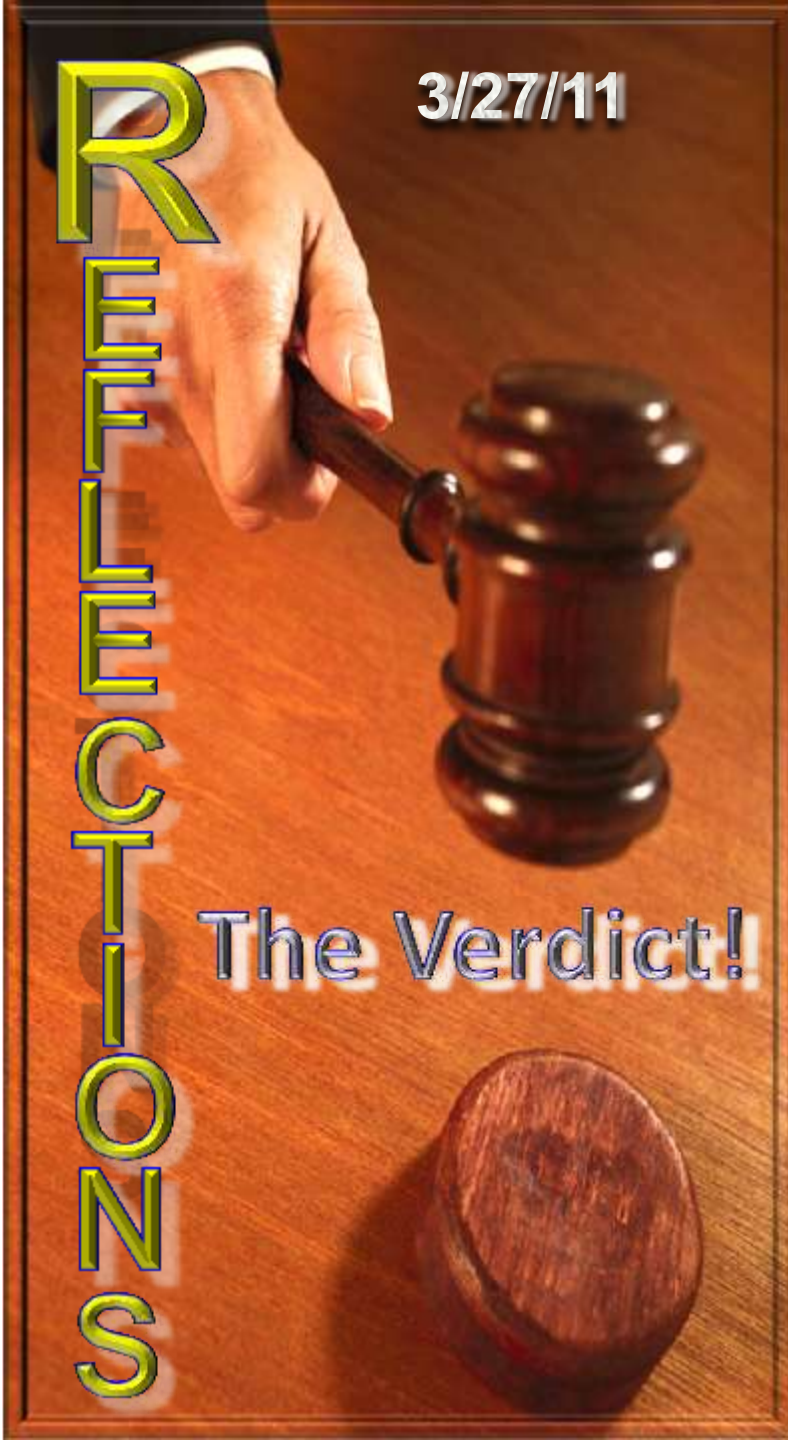


Sermon Notes

SONS—CITIZENRY

3/27/11

The Verdict!





Reflections

A man is brought before the court accused of a crime that he did not commit. He is facing an angry mob on trumped-up charges by men who both hate him and fear him. The verdict? I find no fault in him! The mob responds in rage, "Crucify him, crucify him!!" In order to appease the crowd, the governor gives in to their demands and Jesus is led to the cross where He would give His life for the sins of mankind.

We too face charges before the throne of God. As sinners we are subject to death both physically and spiritually so the verdict is guilty and the sentence is to be eternally separated from God in hell. Jesus, on the other hand, took our sin guilt upon Himself and redeemed us through His death, burial, and resurrection so that we might be reconciled to the Father by our acceptance of the free gift of salvation. It is given by grace through faith and sealed, in Christ, by the Holy Spirit. Paul explains it in detail in Romans chapter six. He challenges us with this powerful argument. **What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? ² Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? ³ Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, ⁶ knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. ⁷ For he who has died has been freed from sin. ⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, ⁹ knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. ¹⁰ For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. (Romans 6:1-10 NKJ)** The verdict is in! In Christ we have been reconciled to the Father and are found to be the recipients of His grace and forgiveness of sins. The sentence? Eternal life in Jesus our Lord.

In the courtrooms of our nation sentences are often softened by placing the guilty one on probation. If he re-offends then he receives the original sentence due him for the crimes committed.

Our salvation is **not** just a softened sentence where we are put on probation, rather it is a complete forgiveness of the sin that held us as captives to an eternity without God. We are treated as if we were never guilty in the first place. What a wonderful salvation we have received!

As Paul has already clarified for us, we are not to continue in the life from which we were redeemed, but we are instead, to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. Since our slavery to the sin nature has been severed by the power of God in Christ, we are to have a change in our very nature complete with a new heart, a new mind, and a new outlook on life. We, as a result, should exhibit a life that gives evidence of being transformed and made new.

Too often, we behave as if our salvation has given us license to continue in our old sinful ways instead of having created us to walk as a new creation in Jesus. Sadly, when we do so, we bring shame on the precious name of our Savior. When we walk as those who are not redeemed, we grieve the Holy Spirit of God and give, those who have denied Him, reason to doubt His provision for sin. We, in a sense, give them permission to call us hypocrites, and justify, in their minds, denying Jesus and His salvation. The consequences are eternal and damning.

Since we all face the forgone verdict of sin guiltiness outside of Christ, it becomes our duty to Jesus to warn as many people as possible of their peril upon rejection of the free gift of salvation in Jesus. The writer of Hebrews sums up the situation of mankind as he warns us... **Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. ² For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, ³ how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation,?** (Hebrews 2:1-3 NKJ)

How indeed? Remember! The verdict is already given for each of us. **Guilty!** We have been given, by God's grace, the privilege of having our guilty verdict removed so let's accept the Savior's gift of salvation. Being redeemed by Jesus has a far better verdict. Welcome home good and faithful servant! If we are faithful to our calling, we may also bring others to Christ as we walk with Him in this life He has given us. **Pastor Doug**