

What Eternity

READING

1 Timothy 1:15

Romans 3

Romans 5

What do you think is a fair outcome for Hitler?

Over the years this story has been attributed to various “famous gentlemen” and a “famous actress”. It seems that none of those gentlemen ever actually said it, but it’s a great quote to get us thinking... so here it is with no names at all.

A “well known gentleman” was overheard talking with a “famous actress”. “Would you sleep with me for a million dollars?”. To which the actress replied, after a little thought, “Sure.”

Then he asked, “How about for twenty bucks?”. To which she indignantly replied, “What kind of woman do you think I am!” The gentleman replied, “We’ve already established that. Now we’re just haggling over the price.”

I’m not sure who you think the worst person of all time was? I guess Hitler would be up there on most people’s list. But if you rank someone higher, then think of them in this next story instead.

What punishment are you expecting Hitler to have in the afterlife? What punishment would you be handing out to him if it was up to you?

Now. Imagine your time comes, and you’re being given the “orientation tour” of where you’ll be spending eternity, and you spot Hitler! Sitting on a sun-lounge, drinking a cocktail and relaxing in the sun.

How would you feel?

Be honest, how do you really feel about that?

What would you do?

Imagine you asked the messenger who was giving you the tour for an explanation, and he says, “God decided to forgive him.”

Now how do you feel?

Is that right? Is it fair?

Is this the kind of God you thought you believed in?

What do you think is a fair outcome for Hitler?

In the TV series, “Heroes”, one of the heroes imprisons a serial killer in an eternity alone. With no other contact with anyone. Ever.

Is that a fair way to deal with a serial killer? What if they had killed millions of people?

What would you say if the judge asked your opinion on Hitler? For your judgement?

Would you build a case against him?

Would you argue that anyone who was that evil cannot be forgiven?

That they must pay for the horrendous crimes they committed?

I can imagine you passionately pleading with the judge. Thrilled to see him agree with you, and the satisfaction you feel as Hitler is taken off to his rightful destination.

And then the shock you feel as the judge points at you, and says, “Them too. Take them too.”

I imagine you screaming for mercy to the judge, “I’m not like him. I’m nowhere near as bad as him. What kind of a person do you think I am?”

To which the judge would calmly reply, “We’ve already established that. We’re just arguing about the price.”

Paulus recommended a great saying. “Yeshua came into the world to save sinners. Of whom I am the worst.”

Talking about people like Hitler makes us feel better about our own evil - our own sins. It’s true that we’re not as bad as him. But we are sinners just the same.

We deserve an eternity of punishment just the same.

And yet we are undeservedly forgiven because of what Yeshua did 2,000 years ago, and not justly condemned for what we did ourselves these last 50 years or so.