

The Judgement Seat of Christ

2 Timothy 4:1

Years ago, people used to say there are two certainties in life death and taxes. I might add a third death. Taxes and the judgment. You remember the Hebrew writer said in Hebrews chapter nine at verse 27, it is appointed on a man wants to die. After this comes the judgment. In the book of Romans, in chapter 14 and the latter part of verse ten, Paul said, we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, for it is written.

Every knee shall bow to me. Every tongue shall confess to God. So then each of us must give an account of himself to God. Let's talk for a moment or two about standing before the judgment seat of Christ. That is a sobering, sobering thing to contemplate. To understand that one day we will all be ushered before the throne of Christ.

You remember when the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy in Second Timothy chapter four, and Paul encouraged him to preach the word. Now I think about Timothy. Timothy was his son in the faith and Paul was this great traveling evangelist, missionary inspired writer. And Paul realizes that death is imminent in light of his impending departure. Paul is telling Timothy, his son in the faith.

Timothy, I want you to preach the word, but I want you to do so in light of the judgment to come. Because, as Paul said, the Lord Jesus will judge the living and the dead. That being said, let's talk for a moment or two about standing before the judgment seat of Christ. Number one, I think about our appearance before the judgment seat of Christ.

Secondly, I'm reminded of our accountability before the judgment seat of Christ. But by way of our appearance, you know, there are times in life when maybe we have an appointment, maybe we have something on our calendar, some uncertainty, some unforeseen circumstance arises and we have to cancel. We understand that when it comes to the judgment, though, we will not have the latitude to cancel.

No. We'll all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. Many of us have thought often about the Lord Jesus Christ, and to understand that as it is today, while we're living, the Lord Jesus functions as our Savior. You say he came to save the human family. The Lord Jesus said, I've come to seek and to save the lost.

The angel when announcing the birth of the Christ, or when announcing to Joseph that that which had been conceived and Mary was so the Holy Spirit, you remember, he said, she shall bring forth a son, his name will be called Jesus, and he will save his people from their sins. Did you know that the Lord is in the saving business?

He's interested in your eternal soul. Now, what that says to me is I have the choice. I can choose whether or not I'll serve the Lord or whether I will delay a decision. Maybe just forgo it altogether. But to understand, right now, while I'm living, I have the choice. I have the chance to make him the savior of my life.

Now we talk about the Lord Jesus Christ. The fact that this was as Isaiah said, Emmanuel, God with us to realize that God, the second member of the Godhead, was willing to come to planet Earth, live, suffer, bleed and die for me. And Paul said that God would have all men to be saved, come to the knowledge of the truth.

The Lord Jesus is interested in your salvation. As a matter of fact, the Lord wants all

people to be saved. Peter said, God's not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. So what about standing before the Lord Jesus Christ? You remember in John chapter five, in about verse 22, Jesus said that the father judges no man, but has committed all judgment to the son.

In verse 27, Jesus said that the father has given him authority to execute judgment because he's the Son of Man. To realize that one day we're going to stand in the presence of Deity the Great. I am the bright and Morning Star. Now, many of us, we have thought long and hard about what the Bible says concerning Jesus.

We pick up a passage like John chapter one, and we hear John introducing us to the eternal word. Remember I said in the beginning was the word. The word was with God. The word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him. Without him was not anything made that was made. To realize that Jesus was the agent by which the world came into being.

And then down in verse 14, when John recorded these words and the word became flesh. Now we're talking about God incarnate. The fact that Jesus inhabited human flesh. But why? Well, as Paul said. To function as a mediator between God and men. And the Bible tells us that man was Jesus. The Lord Jesus came to reconcile the human family.

So to understand that one day we're going to be in the presence of the second member of the Godhead, the one who came and died for our sins. Now, that being said, we've often many times on Sundays we've had the privilege of praying to the father. Matter of fact, we do so every day as children of God. But we express gratitude and thanksgiving for the sending of Christ to bear our sins.

As Paul said in Second Corinthians chapter five and verse 21, when he said to him, who knew no sin, he became sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in him. So we give thanks for the Lord Jesus Christ. We remember his death every first day of the week, don't we? When we partake of the bread, we remind ourselves of the body of Jesus.

Jesus vicariously suffered, bled, and died for us. When we partake of the fruit of the vine. Again, we're reminding ourselves of the precious blood of Jesus. Those are things that help to keep his sacrifice of the four of our minds, but again, to one day realize that we're going to stand in his presence. That will be an awesome reality.

You know, in revelation chapter 20, John said, on one occasion I saw the dead, small and great standing before God. Well, who were they standing before? They were standing before the judgment seat of Christ. So that will be us one day. You remember in Matthew chapter 25, Jesus pictures that great and final day, and Jesus said, he's going to come in all of his glory with the Holy angels.

When the Lord Jesus comes before him are going to be gather all nations. Now when will this occur? Well, in John chapter six, Jesus talks about raising people up at the last day. What we're talking about is that there is coming a terminal day in the history of the universe in which we live now. We're used to things that have an originating point and an ending point.

Well, the Bible tells us in Genesis chapter one, in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. So we're introduced to day one of creation. But there will be the termination of time as we know it. When will that be? Well, Jesus said of that day, and I were knoweth no man, not the angels of heaven, but my father only.

Matthew 24, verse 36. Now here's what Paul said. Paul said that the Lord will descend from

heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, with the trumpet of God. What a day that will be. You remember what Jesus said in John chapter five. The Lord said, verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour's coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice.

So there's coming a day in which all who are in the cemeteries will hear the voice of the Lord. Now think about what Peter said in Second Peter chapter three. Peter makes the case for the coming of the Lord. He said, the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise.

The elements will melt with fervent heat. The earth and the works therein will be burned up. The universe as we know it utterly destroyed, consummated, and will be before the judgment seat of Christ. Because that's when the judgment begins. Now let me say this.

In Romans chapter 14, Paul said, we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, every knee shall bow to me. Every tongue shall give an account of himself to God, or every tongue should confess to God. So what that tells me is I have a choice right now. I can submit to the Lord Jesus.

I can submit my life to him today. Or when the judgment comes, I'll have to stand in his presence and bow and acknowledge him. Wouldn't it be better to know him, to own him as the Lord of our life today, while we have that time and opportunity to align ourselves with him? Because after all, he wants us. As I said earlier, he wants us to be saved.

He wants us to be with him throughout all of eternity. We're going to bow whether we like it or not, but it would be far better for us to bow willingly today in his presence and own him as the Lord of our life, to make him the King of our life. So, number one, we talk about our appearance before the judgment seat of Christ, and to understand that Jesus is going to be on the throne and we're going to stand before him.

He'll no longer be functioning as a savior of the of the human family, but he will be the judge of the human family. Paul would say in Second Corinthians chapter five, we must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ, that each 1st May receive the deeds done on the body according to what he's done, whether good or bad.

Now there's a second thought that I want to I want you to consider with me. Number one, we talk about our appearance before the judgment seat of Christ. But then secondly, our accountability at the judgment seat of Christ. Now we live in a day in time when there are a lot of folks, quite frankly, they're not interested in being held accountable for anything.

There are two words that in many respects, our terms that people dislike in modern society. The first term is accountability. The second term is responsibility. Whether we like it or not, we are all responsible and accountable. To whom? To the Lord. You see, I can't just choose to live as I please with no consequences. I mentioned a moment ago in Genesis chapter one, The Creation of the world.

The Lord is the creator of the universe, and since the Lord created the universe, it would always stand to reason that he has the right, the authority to govern creation, to set before creation the parameters of life. Now let's just think for a moment and talk about that. Did you know that, separate and apart from revelation, that I can't know the mind of God or the will of God, but to realize that God has revealed his will to us in the sacred scriptures?

I can know something about myself. Now, there are three very pertinent and powerful

questions that have been asked that have been asked down through the ages. The first of which is this from whence did I come? What's my origin? Well, the Bible tells me that I made an image in the likeness of God. I'm not the product of chance.

I'm not. I'm not a product of evolution, as some espouse. No. I have been fearfully and wonderfully made. As David said in Psalm 139. Housed within my body is an eternal soul. The Bible says in Genesis chapter one, I've been made in the image and the likeness of God. God has given me the ability to make choices in life.

God is house within me, an eternal soul that will live forever. So, number one, the Bible answers where I came from. But number two, the Bible answers the question of what am I doing here? What's my purpose? There are folks in the world today they're floundering when it comes to answering that question. Now, I know that philosophers have asked for years what's our purpose in life?

Well, you know, Solomon answered that question in Ecclesiastes chapter 12. Solomon had the opportunity to experience a lot of different things in life. And Solomon said, the thrust of life is this fear God and keep his commandments. He said, for this is man's all. Now listen to what he said. Who shall bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil?

Now, I know that there are folks today, a lot of people in our world today. They have, as they would say, lots of skeletons in their closet. And they'd really like for those skeletons to stay where they are hidden, tucked away in some dark place. Solomon said that there's coming a day in which everything that we've ever done will be brought to life.

Well, whom will that be at the judgment? And to understand that we're going to be held accountable for how we live in this life. I live ultimately to glorify God. You remember what Jesus said in Matthew chapter five. Jesus said, let your light so shine before men that they might see your good works and glorify your father which is in heaven.

And so the purpose of man to bring honor and glory to God. Well, where then is God glorified? Was glorified in the church. Ephesians chapter three. Paul said unto him, be glory by Jesus Christ throughout all ages. So we glorify God. But then there's a third thought here. Number one, where did that come from? Number two. What am I doing here?

Number three where am I headed? Where am I going? You know, we talk about life, and there are a lot of folks that misunderstand life itself. They fail to understand from whence they came. They surely don't understand their purpose here. And then, when it comes to what lies out beyond this life, they just don't know. I read about a fella who said, one time, we really won't know til we get out there.

Well, I understand there are some things on the other side that maybe I'm not fully equipped to answer. What's going to be? What's going to be like? But I can tell you this. I know there's an eternity that last before all of us. And if I understand the Bible right, there is a heaven to gain and a hell to shine.

And the question is, where will I be in eternity? I've got to make preparation it. Again, we talk about accountability before God. Did you know the standard that's going to be opened on the day of judgment? We're talking about accountability before God. God's going to judge me not on the basis of what I think. There are a lot of people that have lots of good thoughts in this life, but God is not going to judge us on the basis of what we think, nor will he judge us on the basis of the Moral Majority and in the world in which you live.

Sometimes decisions are made based upon the Moral Majority. That's not going to be a standard. We're not going to be judged by the precepts and creeds and catechisms of mankind, the traditions of man. No, we're going to be judged. By what? By truth. Paul said in Romans chapter two, in verse two, we know that the judgment of God is according to truth.

Now you remember Pontius Pilate. Pilate stood before the Lord Jesus and ultimately offered him up to be crucified. But pilot asked this question, what is truth? Well, Jesus answered that question. Jesus said, sanctify them in truth. Your word is truth, the truth of Almighty God. In Romans two verse 16, Paul said, in the day when God will judge the secrets of men, listen to him.

By Jesus Christ, according to my gospel, we're going to be judged on the basis of truth. We'll be judged by the word of the living God, by the gospel of Christ. Now, if this book is going to judge me, wouldn't it stand to reason that I'd want to know something about it? Listen to Jesus. He that rejected me receiveth not.

My word has that which judges him. He said the words that are spoken. The same shall judge him. Win in the last day. Again we're talking about the terminal day in the history of the universe. Listen to John in Revelation chapter 20. John said, I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and the books were opened.

And he said, 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. So again, we come back. How well do you know this book that we call the Bible? Do you remember Paul said many years ago, all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction, and righteousness.

But the man of God must be complete, thoroughly equipped under every good work. Are there people today that have the idea that the Word of God just deals in? Can't do this, can't do that? Well, certainly. Are there people today that believe that the Bible is holding them back from living a full life? Well, sure there are. But you need to understand God's word wasn't given to hurt us or to hold us back, but rather God gave us his word to help us to bless us so that we might benefit from the wisdom of this sacred book.

That's why Paul said it's profitable when something is profitable, that means it's beneficial. Well, the word's going to be opened on that final day. We're going to be judged on the basis of divine truth. Did you know that not only is there a standard that's going to be used on the Day of Judgment, there's going to be a great separation.

Jesus said in Matthew chapter 25 that when he comes in all his glory with the holy angels, he's going to sit upon the throne of glory. All nations are going to be gathered before him. He's going to begin to separate them as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats. To those on the right hand, he's going to say, well done, good and faithful servant.

Enter into the joy prepared for you. But then, what about those on the left hand? Well, in Matthew chapter 25, verse 41. Jesus said, he'll say to those on the left hand, depart from me, you cast into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. So there are a couple of questions that we need to ask. Number one, who's going to hell?

Listen, you don't want to go to hell. No one wants to go to that place called hell. Now, I know that there are people today that have the idea that the whole concept of hell just preacher talk, and that there is no way a loving God in heaven would ever assign anyone to hell. Well, you need to understand something.

Sin is the problem. The answer is Jesus. And that's why today Jesus functions as the Savior of the world. Now, why hasn't the Lord come as we speak? Well, the reason is because he's long suffering. Peter said, account that the long suffering of the Lord is salvation. And Second Peter chapter three. So God is longsuffering toward us, not willing that into should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Those who've never obeyed the gospel. If you're if you have never, if you've never submitted to the teaching of Jesus, named him as the Lord. If your life obeyed the gospel, you'll be lost. There's no way to sugarcoat it. Well, what does that mean? Obey the gospel? Well, number one, I've got to believe that Jesus is who claimed to be the Son of God.

Jesus said, except you believe that I am, you'll die in your sins. And the Lord said, if you die in your sins, where I am, there you cannot be. That means if you die outside Christ, you don't have any hope. You are, as Paul said, without hope, without God in this world. Those who have never put their faith in Jesus.

Well, that's a mandate. But then there's a second thought we must repent. Paul said, God commands all men everywhere to repent. Acts 17, verse 30. Repentance is a change of mind followed by a change in actions. So we believe in the Lord Jesus. We repent of our sins, and then we acknowledge that he is the Christ, the Son of God, like the eunuch did.

Recorded by Luke in Acts eight, verse 37. We're not finished, though. Now we have to be baptized into Christ to be saved. Listen to Jesus. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. He that believeth not should be condemned. Now Peter said on Pentecost day that we repent, we're baptized, and we enjoy the forgiveness, the remission of sins.

Furthermore, God puts us in the church. That means if we're not in Christ, and if we're not in the church, we're not numbered among the saved. Because in Ephesians 523, the Bible says he's the Savior of the body. Well, what's the body? He's the head of the body of the church. Colossians 118. How many bodies ought that? There's one body, one spirit, even as you're called in one hope of your calling.

Are you in the one body? Are you in Christ? If you haven't obeyed the gospel, you're not in Christ. And you're not in the church that belongs to Christ. And thus, on the day of judgment, you'll hear the words, depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire. You don't want that to happen. But then there's another class of people that will be lost.

Well, who might that be? Those who at one time acknowledge Jesus as the Savior of their life. They've been baptized into Christ. But for whatever reason, they walked away from the Lord. Peter talks about those who have forsaken the right way and going astray. Unfaithful members of the body of Christ will be lost in a devil's hell, and those who are unfaithful to Christ.

The plea has come home. Come back. You know, John said many years ago, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. We have the opportunity as we speak, while we're living to make things right with the loving God, to be restored to our first love, to enjoy fellowship with God and His people once again.

You ever known somebody at one time a member of the body of Christ, faithfully serving the Lord, and then for whatever reason, walked away and then died in that state. No one wants to die unprepared to meet God. So who's going to hell? Number one, those who have never obeyed the gospel never been baptized into Christ. Number two, those who have been baptized into Christ, but who have forsaken the right way and gone astray their own faithful members of

the body of Christ need to come home.

Well, who's going to heaven? Let me tell you who's going to heaven. Those who have obeyed the gospel and those who are living a faithful, steadfast life in the Lord. In James chapter one and verse 12, James said, blessed is the man that endures temptation. For when he has been tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to them that love him.

When we endure the trials and tribulations and temptations of life, to withstand those difficulties, and to understand that when the time comes for us to stand before the Lord, that he will own us and crown us with that stephanos the victor's crown, which suggests to me that every person who dies faithfully in the Lord, every person will be victorious, will have triumphed over the things of this world.

I want you to listen to what Peter said many years ago. Peter said that we that is God's people. We have an inheritance. He said it's incorruptible. It's undefiled. He said it fades, not away. It is reserved in heaven for us. Don't you want to go to heaven? You know, all of us want to believe that one day we can be in the presence of God and in the presence of his people, and we can.

But we got to obey the gospel, and then we've got to live faithfully until the time comes that we bid this world adieu. And then to know that will be ushered before the Lord. As Paul said, to live as Christ, to die is gain, to depart via Christ far better. Thank you for being a part of our program today, and I hope and pray that what's been said has benefited you.

May the Lord bless and keep you. Till we see you again.