

Father and Judge
1 Peter 1:17-21
May 15, 2022

The Lord is my rock (Psalm 18:2).
God is light (1 John 1:5).

1 Peter 1:17 (ESV)

And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile

Two things we need to stipulate right up front here to avoid complete confusion:
Peter is writing to followers of Jesus.

He is writing about present and future judgment of believers, not about the final judgment of the wicked.
Look at the first part of the verse again:

1 Peter 1:17 (ESV)

And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds...

A good father loves his children.
A good father protects his children.
A good father teaches his children.
A good father is a figure of strength and authority.
A good father disciplines his children.

1 Peter 1:17 (ESV)

And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile

But what kind of a judge is God? Our verse tells us: He is one "who judges impartially."

Psalms 139:1-4 (ESV)

O Lord, you have searched me and known me! 2 You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. 3 You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. 4 Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know it altogether.

Colossians 3:25 (ESV)

25 For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.

"God is disgusted and angered by it [sin], and refuses ever to come to terms with it. In consequence, we may be sure that, when he searched in his mercy for some way to forgive, cleanse, and accept evildoers, it was not along the road of moral compromise. It had to be a way which was expressive equally of his love and of his wrath."

- John Stott, The Cross of Christ

Now we know:
God is our Father
God is our judge
God is impartial

But the heart of the whole passage from verse 17 to 21 is found in the next part of our verse:

1 Peter 1:17 (ESV)

And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile

1 Peter 1:18–19 (ESV)

18 knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

Am I tolerating or allowing anything in my life for which Jesus paid the price to set me free?

Am I humbly acknowledging my weakness, and walking in the fear of the Lord?