

DOCTRINE MATTERS: ESSENTIAL TRUTHS OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

Message 29: The Final Judgement and Eternal Punishment

Matt. 24:14 ESV

Jesus said, "And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then **the end will come.**"

DEATH

James 4:14 ESV

"...you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes."

The current death rate is 100 percent. As believers, we do not grieve death without hope because we know this:

- Death has ultimately been **defeated** by Jesus Christ! (1 Cor. 15:54-57)
- Jesus has **lived the life** we could not live. (John 18:38; Heb. 4:15; 1 John 3:5)
- Jesus has **died the death** we deserve to die. (Heb. 2:17; Rom. 5:6-8; Gal. 3:13)
- Jesus has conquered the **enemy** we cannot conquer. (1 Cor. 15:3-8; Heb. 2:14-15; Col. 2:13-15)

THE DECISIVE QUESTION:

Will you *turn from* Jesus, live without Christ now, and die without Christ forever? **OR**
Will you *trust in* Jesus, die with Christ, and live with Christ forever?

THE DEFINITIVE CONCLUSION:

Death is not the end...it is only the **beginning**.

After death comes the **intermediate state**. The intermediate state refers to the condition of people between their bodily death and their bodily resurrection. (2 Corinthians 5:1-10; Rev. 6:9-11)

All people possess both a **body** and a **soul**. (Gen. 2:7) When we die, our bodies are buried, but our souls persist. (Ecclesiastes 12:7; Acts 7:59-60) And one day, our bodies will be resurrected and reunited with our souls. (John 5:28-29; Matt. 25:31-32; Acts 24:14-15; Rev. 20:12; 1 Cor. 15:25-40; 51-53)

COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT DEATH

1. What happens at the moment of death?

- The souls of **believers** immediately enter the presence of God. (2 Cor. 5:6-8; Philippians 1:23; Heb. 12:22-24)
- The souls of **unbelievers** immediately experience the punishment of God. (Luke 16:19-31)

2. What are believers doing in the intermediate heaven?
 - They are **worshipping**. (Heb. 12:22-24; Rev. 19:1-5)
 - They are **watching**. (Heb. 12:1; Luke 15:7; Rev. 18:20)
 - They are **waiting**. (Rev. 6:9-11)

3. How should we view our own death?
 - All who follow Christ should anticipate death with **confidence**. (Psalm 23:4; Rom. 8:37-39; Philippians 1:19-23; Heb. 2:14-15)

 - All who do not follow Christ should fear death with **trepidation**. (Luke 16:22-28)

At the return of Christ, all people (Christians and non-Christians alike) will be resurrected for the day of final judgment.

THE FINAL JUDGEMENT

Daniel 12:2 ESV

“And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”

John 5:28-29 ESV

“Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.”

Matthew 25:31-33 ESV

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left.”

Acts 24:14-15 ESV

“But this I confess to you, that according to the Way, which they call a sect, I worship the God of our fathers, believing everything laid down by the Law and written in the Prophets, having a hope in God, which these men themselves accept, that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust.”

Hebrews 9:27-28 ESV

And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

Acts 17:30-31 ESV

“The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”

SEE ALSO: Rom. 2:5-11; Rev. 20:11-15

BIBLICAL TRUTHS ABOUT THE FINAL JUDGEMENT

- The desire for judgment is **instinctual**. (Habakkuk 1:2-4)
- The fact of judgment is **inevitable**. (Rev. 20:12)
- The warnings of judgment are **undeniable**. (2 Peter 2:4-10)
- The scope of judgment will be **universal**. (Isaiah 66:15-24)
- The nature of judgment will be **personal**. (Matt. 7:21-23)
 - The day of judgment will not ultimately **determine** our spiritual condition.
 - The day of judgment will truly **reveal** our spiritual condition.
- The impartiality of judgment will be **unquestionable**. (Rom. 2:9-11; Col. 3:25)
- The effects of judgment will be **eternal**. (Matt. 25:46)
- The final Judge will be **Christ**. (Isaiah 9:6-7; 42:1; John 5:22-27; Matt. 13:41-42; Acts 10:42; Rom. 2:16; 2 Tim. 4:1; 2 Cor. 5:10)
- All **angels** will be involved in this judgment.
 - Holy angels will gather the judged. (Matt. 13:31-32; 24:31)
 - Fallen angels will all be judged. (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 5-6)
- All **people** (and all they have done) will be involved in this judgment. (Rom. 14:10-12; Eccl. 11:9; 12:14; Matt. 12:36-37; Luke 12:2)

TWO REALITIES

1. God will **justify** every saint who has trusted in Him. (Rom. 3:27-31; Rom. 8:1-2)
 - Every sin will have been **forgiven**. (Psalm 103:9-13; Isaiah 43:25; Micah 7:19; Heb. 8:12; 10:15-18)
 - Varying **rewards** for faithfulness will be distributed. (Luke 19:17-19; 1 Cor. 3:12-15; Col. 3:23-24)
2. God will **condemn** every sinner who has turned from Him. (John 3:16-18; Rev. 20:12-15)
 - Every **sin** will come to light. (1 Cor. 4:5)
 - Varying **degrees** of punishment will be enforced. (Matt. 11:22-24; Luke 12:47-48)

TWO DESTINATIONS

1. Everlasting joy. (Rev. 19:6-9)
2. Everlasting torment. (Rev. 14:9-11)

HELL

Hell can be defined as *a place of eternal conscious punishment for the wicked.* (Grudem)

Revelation 20:15 ESV

And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

CAUTIONS

- We must approach this doctrine **biblically**.
 - The Bible speaks **clearly** about hell.
 - The Bible speaks **comprehensively** about hell.
 - The aim of scripture is not primarily to inform people about the **details** of hell.
 - The aim of scripture is primarily to warn people about the **danger** of hell.
 - That we might repent of **sin**.
 - That we might live in **righteousness**.
- We must approach this doctrine **humbly**. (Rom. 9:14-24)
 - We do not deserve God's mercy. (Ex. 32:25-28; 33:18-19)
 - He would be just to condemn all people.
 - He is gracious to save some people.
 - We dare not defy God's authority. (Job 40:6-8; 42:1-6)
 - He is Creator; we are creature.
 - He is owner; we are owned.
 - He is God; we are not.
 - We do not have the right to judge His ways.
 - God has the right to do what He wants. (Psalm 115:1-3)
- We must approach this doctrine **personally**.
- We must approach this doctrine **passionately**.

BIBLICAL REALITIES ABOUT HELL

- Hell is a place of ultimate **justice**. (Rev. 6:9-11; 16:1-7; 19:1-4; 20:11-12)
- Hell is a place of fiery **agony**. (Mark 9:43-48; Matt. 13:40-42; 49-50; 18:8-9; 25:41; Jude 6-7)

- Hell is a place of conscious **torment**. (Luke 16:22-28; Rev. 14:9-10; 20:9-10)
- Hell is a place of outer **darkness**. (Matt. 8:11-12; 22:13; 25:30; 2 Pet. 2:17; Jude 12-13)
- Hell is a place of weeping and gnashing of **teeth**. (Matt. 8:12; 13:42; 50; 22:13; 30)
- Hell is a place of continual **rebellion**. (Philippians 2:9-11)
- Hell is a place of **vile** association. (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 21:8)
- Hell is a place of divine **destruction**. (2 Pet. 3:7; 2 Thess. 1:9)
- Hell is a place of complete **separation**. (Matt. 5:45; 7:21-23; John 1:9; Acts 14:17; 17:27-28)
- Hell is a place of **eternal** duration. (Dan. 12:2; Isaiah 33:14; 66:24; Mark 9:43-48; Matt. 25:41; 25:46; Jude 6-7; Rev. 14:9-11; 19:3; 20:9-10)

CONCLUSION

The fact that there is a final judgment coming, as well as eternal punishment for all who reject Christ, should motivate us to passionately pursue our mission with a sense of urgency.

Eph. 5:15-17 ESV

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

This is the will of the Lord...

Matt. 28:18-20 ESV

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

There is urgency in the mission...

Rev. 22:12-13 ESV

12 *"Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done. 13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."*