



Course DC219: Judgment Day

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. 2 Corinthians 5:10

Intro: One of the most sober things any person can do is to ponder the reality that he will have to give an account of his life before God on Judgment Day—answering for “**the things done in the body . . . whether good or bad.**” No one likes the idea of just an IRS audit, even if one is an honest man. The thought of having one’s tax records spread out before a government official demands that we approach such an audit soberly. Yet, though an IRS audit is only a mere possibility, standing before the Judgment seat of Christ is an absolute and much greater certainty. To give sober thought to the subject is to thank God for providing Jesus to be our Savior. It also provides motivation to pursue holiness in the fear of God. Not only is certainty of Judgment Day fully established in Scripture, it also accords with sound reason, agreeing with man’s internal sense of justice.

I.) The Reasonableness of Judgement Day

A final Judgment Day is reasonable in light of the injustice which prevails in the world:

- Acts 24:25 Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, "Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you."
- Eccl. 8:14 There is a vanity which occurs on earth, that there are just men to whom it happens according to the work of the wicked; again, there are wicked men to whom it happens according to the work of the righteous. I said that this also is vanity.
- Eccl. 3:16-17 Moreover I saw under the sun: In the place of judgment, wickedness was there; and in the place of righteousness, iniquity was there. I said in my heart, "God shall judge the righteous and the wicked, for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work."

The righteous understand the need for justice, wicked men often deceive themselves that God will take no note of their deeds:

- Prov. 28:5 Evil men do not understand justice, but those who seek the Lord understand all.
- Ps. 10:5-11 ⁵ His ways are always prospering; Your judgments are far above, out of his sight; as for all his enemies, he sneers at them. ⁶ He has said in his heart, "I shall not be moved; I shall never be in adversity." ⁷ His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and oppression; under his tongue is trouble and iniquity. ⁸ He sits in the lurking places of the villages; in the secret places he murders the innocent; his eyes are secretly fixed on the helpless. ⁹ He lies in wait secretly, as a lion in his den; he lies in wait to catch the poor; he catches the poor when he draws him into his net. ¹⁰ So he crouches, he lies low, that the helpless may fall by his strength. ¹¹ He has said in his heart, "God has forgotten; He hides His face; He will never see."

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- 2 Peter 3:4-10 ⁴ and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." ⁵ For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, ⁶ by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. ⁷ But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. ⁸ But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

The Great Extent of who will be there has already been addressed by the fact that "**we must ALL appear before the judgment seat of Christ.**" However, the following two passages give a very great visual of the extent of the **ALL**. That all the dead are raised at the same time (#1) and that those who are judged before the throne of God includes both saved (whose names were written in the lambs Book of Life) and those who were not (#2), gives the staggering truth of just how great this last day is—this Day of Judgment. For it includes Adam and the race from him—i.e., **EVERYONE**.

- John 5:28-29 ²⁸ Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice ²⁹ and come forth--those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.
- Rev. 20:11-15 ¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book of Life*. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. ¹³ The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵ And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

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God's righteousness demands that sin be dealt with. It will either be dealt with at the cross (Rom. 3:23-26), or when He returns for judgment (2 Thess. 1:6-10):

- Rom. 3:23-26 ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, ²⁶ to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.
- 2 Thess. 1:6-10 ⁶ since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, ⁷ and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, ⁸ in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, ¹⁰ when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.

❖ One may ask, “For what purpose are they revealed in that Day if they can do us no harm? Why is it necessary that they be revealed?” There is, however, a very necessary and sound reason for all things to be manifested in that Day, for no one lives in a vacuum. Our sins which we have committed against others may be greatly related to the sins they themselves committed. If only our sins were hidden from the record, even though they greatly contributed to the actions of another, much of the necessary extenuating circumstance in order to justly weigh the level of guilt and responsibility for the sin of another would be left out of the judgment. This would not be a just/fair manner of judgment in either a human court nor before the throne of God. It is most reasonable that everything should come out in the final judgment. Furthermore, the goodness of God towards us in His forgiving us from our sins would be greatly hidden if such things remained covered. Let our hearts rest in this: There will be nothing revealed in our past life in sin that will be used against us. For every forgiven sin that comes to light in that Day there will be, as it were, a blessed asterisk next to it with a footnote declaring: *THIS CHILD IS CLEAR FROM THIS SIN—IT HAS BEEN FORGIVEN—COVERED BY THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST—CAST AWAY FROM REMEMBRANCE, NEVER TO BE HELD AGAINST THIS HOLY CHILD!* In such moments I can well imagine a chorus of angels singing *glory to God in the highest, O how He loves them!* Every Christian on that day will be so moved that they will not be able to keep a crown upon their heads but will gladly cast them before the throne while bowing in humble adoration and saying, “It is all of Your grace that we are here, all glory goes to You O God!” Amen.

It may be answered, It is apparently and absolutely necessary, for the full display of the glory of God; for the clear and perfect manifestation of his wisdom, justice, power, and mercy, towards the heirs of salvation; that all the circumstances of their life should be placed in open view, together with all their tempers, and all the desires, thoughts, and intents of their hearts: Otherwise, how would it appear out of what a depth of sin and misery the grace of God had delivered them? And, indeed, if the whole lives of all the children of men were not manifestly discovered, the whole amazing contexture of divine providence could not be manifested; nor should we yet be able, in a thousand instances, “to justify the ways of God to man.” Unless our Lord’s words were fulfilled in their utmost sense, without any restriction or limitation, — “There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, or hid that shall not be known;” Matt. X, 26; abundance of God’s dispensations under the sun would still appear without their reasons. And then only when God hath brought to light all the hidden things of darkness, whosoever were the actors therein, will it be seen that wise and good were all his ways; that he saw through the thick cloud, and governed all things by the wise counsel of his own will; that nothing was left to chance or the caprice of men, but God disposed all strongly and sweetly, and wrought all into one connected chain of justice, mercy, and truth. —John Wesley, *The Works of the Rev. John Wesley, Vol. 1* (3rd American edition), (New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1895), 130.

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Had all men a deep sense of this, how effectually would it secure the interests of society! For what more forcible motive can be conceived to the practice of genuine morality, to a steady pursuit of solid virtue, and a uniform walking in justice, mercy, and truth? What could strengthen our hands in all that is good, and deter us from all evil, like a strong conviction of this, “The Judge standeth at the door;” and we are shortly to stand before him?
 — John Wesley, *Ibid.*, 126.