in a narrow, confined, or restricted place."

- **Conclusion:** God judges according to works – in the same way he judges according to guilt, the truth, and knowledge. And He does it all without favoritism.