

ILLUSTRATED MESSAGE

TITLE: The Judge

OBJECT: Gavel or wooden mallet

DOCTRINE: Justification

STORY WITH THE OBJECT

Judges use a gavel to declare their verdict in court. A friend of mine had robbed another man at knifepoint. He was declared guilty and sent to prison by the judge. I pled with the judge on behalf of the family. She told me "I am a good judge; therefore I must judge according to the law."

TRANSITION TO THE SPIRITUAL

It makes me think of a verse, "Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Someday we will all die, and we will be judged by God, the good Judge of heaven. You may say, I have nothing to worry about, I am innocent, I have never done anything wrong. I am a good person.

THE PROBLEM (LAW)

Let's see how good you are according to God's laws, the 10 commandments. Have you ever lied, have you stolen, or had lust in your heart? Have you ever coveted something that was not yours? Have you ever had hate toward someone? Then you are not a good person, but a bad one.

THE CONSEQUENCES (ETERNITY)

If you have broken the 10 commandments of God, then you are guilty of breaking His law. We are all guilty. No one is without sin, so we have a big problem. If we are guilty, we cannot go to heaven. The guilty will have their place in the eternal fire, separated from God forever.

THE SOLUTION (CROSS)

From the very beginning, God knew you and I were going to be guilty. We have a fine to pay because we have broken the law. Because of our guilt, we deserve hell. But God had a plan: the judge of all the world, came down and became a man; Jesus lived a perfect life and died on the cross to pay our fine. Jesus rose up from the dead, proving he has power over sin.

THE CALL (REPENTANCE AND FAITH)

What must we do to be declared innocent in God's eyes? First, we must not only confess our guilt, but make a decision to turn from our sin and live to please God. Second, we must put all of our trust in Jesus and believe that He paid our fine on the cross, so we do not have to pay our own fine in hell. Then God will see us as innocent and we will be welcomed into His perfect home.