

THE DAY YOU STAND BEFORE GOD

Heaven or Hell...One's Eternal Destination

Matthew 7:13-29; Matthew 25:31-46; Hebrews 9:24-27

“And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment.”

~Hebrews 9:27

As you listen to popular views about **heaven** and **hell**, you can test what you hear with a few biblically-discerning questions:

- *Does this view of hell diminish the threat of God's justness and judgment?*
- *Does this view of heaven diminish the glory of God's grace, mercy, and justness?*
- *Does this teaching soften the urgency of repentance?*
- *Does this teaching offer the sinner any hope of salvation beyond this life?*
- *Does this teaching offer the sinner any hope of salvation other than through Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ alone?*

Modern views of **heaven** and **hell** typically don't survive the *test of biblical fidelity*. They allow the sinner to *feel more comfortable* and *complacent* by *redefining* God...by making Him appear *less severe* in His judgment. They redefine His *righteousness*.

The **two** things that most people have trouble with regarding **hell** is its *severe agony and torment* and its *eternal duration*.

I. WE WILL ALL STAND BEFORE GOD:

Most people believe that *judgment* must be *fair* and *equitable*. Ie. Like a scale where the *good* outweighs the *bad*. God's *judgment* is based on what is *just* and *righteous*.

“When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left.”

~Matthew 25:31-33

“And He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.”

~John 5:27-29

The *judgment* that everyone will face will be a *righteous judgment*.

“I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, ‘Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; because His judgments are true and righteous...’”

~Revelation 19:1b-2a

And by the way...If you think you will be asking God to justify His decisions, character, or any other thing...let me remind you how **John** responded when he *saw Jesus in His glory*.

“When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, ‘Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades’.”

~Revelation 1:17-18

II. JUDGMENT FOR THE BELIEVER:

“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.”

~II Corinthians 5:10

The **judgment seat of Christ** is also known as the **Bema Seat judgment** (Acts 18:12). Believers will be judged in a review of their *works* for the purpose of *rewards*...their *crowns*.

“For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward.”

~I Corinthians 3:11-14

We aren't saved *by our good works* (Ephesians 2:8-9). But we were **created** (*made*) and **saved for** the **purpose of works**.

- **Genesis 2:15**...Adam was placed in the Garden to cultivate and work it (keep it).
- **Ephesians 2:10**...As a believer, you were saved for the purpose of doing the good works that God prepared beforehand so that you would walk in them.
- **II Timothy 3:17**...The man of God is adequate and equipped for every good work that God calls him to do.
- **James 2:17-18**...Works shows that one has faith and that their faith is alive.

The believer will be *judged* and *rewarded* based on their *works*...not works that they do *for* God...but the works that they do in *response* to God...the works that God does *through* them.

III. JUDGMENT FOR THE UNBELIEVER:

“When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left...Then He will also say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels’.”

~Matthew 25:31-33, 41

Man tends to *trust in himself* and believes that his own *merit* and *goodness* will be accepted by God.

There are **three rich men** mentioned in Scripture:

- **Matthew 19:16-26**...The rich young man. *“What good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?”*
- **Luke 12:16-20**...The rich man who was very productive.
- **Luke 16:19-31**...The rich man who had lives a life of luxury.

“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.”

~Revelation 20:11-15

Born once...die twice. Born twice...die once!

IV. THERE IS PERMANENCE IN ONE'S DECISION:

“...He will also say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels’...These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

~Matthew 25:41, 46

No one can be saved after death.

“...Between us and you there is a great chasm fixed, so that those who wish to come over from here to you will not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us.”

~Luke 16:26

So who can be saved? The disciples asked this same question in **Matthew 19:25**. Jesus said...

“With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

~Matthew 19:26

“If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation...For ‘Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved’.”

~Romans 10:9-10, 13

LESSONS WE MUST LEARN:

- Not everyone is going to heaven (Matthew 7:14, 21-23).
- Many who think they are saved are actually lost (Matthew 7:22). Specifically, those who are trusting in their good works...those who

are trusting in their religious activity...and those who think that their trying to be a good person. None will be acceptable to God.

- **There is no second chance to be saved after one dies (Luke 16:26; Hebrews 9:27).**