

Occupations

Harmony M.B.C., August 21, 2016

Robert P. Myers

Rom. 2:5 ...”God...”

Rom 2:6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

Rom 2:7 To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:

Rom 2:8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,

Rom 2:9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;

Rom 2:10 But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:

I. Humanity should face the fact that God is going to render to every man according to his deeds

- ◆ This should give pause to the every member of the human race to give some thought to what their deeds are all about
- ◆ I want to spend just a moment explaining the word “deeds” – the Greek word chosen by the Holy Spirit for this word here is “ergon” which literally means to toil or labor in an occupation. I want us to remember that this verse is describing how a man might be pursuing an occupation. This is not about an isolated act, but about a career – laboring in something chosen as an occupation or career.
- ◆ There shouldn’t be any confusion among humanity about how they may assess their deeds – God has spoken to man and outlined a standard for measuring deeds. That standard is laid out in the word of God
- ◆ A lot of job openings for specialized occupations pass through my email from headquarters each week. Each advertisement has a pay grade, a job title, a location where the hiring is being done, and a JOB DESCRIPTION. In that job description, there are details about what the employee will be doing in that occupation. Many of those descriptions are detailed. You can read what that person will be doing. In the same way the word of God describes in detail what people will be doing in the occupation they pursue.
- ◆ Let’s take that standard and examine the two contrasting types of occupations described by the Apostle in these verses. First, the description in verse 7: “To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:”
 - Let me first bring everybody’s attention to the fact that the word “well” in this verse is the same word used by Jesus in Mat. 19:17 to instruct that man that there was only one who was good and that was God:

- **Mat 19:17** And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is none good but one, that is, God:* but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.
- And by the way, the word “doing” in this verse is the same “ergon” as in verse 6 that means to “labor in an occupation.”
- ◆ So, may I dare to say that Paul is here saying that those described in this verse are performing “God stuff” or the “stuff of God,” since only God is good, good can only belong to Him.
- ◆ I need to settle this in our minds so that we can properly understand this verse to be telling us that what the people described in this verse are doing is the stuff of God as they pursue their unique occupation. So, what we see here is an explanation by the Holy Spirit that those described in this verse are people who are laboring in **the occupation** of doing God stuff! Now, let’s go on and describe what that stuff is:
 - Patient continuance in doing the stuff of God
 - Seeking glory, honor, immortality in doing the stuff of God
 - Seeking it in eternal life (remind us that this is in contrast to seeking glory honor and immortality somewhere else)
- ◆ Let’s stop just a moment and settle in our minds how a person might fill the job description given here: that is seek by patient continuance that glory, honor, and immortality that is housed within the framework of eternal life.
 - First, eternal life is found only in one place: Jesus Christ
 - So, a person pursuing the occupation of doing the stuff of God would be attached to Jesus Christ. That’s it in a nutshell.
 - Jesus said in John 6:29 “...This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.”
 - And by the way, the word work in that statement by Him is the same “ergon” found in the 6th and 7th verses of our text. So pursuing the occupation of doing God stuff begins with believing on Him whom God has sent!

II. Now, taking that standard again as our guide, we can say that if a man works at an occupation and his tools that he uses in that occupation are tools that God has said “thou shalt not use” then such a man is toiling in an occupation that fits with the second kind of person described in v. 8. Let’s look at that now:

- ◆ 8 - “But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, 9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil”
- ◆ To emphasize what this means, we need a reminder as to what evil is according to God’s standard. We can get that from Gal. 5:19-20- “Now the **works** (here we have that Greek word “ergon” again – these are the activities pursued as labor or toil in an occupation [of the flesh]) of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like:”

(“...of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things **shall not inherit the kingdom of God.**”)

- If I walk into an auto mechanic’s shop and rummage through his tools, what do you think I will find? Those of you who know anything about auto repair know that I will find wrenches, testing equipment, screwdrivers, etc. – the tools of the trade. In the same way, we can look at any craftsman’s tools that he uses in an occupation and tell what his work is. So it is with humans in the world of spiritual and fleshly things.
- ◆ I need to stop right here for a minute and remind us all that even though I am reading about labor which violates God’s standard, I am not suggesting that keeping the law of God is what will give us eternal life. I showed plainly when looking at v. 7 that eternal life lay in the stuff of God...and the stuff of God is believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. But, the standard DOES give humanity the knowledge of sin, and can be used to identify what trade a person is pursuing:
 - Rom 3:20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.
- ◆ Now, to go on, I want to take us back to a phrase in v. 7 and contrast it to what describes those who work the works of evil, so that I can make a point about the difference in the two occupations, and also point out the difference in the end product of the two careers.
 - This is the description of those who are doing the stuff of God: “To them who by patient continuance in **well doing** seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:”
 - This is the description of those who are doing the stuff of evil: “But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness,... Now the **works** of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like:

III. Last, we want to go back to what I said at the first of the message. God is going to render to every man according to his deeds. Once we are clear on how a man’s occupational acts or behavior are, in fact, a most accurate way to determine what kind of career he is in, we see how accurate it is for the Lord to render to every person according to those deeds. These closing verses are a summary of that:

vv. 8-9: “...unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, 9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil...”

v. 10: “But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good....”