

The Bible Says: Judgment

By Mark Hatfield

Whenever the subject of religion is discussed, thoughts of heaven and hell which includes eternal judgment are displayed in the minds of many. Everyone knows that someday we must die (Heb. 9:27). Most everyone understands and recognizes the brevity of life. The problem that is often found when discussing the judgment of Almighty God, is that some people misunderstand what will take place on that day. God has given to us an exact representation of what will take place, the question is will we accept His word on this matter?

EVERYONE WILL BE JUDGED

It is easy to see from God's word, that every person that is accountable will stand before the throne of the Lord and be judged based upon the life that they lived. In II Corinthians 5:10, Paul penned, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or evil." Many today misunderstand that even though you are a Christian, you will have to stand before the judge of all mankind. Was Paul a Christian when he wrote the Corinthian letter? Yes. Did he not include himself when he said, "For we"? Yes. Paul even said that he had a crown of life awaiting him. Does that mean that he would not be judged? No.

Some people turn to passages like Romans 8:1 to support their view for no judgment to those in Christ. The passage reads, "There is therefore now no *condemnation* (emph. m.l.h.) to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." This passage doesn't say no judgment, it says no condemnation. Every individual will stand before the throne of Christ, but those that walk after the Spirit and are in Christ will receive "no condemnation". Some also teach that "once you are saved you are always saved". The only question that you must ask someone who holds this view is...What happens if they stop walking after the Spirit and return to the fleshly things? It is obvious that they are in a position to be lost. Only the faithful in Christ are promised a crown of life (Rev. 2:10), and salvation (Hebrews 5:9; Matthew 24:13).

IT WILL HAPPEN AT AN UNEXPECTED HOUR

By inspiration, the apostle Peter wrote, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." (II Peter 3:10) If the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night, then it will come at an unexpected hour. There will not be any last minute repentance time, it will be too late. No wonder why Peter told his recipients to live upright lives, after this warning of the day of the Lord (II Peter 3:11-12). For those who teach that Christ will come to establish His kingdom on earth and reign 1000 years... where is He going to put it, since all these things shall melt with fervent heat? When are we going to realize that the kingdom is established, and that Jesus is reigning at the right hand of God, and that those being saved can be added to that kingdom (Acts 2:47; Matthew 16:18-19). How long will we think that we can be

saved if we are not a part of the kingdom of which Jesus will be the Savior (Eph. 5:23; Colossians 1:24)? Are you prepared for the sudden judgment of the Lord?

IT WILL BE A TIME OF REJOICING, AND WEeping

Paul, in his second letter to the Thessalonians, wrote, "...when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; When He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe..." (II Thess. 1:7-10). The judgment day will be one of weeping and gnashing of teeth for those who never obeyed the Lord, but a time of rejoicing for those who were faithful to God and will then be able to spend eternity forever in heaven. What kind of day will it be for you?