

The Kingdom of God #12: The Judgments of God

Note: Many people avoid the book of Revelation. Why? Probably a mixture of fear and a feeling that understanding it would be hopeless anyway. I believe we should just keep reading it and studying it anyway. If we are faithful to “put it in” our minds, then eventually there will come a time when the light comes on and we will understand it. Maybe right now it is not necessary that we understand something, but when we need to know it, God can illuminate it to us, if we have at least been faithful to read it.

God’s judgments are probably not the most popular topic of study, and yet we dare not ignore something that we all will inevitably face. Right now we have the opportunity to affect that future judgment.

Why are most Christians unaware of, or at least unconcerned about, a future judgment?

- Recent generations have down-played the message of a holy God’s wrath against sin, and His righteous judgment of it. They prefer a feel-good message that is more psychology than theology. They have even mocked “hellfire and brimstone” preaching as unsophisticated and only suitable for hillbilly churches. I don’t think a constant harangue with that kind of preaching is helpful or healthy, but most churches have gone to the other extreme. Their God is a celestial Buddy who just wants to be our friend, and is only mildly annoyed by our “weaknesses” (they are no longer referred to as “sins”).
- Many think that the fact that they got saved means that we have escaped God’s judgment altogether.
- Many are simply too distracted by the busy-ness of life. We spend more time on Facebook and the Drudge Report than in seeking God. But idle words are not forgotten – Mt. 12:26-27.
- Since it is “way out there in the future” (we think), it is easy to procrastinate. Out of sight, out of mind.

God is the Judge of all the earth

Gen. 18:25 – Shall not the Judge of the whole earth do right?

Ps. 96:13 – the Lord cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the earth with righteousness ...

Heb. 12:22-23 – To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, and to God the Judge of all ...

But He does it through Christ, as the Son of God

Jn. 5:22-29 – For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.

Ac. 10:42-43 – (we are commanded to testify that) it is he (Jesus) which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.

Ac. 17:30-31 – he hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained

2 Tim. 4:1-4 - ... the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom

The Judgments of God

1. Judgments of the living
 - a. Of the world – the Flood, the Second Coming
 - b. Of cities and nations – Sodom, Tyre, Egypt, Israel, Judah, Babylon, Greece, Rome, our Civil War, ...
 - c. Of individuals - Nadab and Abihu, Uzzah (2 Sam. 6:6-7), Ananias and Sapphira, Herod, etc.
2. At death – by separation of the righteous into Paradise and the wicked into Hades, awaiting the final judgment (Lk. 16)
3. Final judgments
 - a. The Beast (Antichrist) and false prophet are cast alive into the lake of fire – Rev. 19:20
 - b. Satan is cast into the Lake of fire – Rev. 20:10
 - c. Of the wicked (great white throne, lake of fire)– Rev. 20:11-15
The sea, death and Hades deliver up all their dead. (the “second resurrection”, Jn. 5:29 – a “resurrection of damnation”). All the dead stand before the throne.
Judged out of two books – a record of works, and the “book of life”,
Death and hell (Hades) are cast into lake of fire, also all those not in the book of life.
 - d. Of believers (probably takes place at the first resurrection, before the marriage supper of the Lamb)
Rom. 14:10 – But why dost thou judge thy brother? Or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.
2 Cor. 5:9-10 – Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ: that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

The Judgment of Believers

1. Not a judgment of heaven-or-hell – we are already made citizens of the heavenly kingdom when we believe. Col. 1:12-14
2. A judgment of works. Parable of talents, of sheep and goats. 1 Cor. 3:10-15
3. Conclusion – we should judge ourselves now, while we have opportunity to change, 1 Cor. 11:31 – For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. (speaks of chastening from misusing the communion, but the principle applies.)