

"The Judgment"

When Jesus comes again, we'll all gather before the judgment seat of Christ. What will happen there? Hello, I'm Phil Sanders. And this is a Bible study, "In SEARCH of the Lord's Way." And today we're going to explore what the Bible says about the Judgment Day.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search God's Word for the Lord's Way. Of all the books that you might study, none is more crucial to your soul than the Bible. It alone has the Lord's words of eternal life. It contains the spiritual criteria that will one day judge your soul. My friend you cannot afford to ignore what God's Word actually says. Beyond this, no book is more filled with love, no book has more wise counsel, and no book will give you greater hope than the Bible. And this is why we take the time to explore God's Word each week. We're so delighted you spend this time with us. We want to be a part of your life each week.

I grew up watching Perry Mason on television. As a defense attorney, Mason nearly always demonstrated that there was a reasonable doubt about his client's guilt. Usually the judge dismissed the case because Perry Mason exposed someone else as guilty. The jury had such doubt that they found the defendant not guilty. It was an exciting drama, all over, of course, in one hour.

The Bible, however, describes the Judgment Day differently. The Lord knows all things. He already knows those who love Him and have their names written in the book of life. And He also knows those who have refused Him and followed their own path. Now He'll separate the saved on His right from the lost on His left.

The Judgment Day is not so much a day of trial as it is a day of sentencing or rewarding. Some will enter their reward in the heavenly city, while others are taken away from God forever. And I'm talking about these matters today, because we all need to know them. We don't want the Day of Judgment to find us unprepared.

Now many have expressed interest in what happens after life is over, so we're offering this booklet, "After Life," and we're offering it free! If you'd like a copy or a CD of our study, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also stream this program on our website at www.searchtv.org.

The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from Revelation 20:11 to 15, and then we'll explore what the Bible says about the Judgment.

Our reading today comes from the book of Revelation chapter 20 verses 11 to 15.

Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

That's a serious reading of the word of God and I hope you'll take it to heart. Let's pray together. Father we're thankful that You have given us an eye opening picture of what will take place

in the future. And Father we pray that we will live in such a way that our deeds will show our love for You and that we'll live according to Your will. May Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Pay very close attention to Revelation 20:11 to 15, because it describes what will happen to you on Judgment Day. No matter who you are, where you've lived, when you lived, what language you spoke, or how important you thought you were, you'll be present before the great white throne. The Lord will judge you on that day.

The great and the small will all be accountable to God. Those who died and were resurrected at the second coming will be there, both the righteous and the unrighteous. The sea will deliver up its dead. Death and Hades will deliver up their dead. And those whose names are in the Lamb's book of life and those whose names are not found in the book of life, both of them, will be there at judgment.

Some present will try to escape out of fear, but there is no place for them to go. You cannot escape your appointment with the Lord Jesus on Judgment Day. 2 Corinthians 5 and verse 10 says, "For we must all [yes, we must all] appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." Now how you have lived your life will determine how the Lord will recompense you for eternity.

On the last day, the Day of Judgment, the Lord Jesus will judge us by the things which were written in the open books and He'll do it according to our deeds. Now the Lord Jesus said in John 12 and verse 48, that "He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day." Now those words are recorded in the New Testament. It's found in the bible. Now the Day of Judgment is also called the last day, because there will be no other days after it. It's the end of this age and the beginning of the age to come.

We will not be judged by councils or creeds. Popular culture will not decide right from wrong. The Lord Jesus will not take opinion polls asking us what we think He should do. What Jesus said and what is recorded in the books, that is the New Testament, will be the final and only basis of authority to determine our eternal destiny.

Now the Lord Jesus will sit on that great white throne as our judge on that day. Paul said in Acts 17 verses 30 to 31, "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead." Now just as surely as Jesus arose from the dead, so we can be sure there will be a second coming and a Day of Judgment.

I'm thankful the Lord Jesus will judge us. The Bible says that He is a righteous judge in 2 Timothy 4 and verse 8. He loved us enough to die for our sins upon the cross. And He's been our mediator according to (1 Timothy 2 and verse 5) and our advocate with the Father (1 John 2 and verse 1). Now the Lord Jesus is full of mercy, and He will exercise mercy to the extent that it is consistent with His perfect justice and truth. Now since He lived as a man on this earth, He has perfect sympathy and understanding of our weaknesses. And He will do what is right on that day.

Now on the Day of Judgment, the Lord will judge us individually. Romans 14 and verse 12 says, that "each one of us will give an account of himself to God." My friend, no one can believe, repent, or obey the gospel in baptism for you. God will hold you personally responsible for the sins that you committed and for the good things that you failed to do. The Scripture says in Matthew 16 and verse 27 that God will "repay each person according to what he has done."

We sometimes judge others for their sins but ignore our own. Some suppose God will condemn others for their sins but will forget about their own. Paul said in Romans 2 verses 1 and 2, "Therefore you have no excuse, everyone of you who passes judgment, for in that which you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things. And we know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice such things." My friend sin is still sin, no matter who commits it.

On that day the Lord Jesus will judge each one impartially. He won't play favorites. Romans 2 verses 6 to 11 says that God "will render to each person according to his deeds: to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, (to them) eternal life; but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For there is no partiality with God." Now God will judge us on the basis of our faith, not out of prejudice. Out of what He teaches, not out of presumption or prejudice.

The Lord will judge us honestly and righteously. And there won't be anything hidden from His sight. The Bible says in Hebrews 4 verses 12 to 13, "For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." When you stand before the Lord Jesus and His Word is opened, He will judge you fairly and openly. Now you might be able to hide things in this life, but all will be laid bare to His eyes in the life to come.

First, the Lord will judge our thoughts and motives. Now our hearts can be so deceptive. You remember the Lord said in Matthew 15:19, "For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders." What we think in our hearts prompts our behavior. And this is why willfully thinking sin is as bad as acting on it. You remember the Lord Jesus said in Matthew 5:27 and 28, "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery'; but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

God knows what is in our hearts. John 2:24 to 25 says, "But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men, and because (of this) He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man." Romans 2 and verse 16 reminds us on that day, that "God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus." My friend, if you are contemplating evil in your heart, remember God knows your heart.

Proverbs 21 and verse 2 says, that "Every man's way is right in his own eyes, But the LORD weighs the hearts." The Lord knows your real reasons. And each of us needs to be like David who said to God in Psalm 139:23 to 24, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way." Now if God looked into your heart, what would He see there? Would He see good or evil in you?

Second, the Lord will judge us by how we speak. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 12:34 to 37, "For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart. The good man brings out of his good treasure what is good; and the evil man brings out of his evil treasure what is evil. But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an account for it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." Now a careless word is a worthless comment that's made by an unthinking person. They don't realize how hurtful their words can be.

Now idle words may be gossip or lies; they may be endless grumbling or complaining. Now these careless words may be unfair criticism, or name-calling, or slander. They may show hatefulness and anger. They may be filthy talk. Ephesians 4 and verse 29 says, "Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear." You will have to give an account to God one day for how you speak. Proverbs 18 and verse 21 says, that "Death and life are in the power of the tongue."

Third, God will judge us by our works. Proverbs 15:3 says, that "The eyes of the LORD are in every place, watching the evil and the good." God sees everything we do, even if no one else sees it. 2 Corinthians 5 and verse 10 says, that "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." The Lord Jesus said in Revelation 2:23, "I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds."

You see our morals matter; right and wrong matter. Romans 8 verses 12 to 13 says, "So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live." Now if we allow sinful passions to control us, and act upon them, we'll lose our souls. We must cease from the sinful behavior and live godly lives. Galatians 6 verses 7 to 8 says, "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life."

Now how we treat others also matters. If we wish to be forgiven, then we must learn to forgive. Jesus said in Matthew 6:14 to 15, "For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions." 1 John 4 and verse 20 says that you can't claim to love God if you hate your brother. Loving God means learning to love and to forgive others. Don't let anger come between you and your God.

Being kind to others matters. In Matthew 25 verses 31 to 46 the Lord Jesus separated the sheep from the goats on the basis of their kindness. The sheep fed and clothed the needy; they visited the sick and those in prison; but the goats ignored their needs. The Lord said in verse 46, that "These (that is the goats) will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

I tell you when the Lord Jesus passes judgment on our souls, we too will either enter into eternal life or be taken away into eternal punishment. No event has greater consequences than this one. Eternity has no end. And once the Lord passes judgment on us, there's no second chance and no appeal. Whether we live in the grace of God in this life will determine our eternal destiny. If the Judgment Day came today, would you be right with God according to the Scriptures? The Lord Jesus died on the cross for you, but has His blood washed you free from sin? Let's pray together. Oh Father help us to live in such a way that we honor You. And Father that we obey You. May Your will be done on earth, in our lives, so that we may live with You in heaven. This is our prayer in the name of Jesus, Amen.

Someone says, well "Surely God is too good to punish anyone in the lake of fire." Think a little with me. If God let impenitent, sinful people go unpunished, He would certainly be an unholy and an unjust God. Habakkuk 1:13 says of God, "Your eyes are too pure to approve evil, And You cannot look on wickedness with favor."

The apostle Peter in 2 Peter 2 verses 4 to 9 says that “if God condemned angels when they sinned, (and) did not spare the ancient world when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly, and (He) condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah for their ungodliness, “then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation , and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment.”

Peter also says that God does not wish “any to perish but for all to come to repentance” (2 Peter 3 and verse 9). I tell you it breaks God’s heart to see the wicked lost. God said in Ezekiel 18 verse 23, “Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked,” declares the Lord GOD, “rather than that he should turn from his ways and live?” God doesn’t want to condemn you or anyone. But He wants you repent. You must be prepared for the judgment day.

To become a Christian, believe Jesus is the Son of God, repent of your sins, confess Jesus as Lord and Christ, and be baptized into Christ. Baptism is an immersion in water in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2 and verse 38). And when you’re baptized, your sins will be washed away, and the Lord will add you to His church (Acts 2 and verse 47 and 22 and verse 16). Now once you become a Christian, stay faithful! Love God and serve Him for the rest of your life.

Well we hope that today’s study of the Judgment has caused you to think about your soul. If you want a free printed copy of this little booklet, “After Life,” or a CD of this message, just mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org.

Or, you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now our programs appear on our website at www.searchtv.org. We also offer Bible Correspondence courses to help you learn more about God’s will, And we offer study sheets that go with our programs. There’s also a schedule of our programs and a map with the location of churches in your area. You can watch SEARCH anytime on YouTube! And we ask that you subscribe to our channel, “SearchTVMinistry.” Well if you contact us, we won’t beg you for money or put you on a list.

So worship with a church of Christ in your area. They’re the reason we don’t ask for money. And we’ll help you to find a church home if you’d like to find one. Churches of Christ love and want guests, and you’ll be glad you attended. We’ll be back next week, Lord willing. Keep searching God’s Word. God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord’s Way.