

God is the Just Judge

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[0:00] Amen. Many years ago, I had the opportunity to witness to a co-worker who had grown up in China. There was much plowing that had to be done in the field of his heart before he was able to even consider the gospel.

Of course, one aspect was being raised a devout evolutionist. And so when I gave him the Genesis flood, he dove into it and ate it up and had many questions when he had many conversations. But after a while, for him, as he read the Bible, he found a particularly troubling aspect that he saw over and over, especially in the Old Testament.

And that's related to God's annihilation of so many people groups. Seemingly mercilessly, destroying thousands upon thousands of, quote, innocent children, women, babies. And he asked, is this right? How can I serve a God that the Bible portrays as being so unfair and doing things that today, in our view of goodness and as we have evolved as people, would never consider doing that type of thing anymore?

[1:35] I would just like to ask you to ponder this thought, because I would like to hear from you how you would respond to an unsaved man's questioning on these aspects.

What would you say to him? But before hearing your answers to the question, I'd like to do just a short biblical survey to kind of review some of the passages he was struggling with.

And for those of you taking notes, we're going to divide the lesson this morning under four main heads. First, examples of God's acts of judgment. Two, the meaning of justice.

Three, God is judge. And then four, the basis for judgment. So first, examples of God's acts of judgment.

Please turn to Genesis 7.23. Genesis 7.23.

[2:34] Of course, at the very beginning, God's judgment on the world came in the form of the curse, didn't it? And that was truly the greatest of all judgments, because it was through that curse that sin entered the world.

Actually, it was through Adam and Eve's sin that sin entered the world, but it was through the curse that then, because of that sin, death entered the world and then death to all men. And so, in a sense, all that we are about to read is a consequence of that initial judgment on Adam's and Eve's sin.

So, Genesis 7.23. And leading up to this, this, of course, is related to the worldwide flood that God sent on all the earth, and this was the conclusion of the matter.

Every living thing on the face of the earth was wiped out, men and animals and the creatures that move along the ground, and the birds of the air were wiped from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those with him in the ark.

How many millions of women and children and babies do you suppose were wiped out as part of that worldwide flood? In probably an incredibly terrorizing fashion.

[3:50] Then there was Pharaoh and all of Egypt. Turn to Genesis 15.13. Genesis 15.13. Then the Lord said to him, Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated four hundred years, but I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions.

And, of course, God fulfilled his promise by destroying all of Egypt through ten plagues, the last of which was the killing of the firstborn male in every household.

How many of these firstborn souls do you suppose were little boys or even babies? Sodom and Gomorrah. Genesis 19.

Genesis 19.24. Then the Lord rained down burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the Lord out of the heavens.

Thus he overthrew those cities and the entire plain, including all those living in the cities, and also the vegetation in the land. Again, an entire city.

[5:11] Some have supposed it may have even been upwards of a million people or more. Many, many, quote, innocent wives, mothers, children, babies.

Then we have Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Numbers 16. Numbers 16, verse 19. Numbers 16:19. When Korah had gathered all his followers in opposition to them at the entrance of the tent of meeting, the glory of the Lord appeared to the entire assembly. Jump to verse 23.

Then the Lord said to Moses, Say to the assembly, Move away from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Moses got up and went to Dathan and Abiram, and the elders of Israel followed him. He warned the assembly, Move back from the tents of these wicked men. Do not touch anything belonging to them, or you will be swept away because of all their sins. So they moved away from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

[6:25] Dathan and Abiram had come out of there and were standing with their wives, children, and little ones at the entrances to the tents. Jump to verse 31. Verse 31. As soon as he has finished saying all of this, the ground under them split apart, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them with their households and all Korah's men and all their possessions.

They went down alive into the grave with everything they owned. The earth closed over them, and they perished and were gone from the community. At their cries, all the Israelites around them fled, shouting, The earth is going to swallow us too.

And fire came out from the Lord and consumed the 250 men who were offering the incense. Then we read of Achan.

Joshua 7. Joshua 7, verse 24.

Joshua 7, verse 24. Then Joshua, together with all Israel, took Achan, son of Zerah, the silver, the robe, the gold wedge, his sons and daughters, his cattle, donkeys and sheep, his tent, and all that he had, to the valley of Achar.

[7:52] Joshua said, We have, why have you brought this trouble on us? The Lord will bring trouble on you today. Then all Israel stoned him, and after they had stoned the rest, they burned them.

Was it right and fair that this wicked man's family should also have to suffer?

Probably little children, didn't know what was going on yet. Then there's Joshua 10, verse 28.

Here we enter into Joshua annihilating every living, at least he was commanded to annihilate every living person living in Canaan.

In Joshua 10, verse 28, we read, That day Joshua took Makeda, he put the city and its king to the sword, and totally destroyed everyone in it.

[8:53] He left no survivors. Jump down to verse 32. The Lord handed Lachish over to Israel, and Joshua took it on the second day. The city and everyone in it he put to the sword, just as he had done to Libna.

And on and on we read of the story. To Eglon, Hebron, and on it goes. The campaign summarized in verse 40 of chapter 10.

So Joshua subdued the whole region, including the hill country, the Negev, the western foothills, and the mountain slopes, together with all their kings. He left no survivors.

He totally destroyed all who breathed, just as the Lord, the God of Israel, had commanded. Please turn to Acts 12, verse 21.

As we consider a few New Testament examples, first note that Jesus pronounces judgment on the whole Jewish nation for rejecting himself, the Christ. Jesus said to them in Matthew 21, 42, Have you never read in the scriptures, the stone the builder rejected has become the capstone?

[10:09] The Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes. Therefore, I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to people who will produce its fruit. That was a direct judgment on Israel.

You'll remember Ananias and Sapphira who lied to Peter and to the Holy Spirit regarding the amount they sold for the land, and they were both struck instantly dead.

In Acts 12, 21, we read of King Herod. On the appointed day, Herod, wearing his royal robe, sat on his throne and delivered a public address to the people.

They shouted, This is the voice of a god, not a man. Immediately, because Herod did not give praise to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died.

[11:13] Packer summarizes God's judgment in this way. When we turn from Bible history to Bible teaching, the law, the prophets, the wisdom writers, the words of Christ and his apostles, we find the thought of God's action and judgment overshadowing everything.

The prophets take up this theme. Indeed, the greater part of their recorded teaching consists of exposition and application of the law and threats of judgment against the lawless and impenitent. They spend a good deal more space preaching judgment than they do predicting the Messiah and his kingdom. In the wisdom literature, the same viewpoint appears. The one basic certainty underlying all discussion of life's problems in Job and Ecclesiastes and all the practical maxims of Proverbs is that God will bring thee into judgment, God will bring every work into judgment, and every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.

[illegible]

And really deal with what our pastor has been faithfully preaching, that when you minimize our wickedness, the gospel doesn't look that grand.

[14:22] Well, I would like to address the subject on two fronts. One, retribution is right. And two, the judge is righteous.

You know, when I was young, you were always told you're not supposed to define a word with the word, but the dictionary always does it. I've never figured that out. The quality of being just, righteousness, equitableness, or moral rightness, the administering of deserved punishment or reward.

Something justly deserved, recompense, something given or demanded in repayment, especially punishment. As God's image bearers, isn't it built into our very fabric to believe that this is right and needed?

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We see retribution throughout Scripture. Matthew 16, 27, The Son of Man is going to come in His Father's glory with His angels, and then He will reward each person according to what He has done. That's retribution. I had you turn to Romans 2, verse 6. Look at that with me. Romans 2, 6. God will give to each person according to what He has done.

Retribution. To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor, and immortality, He will give eternal life. But 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. But glory, honor, and peace for everyone who does good, first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

[16 : 44] For God does not show favoritism. Unfortunately, this is no longer the politically correct viewpoint, is it? We no longer have prisons.

We have centers, or that is, centers for retribution. Rather, we have correctional facilities, places where people are rehabilitated.

In fact, our understanding of righteousness is so bankrupt that those who would demand retributive, retributive, I so struggle with that word, retributive justice, what do we consider those kinds of people?

I mean, aren't they bloodthirsty? They're hate mongers? They're evil. On the other hand, those who espouse leniency in the serving of justice are seen as forgiven, forgiving, and compassionate, and kind.

We've turned everything on its head. And since this is the culture that we breathe, can you see, especially as we witness to people who have no knowledge of Scripture, this is going to be a major stumbling block.

[17 : 55] Which is why the first point is that retribution is right and just. Of course, the Bible presents a very different version of justice. when the judge issues his righteous judgments.

And we saw that throughout our brief survey, but also at the end of the age. In 2 Corinthians 5.10, we read, For 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.

So, again, it's retributive justice. But again, because of our twisted view of justice, many find it difficult to reconcile how a good and loving God could also be the judge of all the earth and before whom all of us are going to have to give an account.

Packer asks whether a God who did not care about the difference between right and wrong could be a good and admirable being. Would a God who put no distinction between the beasts of history, the Hitlers and Stalins, if we dare use names, and his own saints be morally praiseworthy and perfect.

Moral indifference would be an imperfection in God, not a perfection. He continues, God will see that each man, sooner or later, receives what he deserves, if not here, then hereafter.

[19 : 17] This is one of the basic facts of life. And being made in God's image, we all know in our hearts that this is right. This is how it ought to be. Packer makes an undeniable point in the onslaught of all the political correctness.

When it's your son or your daughter or your wife that's brutally murdered and an unjust judge grants leniency or the case is thrown out on some technicality, isn't retribution rightly what is demanded from our hearts?

The instinctive desire for retribution was used as the test that actually caused Asaph's feet to slip. Remember that? He could no longer take the obvious reality, even as we're learning about Ecclesiastes, that the wicked are prospering and that the righteous are being wronged.

It just isn't fair. It's not right. Where does that sense of fairness come from? It's built within the fabric of every one of our hearts. Every person who has ever lived in this fallen world knows the powerful surges of emotions when either ourselves or our family members, our loved ones, our friends, are wronged, when they're treated unjustly.

[20 : 42] It's infuriating. It is wrong. And that is just a reflection, even in its sin-corrupted way, of the image of God by which we were made.

Well, how did Asaph return to emotional and spiritual stability? Did he give up on the sense of justice? Not at all.

Without knowing that justice will finally prevail, life would become unbearable, wouldn't it? And so what did Asaph do?

He considered the finally of the matter. You read in Psalm 73, 16, when I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me till I entered the sanctuary of God, then I understood their final destiny. Justice will be served. Everything will be righted. And that is what has enabled him to get through a very unfair and unjust world in the here and now.

[21 : 49] But not only is retribution good and right, but the judge is righteous. The judge is righteous. As we consider God's many historical acts of judgment, the final and ultimate answer for justifying these verdicts is to accept what all of Scripture testifies to and that is that the God, the judge of all the earth will do right.

Isn't this how God addressed Job's questions? By confronting him with himself. For the one wanting human satisfying answers reading Job could probably be pretty frustrating because God doesn't give any.

What does he do? He never answers any of Job's questions or challenges. he simply confronts Job with himself because it really comes down to this.

Either we will trust in our own understanding, we will set ourselves up as to what is right or what is wrong, or we will trust that the judge of all the earth will do right always.

The character of God is the guarantee that all wrongs will be righted someday, says Packer.

Romans 2.5 But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath for yourselves for the day of God's wrath when his righteous judgment will be revealed.

[23 : 16] Notice that the day of God's wrath isn't anything like the day of human wrath. In our wrath, we often overreact, we react sinfully, we lose control, but in the day of God's wrath, he will administer his righteous judgment.

Righteous judgment is ultimately dependent on God's righteous character. And I cannot improve on Leon Morris' summary statement on this subject, which was quoted in Packer's book.

The doctrine of final judgment stresses man's accountability and the certainty that justice will finally triumph over all the wrongs which are part and parcel of life here and now.

The former gives a dignity to the humblest action. The latter brings calmness and assurance to those in the thick of the battle. The doctrine gives meaning to life.

The Christian view of judgment means that history moves to a goal. Judgment protects the idea of the triumph of God and of good. It is unthinkable that the present conflict between good and evil should last throughout eternity.

[24 : 29] Judgment means that evil will be disposed of authoritatively, decisively, finely. Judgment means that in the end God's will will be perfectly done.

Was God right to destroy thousands, millions of quote innocent babies, children, women, the firstborn?

yeah. Yes, he was. How do I know? Because retribution is necessary and it's right and it's good and because the pure righteousness of the judge ensures that perfect justice is always served.

And that is where our faith must lie. Well, we've done a survey of God's judgments throughout scripture and we've considered the meaning of justice. I now want to turn our thoughts to the reality that God is judge.

God is judge. Remember when addressing God, Abraham asked, will not the judge of all the earth do right? We've quoted it several times this morning.

[25 : 41] Well, the psalmist repeats the theme, Psalm 75, 7, or in Psalms 82, 8, rise up, O God, judge the earth, for all the nations are your inheritance.

When turning to the New Testament, however, many want to believe that God somehow is no longer the judge, that now as we enter into the age of grace, as if all ages weren't ages of grace, that somehow it's changed.

Packer observes, if we examine the New Testament, even in the most cursory way, we find at once that the Old Testament emphasis on God's action as judge, far from being reduced, is actually intensified.

The entire New Testament is overshadowed by the certainty of a coming day of universal judgment, and by the problem thence arising, how may we sinners get right with God while there is yet time?

For example, in Hebrews 12. 23, we read, you have come to God, the judge of all men. Or James 5. 9, don't grumble against each other, brothers, or you will be judged.

[26:53] The judge is standing at the door. Or 1 Peter 4, 5, but they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. Scripture makes clear that God is judge.

But if you want to really blow the gasket, of modern professing Christians, just try suggesting that Jesus is the Father's agent of justice.

Please turn to Matthew 25, 31. Matthew 25, 31. Just in support of this statement, listen to Acts 10, 42.

He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he, Jesus, is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. Romans 2, 16.

This will take place on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares. Or John 5, 22.

[28:00] Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son. And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man. I just want to establish it's over and over.

There's many, many more passages. Jesus is the judge. This picture of Jesus, the Savior, as judge, simply does not compute for many modern Christians or professing Christians.

We love to hear of Jesus as Savior, meek and mild, dying on my behalf, my Redeemer, an advocate before the Father, a Lamb who was slain for me.

And all these things are true. But do we appreciate the New Testament's emphasis, Jesus' emphasis, that one day we must all stand before him as king and judge?

Look at Matthew 25, beginning in verse 31. When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory.

[29:06] All the nations we gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

Then the king will say, what follows is an account of his pronouncements of judgment and blessing to those on his right and his left. And then he concludes in verse 46, then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.

God bless and God bless God bless and in Matthew 7.21, Jesus addresses what would seem to be a very common scene that is going to happen probably for many who cannot picture Jesus as judge in this age.

And he says, not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. So here are all people proceeding before him, standing before this great judge.

And some who are on the left and have been condemned to eternal judgment are going to turn to him and say, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?

[30:25] Then I will tell them plainly, I never knew you, away from me, you evildoers. This is a fearful judge. And he will do right, but he is judge, and we must see him as judge and king.

Revelation provides a very awesome and frightening picture of the lamb who is coming to judge and make war at the end of the age. And in chapter 19, verse 11, we read, I saw heaven standing open, and there before me was a white horse whose rider is called faithful and true.

With justice he judges and makes war. His eyes are like blazing fire and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one but he himself knows.

He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the word of God. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean.

Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. He will rule them with an iron scepter. He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty.

[31:39] On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords. God's wrath and judgment toned down in the New Testament?

I don't think so. We cannot leave the subject of God the judge without contemplating the basis that will be used for God's righteous judgments.

And so that's our fourth and final point, the basis for judgment. You know what has been one of the most trying and frequent attacks I have received as I have been through this unemployment phase? First, my sins are prayed before me. Then the accuser draws back his bow and shoots the arrow of logic and says, because of your sins, you're now getting payback.

It's because of your own wicked heart that now you are having to make payment for all of this wickedness. How would you counsel someone, and this is a question to you, how would you counsel someone struggling with such guilt, especially considering the very real truth that we've just surveyed, that God is the judge, and that he does exact deserved judgment, what would you say to them?

[33:12] I didn't give you enough time to think about it. Very good. Okay. He asked, is this a believer?

Well, does the question matter? Is there a believer, I would point that the fact that Jesus Christ is taking all the wrath of God's judgment in your place.

So I would remove from that anything of God's wrath that is going to love?

Okay. Everybody hear that? You just summarized the last of my lesson, we can go home. Did I see a hand back there?

Same thing. Okay. Well, please turn to Romans 8.30. Romans 8.30. I asked Pastor John, does it really matter?

[34:25] Of course it matters. But what I was driving to with that question is, I guess the first thing I would ask the person to do is to examine themselves to see if they are in the faith.

And I only take that from 2 Corinthians 13.5. Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you? Unless, of course, you fail the test.

And there's many other passages that exhort us to do this. Is there fruit in my life that could only be produced by the Spirit? Do I love God's law? Do I find my heart warmed and encouraged by his word, even when it crosses my own desires?

Do I long for God's glory? Do I desire to please Jesus? Well, if the answer is yes, then I should realize that Christ Jesus is in me, as this passage says.

So, assuming I pass the test, I should secondly consider certain truths, realities, regarding my standing with God and judgment. And if you look at Romans 8.30, beginning in verse 30, And those he predestined, he also called, those he called, he also justified, those he justified, he also glorified.

[35:49] What then shall we say in response to this? If God is for you, who can be against you?

He who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all, how willing he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

So, if I've passed the test, if I am in Christ and he is in me, then God has given me his own son, dying on the cross for my sins, and he asks the rhetorical question, if he's given you his son, will he not give you everything else?

God will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.

God is the judge. He's the justifier. We can't justify ourselves. We would all end up in hell. Unless he somehow justifies us, we're all damned. And he does justify those whom he has chosen.

who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus who died. Let me stop before the last verse. Who is he that condemns?

[37:06] Christ Jesus. So here we see Jesus as judge again. We will appear before him. He is the judge. He is the one that will pronounce condemnation.

Ah, but it's he who died. He died for me. if he's in me and I am in him. More than that, who was raised to life is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for me.

Since he's taken all of God's wrath, he's now at the right hand of the Father praying for me, interceding for me on the basis of his propitiation on my behalf.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? That's pretty awesome. So I dwell on the centrality of truth, the reality of what Christ has done for me to overcome the darts and the arrows of Satan.

Not even one difficulty of my life can be counted as payback for lapses into sin. For to do so is to count the blood of Christ as insufficient for fully satisfying God's justice.

[38:23] The wrath of God was fully unleashed on his son for his elect. Justice has been fully served. It's for this reason that this entire section in Romans 8 is able to begin with verse 28.

God and with God's justice fully satisfied for his people in Christ we read astounding statements from the judge such as what we see in Psalm 103 10 to 14!

He does not treat us as our sins deserve repay us according to our iniquities as high as the heavens are above the earth so great is his love for us those who fear him as far as the east is from the west so far has he removed our transgressions from us as a father has compassion on his children so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him for he knows how we are formed he

remembers that we are dust so that if we confess our sins he's faithful and just faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness because the just judge has provided full payment there's no more payment to be made there's no more retribution to suffer for our sins the trials we suffer rather than being payback for our sins are now actually acts of kindness bestowed by God on his children and yet there is seemingly troubling message found in scripture and we see it in two which we really talked both about this morning but to summarize the two points 2nd

Corinthians 5:10 talks about the fact that our judgments based on works for 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!

dead great and dead standing before the throne and books were opened another book was opened which is the book of life the dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books the sea gave up the dead that were in it and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them and each person was judged according to what he had done then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire the lake of fire is the second death if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life he was thrown into the lake of fire so in the scene of final judgment we see playing out what was foretold by the apostles and the prophets and

[42:12] Jesus himself the books are opened which have recorded in them all of our doing everything each one of us has done and each of us will be judged according to what he has done that's clear but then we have this little statement added in verse 15 if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life he was thrown into the lake of fire there I will be standing before the judge all of my deeds exposed even my very best shown to be laced with self centeredness and wickedness and if that were the end of the story anyone who has the slightest bit of cognition of their own depravity would be filled with fright and horror at the prospect of this scene someday my condemnation would be certain but then the judge does something amazing he opens another book the book of life and he to see if my name if it isn't

I will be condemned based on my deeds my very best deeds are hopelessly laced with self centeredness I'll be thrown into the lake of fire but if my name is found written in the book of life the king will say to me as Jesus said in Matthew 25:34 come you who are blessed by my father take your inheritance the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world so we see that my deeds will be reviewed before the judgment seat of Christ but if the penalty of my wickedness has been propitiated by Christ through his atoning sacrifice his atoning death on the cross my name will be written in the book of life and therefore I will be invited into God's kingdom not on my own merit but on Christ's very quickly the second consideration for resolving the apparent conflict is that the words and the works of the righteous will in fact evidence that their

Godward allegiance will evidence their Godward allegiance that we are serving of Christ on this point Packer offers the following insight final judgment as we saw will be according to our works that is our doings our whole course of life the relevance of our doing is not that they ever merit an award from the court they are too far short of perfection to do that but that they provide an index of what is in the heart what in other words is the real nature of each agent and he gets that from passages like Matthew 7:16 to 20 by their fruit you will recognize and I'm not going to take time to read the whole section so Jesus is able to make the conclusion based on the overall tenor of a person's life through the fruit as imperfect as it is about their final judgment very truly in that sense as well why because it is

God who does work in us to will and do of his good pleasure he does put his spirit in us he does move us to follow his decrees and be careful to keep his laws and so there is an overall tenor of fruitfulness and righteousness that will come from the righteous the third and final truth worth remembering is that God does judge his people remember in 1st Corinthians 11 related to the taking of the Lord's Supper and the statement Paul made regarding some of the sicknesses that were going on there as they were eating it unworthily for anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself this is why many among you are weak and sick and a number of you have fallen asleep but if we judged ourselves we would not come under judgment when we are judged by the Lord we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world and this comes back to something

Pastor John brought up we are as children of God disciplined but notice that when God judges his children it isn't retributive justice it is corrective justice discipline it's for our good if you want to write

down Hebrews 12 5 to 11 to read more about God's discipline later or between the services let me just conclude asking are you a child of God are you a child of God if you're not flee to the Savior we will all stand before the judgment seat someday and if you stand there on your own merit there is no hope but if you are a child of God have you considered that even within your greatest difficulties that they are God's good gifts to you they're his graciousness they may be in the backdrop of great severity but he's working them all out to make me ready for his kingdom let us go out and worship [47 : 37] God the judge may