

2 Thessalonians 1:5-7

*All this is evidence that God's judgment is right, and as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering. God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you.*

When your head hits the pillow at night, you want the temperature in the house to be just right, don't you? For some of you that's a balmy 70 degrees, but for others it's a chilly 55. Before you hop in the tub or jump in the shower, the water temperature has to be just right, too. For some of you that's just a few degrees above body temperature, but for others it has to be close to scalding. Before you take a sip of your morning coffee, it has to be hot enough, too –with just the right amount of cream or sugar. The problem is, "just right" can mean ten different things to ten different people.

Mention the phrase "Judgment Day" to the Thessalonians --the congregation that first received this letter from the Apostle Paul— and they'd probably give you ten different opinions about it. Some thought Christ had already returned and they all missed it. Others figured that Christ's return was such a long way off that they had time to eat, drink, and be merry and didn't need to give any attention to spiritual and eternal matters. Still others were busy amassing good works like vouchers for eternal life and longing for the day when they could cash them all in (boy! wouldn't God be impressed with them!).

Sadly, those wrong ideas about Judgment Day are still around.

It's easy for people today –including you and me—to be confused or uncertain about the events that will take place when Jesus comes again in glory “to judge the living and the dead.” Maybe you're a little worried about where you'll be at the end of the world --how you'll react to the universal chaos of “heaven and earth passing away,” what it will be like to stand before the judgment throne of God, or what kind of verdict you will hear.

The Bible doesn't answer every question we could possibly have about the end of the world and the beginning of eternity. It doesn't give you every detail, but you can't miss its one, big, reassuring promise: *Judgment Day will be just right thanks to Jesus!* Plan on it. Anticipate it. Don't worry about it. And finally, leave all the details to God.

In the first two verses of our text Paul tells us, "God's judgment is right." Then he adds, "God is just." And if you want to know exactly what the end of the world will be like for you, use those two words together –it will be “just right.”

What God does between now and the end of the world will be just right. The verdicts that God hands down on the Last Day will be just right. Because God is right and just, everything he says and does and decides is just right, too.

God is just right when he says that you have wronged him and others with your sin. God is just right when he says that “all have sinned and fall short of his glory” and that all of us deserve his eternal condemnation. It’s just plain wrong to think otherwise. Consider 1 John, chapter 1, verse 8. “If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.”

But here’s the good news; here’s why we can be so sure that Judgment Day will be just right, “if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will purify us from all unrighteousness.” In his love and mercy, God sent his Son to pay for your sins. He raised Jesus from the dead and gave your Savior the authority to sit in judgment over the world in order to guarantee that everything will be just right on the Last Day. Thanks to Jesus Judgment Day won’t be so hot that it burns us with fires only meant for hell. And Judgment Day won’t be so cold and heaven so sterile that we’ll be frozen with boredom and chilled with thoughts of how nice we had it on earth.

God never messes up and he doesn’t leave anything to chance. Rest assured that everything will turn out just right. Every day of your life is in God’s hands and so is the task of getting you to heaven. “You will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God as a result of God’s judgment,” Paul writes a little later in 1 Thessalonians.

Jesus will judge you fairly and squarely and the standard he will use is the gospel standard of Mark 16:16, “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.” The good news of Jesus Christ is the only reason why you can face Judgment Day without worry. For the same gracious Lord who chose you in eternity before the creation of the world and sent his Son to pay for your sins, has written with the blood of the Lamb your name in the Book of Life. God has welcomed you by name into his eternal family by Holy Baptism, brought you to faith and he keeps you steadfast in faith by the gospel of sins forgiven.

So then, whenever the events of Judgment Day begin to take place, you can stand up, look up with joy and see your salvation drawing near. “When the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels” he will make everything right. He’ll shut out from heaven everything that troubled you –including the Devil and his demons. He’ll welcome you as warmly as long-awaited family.

And, then what? Revelation 21:3-4: Then you’ll hear “a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. You will be his people, and God himself will be with you and be your God. He will wipe every tear from your eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.’”

And throughout eternity you’ll find your thoughts centered on one heartfelt, amazing truth, “This is just right –thanks to Jesus!” Amen.