

11043-A May 22, 2011
Eternal Judgment
Revelation Chapter 20:11-15

I. Jesus talked about eternal judgment more than anybody. John 5:22-29

- A. Jesus is the judge, God as the Son of Man.
- B. Judgment is the ultimate threat to the human soul.
 - 1. Not war, poverty, cancer, global warming.
 - 2. Not even physical death. (Mtt.10:28)
- C. People's deeds tell the real story of their hearts. 29

Revelation is the vision of the final defeat of sin and death.

II. Six Things about the Final Judgment. Rev. 20:11-15

- A. The description of it. Symbolic of reality beyond our imagination.
 - 1. Symbolic of a material reality that we can only know by being told about it.
 - 2. Taking place in a dimension beyond anything we have experienced.
 - a) Earth and sky fled away: No hiding in the creation any more.
 - b) We have been hiding from God in the creation ever since Adam and Eve hid among the trees.
 - c) All the false gods are from the creation. It is no longer available to be a source of idolatry.
- B. The authority behind it. God himself, in Christ. Matt. 10:28
 - 1. The white throne (purity and power) must be God in Christ (Jn.5:22).
 - a) Wrath is God's settled, permanent, righteous opposition to all evil and sin.
 - b) He takes sin and evil personally and seriously.
 - c) Sin against an infinitely good Person is infinitely bad, and has infinite consequences.
 - 2. *Christ is the victim of our sin, the judge of our sin, and the propitiation for our sin. He therefore has all the right and power to forgive our sin personally, legally, morally, spiritually, eternally.*
- C. The experience of it. Eternal Conscious Torment. 10
 - 1. *All the symbolism indicates never-ending pain.*
 - a) Worms, flame, darkness, gnashing teeth, weeping.
 - 2. *The original purpose of it. Satan's judgment. 10; Matt. 25:41*
 - a) Humans only share it because they share the character and will of Satan and his demons.
 - 3. *All the passages indicate a continued state of anger and rebellion against God, even when forced to admit he was right.*
 - a) There is sorrow, but no repentance in hell.
 - b) Given over to their desires against God. Rom.1:21-32

D. The basis of it. Human Deeds. 12

1. *Because deeds are the index of the heart.*
 - a) Thoughts. Matt.5:21-22, 28; Rom. 2:16; 1 Cor.4:5
 - b) Words. Matt.12:35-37 (judged by careless words)
 - c) Deeds. Matt.7:15-23; 1 Cor.6:9
2. *And the heart is where the evil resides.*
 - a) *The source of all our evil deeds is replacing God in our heart with something in the created order. Idolatry.*
 - b) Loving anything in the creation instead of loving God.
 - c) Loving God above all things is the law of the universe and we cannot do it. *This is why we need what the Lord did for us at the cross—his propitiation and his grace.*
3. *This means it is radically fair and just.*
 - a) Retribution (getting what is deserved) is the moral law of the universe.
 - b) Judgment could not be fairer—it is precisely how our entire world runs, and how our consciences work as well. We all intuitively sense that bad things should happen to bad people and good things should happen to good people. This is true. And it is what sets up the dilemma that God personally and miraculously solves at the cross! The glory of the cross is that the “bad thing” happened to someone on behalf of someone else. By faith-union with Christ the crucified, risen, reigning Lord of the universe we enter a retributive reality in which we do not take the blame for our own sins—he does. This is the only way salvation can work. It must be by his grace through his sacrifice alone! (See Rom. 3:21-4:8)
4. *We are not judged for “rejecting Christ” as if that is the only thing we did wrong.*
 - a) Rejecting Christ is certainly a sin, but just a symptomatic sin that grows from our violent rebellion against the Lord and keeps us out of touch with God’s grace.
 - b) Rejecting Christ is essentially the decision not to ask forgiveness for our own sins, which is the same as telling God we have no sin (1 Jn. 1:8-9), which is manifestly false, even by our own observation.
 - c) *The sins people go to hell for are the thoughts, words, and deeds they know are theirs and they know are evil. (Rom.3:23)*

E. The rescue from it. The Lamb's Deeds (instead of yours).

1. This is the *Lamb's* book of Life (13:8; 21:27).
 - a) The lamb that was slain, who has the authority to open the scroll (5:12).
 - b) The lamb that was slain is the Passover lamb, whose shed blood over the lives of Israel protected them from God's wrath against all human rebellion symbolized by Pharaoh and his kingdom.
 - c) Slain by what? By the wrath of God. Rom.8:32
 - d) Why? To protect the lives of those under his blood: Passover.
 - e) God propitiates his own wrath, saves us from his own justice! There is no other message like this!
2. *His deeds become our deeds*
 - a) The deed of his death, taking the blame for you. Gal. 3:13
 - b) The deeds of his perfect life accounted to you. 2 Cor.5:21
3. *God really does justify (declare righteous) the ungodly. Rom. 4:4-8*

III. He has done all to save us. What's keeping you from living in this grace!