

We Will Be Judged!

... But *When* Will We Be Judged?

The subject of judgment is a rather fearsome one, since it immediately conjures up the thought of standing before a stern individual in a black robe, who is gripping a gavel that is about strike the lecturn, pronouncing your guilt ... and your sentencing to prison for some heinous act. Yet, is this a fair view of our Creator's judgment of us and of others in the world?

Some may have the vision that after the saints are resurrected they will be judged. They think that after they are resurrected they will face the Father at His throne and have their works — their thoughts, words, and deeds — laid out before them, and judged as worthy or unworthy. Yet, does this make any sense, since as a spirit son of God you will be unable to sin (I John 3:9)? What sense would it make to be judged if you already have been found worthy of eternal life, and indeed already have it?

Let us first examine a powerful discussion about judgment in Matthew 11:20-24.

“Then He began to rebuke the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done, because they did not repent. ‘Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon they would have repented long ago in sack cloth and ashes. But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, who are exalted in heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained

until this day. But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you.’”

judgment = krisis, “the process of investigation, the act of distinguishing and separating (versus *krima*, which is the sentence or verdict pronounced), hence the passing of judgment upon a person or thing.”

Christ speaks further of the “day of judgment” in Matthew 12:34-37, when He states that “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks,” and out of the good treasures of his heart a good man speaks

good things; conversely, an evil man out of the evil treasures of his heart speaks evil things. In verse 36 and 37 Christ makes plain that “... for every word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”



People conjur up all sorts of ideas concerning judgement day, the most common being that a person will most likley be consigned to an ever-burning hell.

day = hemora, “a day, or time period.”

Thus we see that judgment is an extremely important issue, for on it hangs the very essence of our entry into eternal life! Moreover, it is attached intimately to repentance, as we read in Matthew 11:20-24 ... a repentance from evil words, and by implication evil deeds and lawless attitudes. The “day of judgment,” or time of the process of investigating our acts, words, and motives, has everything to do with the process of calling, faith in our Creator, and repentance, baptism, the laying on of hands, and the receiving of God's spirit.

“Therefore ... let us go on to perfection, not lay-

ing again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment” (Hebrews 6:1-2).

Use a Little Logic

Let us first understand our calling, which for the elect began before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4), and led to the Father calling us from the midst of this sinful world to come to His Son, Jesus Christ (John 6:44). For those of us who accepted this calling — and I personally contend there is no real choice but to accept it — the next step was repentance from our evil past, having absolute faith in our Father’s wisdom to have brought us to repentance. We then were baptized — symbolizing the washing away of our sins — and had hands laid on us to receive the holy spirit ... the actual character of the Creator placed within us. It is the process as depicted below.

Calling of the Father => Faith toward God => Repentance => Baptism => Laying on of hands

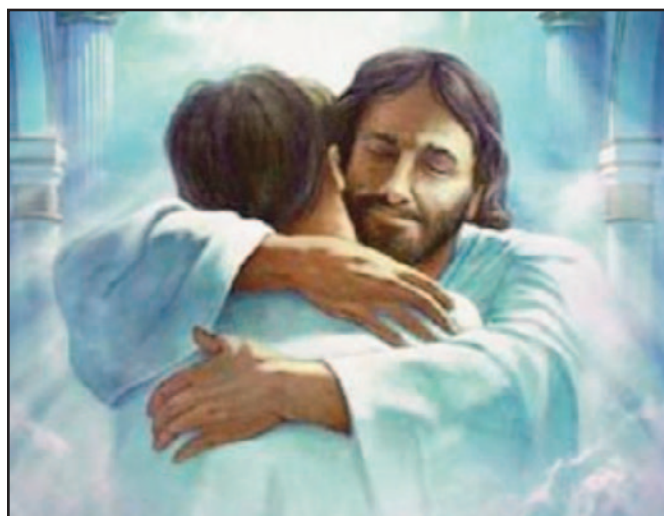
During this process, once baptized, having hands laid on us and receiving the holy spirit, we understand that all of our sins have been forgiven, removed from us totally as far as the east is from the west (Psalm 103:12). We are clean and pure, new creatures, true sons of God! (John 15:3; II Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 4:4-7; 6:15; I John 3:1-2). Moreover, if we sin again after this momentous conversion — and we do to some degree every day— we receive forgiveness from that sin once we perceive that error and come to the Father in repentance; He is quick to forgive us (I John 1:8-10; 2:1-2).

We are assured that with this forgiveness and purity and sonship with the Father, we will be raised to eternal life in the resurrection. It is a promise that the Father and Christ have given to us!

“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who

are asleep [dead]. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus shall we always be with the Lord” (I Thessalonians 4:14-17).

Now, if judgment has to do with being “investigated” [*krisis*] as being worthy or not of attaining the resurrection and eternal life, then have not the elect of today and in centuries past been judged worthy of that reward already! Of course! They are worthy of eternal life as judged by the Father in heaven. Why else would He have called them to His Son Jesus Christ to have their sins washed away in His perfect life and sacrificial blood? **GOD’S FIRSTFRUIT ELECT HAVE BEEN JUDGED, AND ARE BEING JUDGED, IN THIS AGE!** They have been



Judgement has indeed already begun with the household of God in this age, and the saints will be found qualified to inherit eternal life!

found worthy, younger brothers of Jesus (Romans 8:29), accepted as was Jesus when it was declared of Him, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing” (Revelation 5:12). We too are crucified daily alongside Christ (Galatians 2;20).

Our Judgment Is Now

Yes indeed, our judgment is now, in this age, and we have been found worthy of the resurrection and eternal life. True to the statement of Peter in I Peter 4:17-18,

“For the time has come for judgment [*krisis*] to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? Now, ‘If the righteous one is scarcely saved, where will the ungodly and sinner appear’?” (See Proverbs 11:31).

Our judgment is based upon the bedrock principles of the Father’s eternal laws, summarized in the Ten Commandments, and in their spiritual application as revealed through the life of Jesus Christ (Matthew 5:17-19). He never erred in following that perfect will of His Father, and we follow in His footsteps (I John 2:6), striving to be like Him and put sin out of our lives, which is disobedience to those perfect laws (Romans 7:7; I John 3:4). That will is for His character to live within us.

Those who have not been called by the Father

in this age — those destined for the second resurrection (Revelation 20:11-15) — face a different time of judgment. Their time will be after the millennial reign, after which all of those who were not called in this age will be raised to physical life, given the opportunity to repent, and, if they accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, they will be made spirit just as the firstfruits who were resurrected before the millennium. The process will be the same. Everyone must bow down to the Creator of all and acknowledge their sins.

We of the firstfruits should rejoice in being called to a “better resurrection” (Hebrews 11:35). That does not make us better in the long term than anyone else who will taste of eternal life; it only places us in time order (I Corinthians 15:23) of being able to serve those who will be resurrected later. Our Creator wills that all of His creations, made in His image (Genesis 1:27), will be saved (Romans 11:26; I Thessalonians 2:4). Let us rejoice in being firstfruits — the very elect — and let our light shine to the world around us of the glorious truth that has been revealed to us!