

Biblical Theology

Unit 8: Doctrine of the Church – Lesson 3: The Final Judgment

Nature of the Final Judgment

- Definition: The last and ultimate proclamation by Jesus Christ of the eternal destinies of all people which will take place after the millennium and after the rebellion that occurs at the end of time.
 1. **The Final Judgment will determine the eternal destination of all people.**
 - **Revelation 20:11-15** - *Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. 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.*
 2. **Jesus will be the Judge at the Final Judgment.**
 - **2 Timothy 4:1** - *Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead,*
 - **Acts 10:42** - *he is the one appointed by God to be judge*
 - **Matthew 25:31-33** - *“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne.*
 3. **All who are judged will be resurrected before Final Judgment**
 - **Revelation 20:13** - *And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done.*
 - **John 5:28-29** - *those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.*
 4. **Unbelievers will be judged at the Final Judgment.**
 - **Revelation 20:15** - *And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*
 - **Romans 2:5-7** - *you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.*
 - **Ecclesiastes 12:14** - *For God will bring every deed into judgment, with[a] every secret thing, whether good or evil.*
 5. **Believers will be judged at the Final Judgment.**
 - **Revelation 20:12** - *And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done.*
 - **Romans 14:10-12** - *For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; for it is written, “As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.” So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.*
 - **2 Corinthians 5:10** - *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body,*
 - **Matthew 25:31-34** - *‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*
 6. **Angels will be judged.**
 - **2 Peter 2:4** - *For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment;*
 - **Jude 6** - *And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day—*

7. The very character of God necessitates Final Judgment.

- *Psalm 7:11 - God is a righteous judge, a God who has indignation every day.*
- *Deuteronomy 32:4 - The Rock, his work is perfect, and all his ways are just.*
- *Revelation 19:1-2 - his judgments are true and just;*

Differing Opinions Regarding Final Judgment

- Though the scriptures require us to agree on a coming judgment, differing opinions exist on certain details pertaining to the Final Judgment.
 1. **Some believe there will be more than one judgment.**
 - 1. The Judgment of the nations. (Matthew 25:31-46).
 - Judging the world for their treatment of Jews and Christians.
 - 2. Bema (Judgment) Seat of believers. (2 Corinthians 5:10).
 - Christians receiving degrees of rewards for good works.
 - 3. Great White Throne Judgment / Final Judgment (Revelation 20:11-15).
 - Declaring eternal punishments for unbelievers.
 2. **Some believe the Final Judgment occurs immediately at Christ's return.**
 - This view is held by those who do not believe in a future, literal 1,000 year reign of Christ. (Matthew 25:31-46).
 3. **The Scriptures indicate that there will be degrees of judgment.**
 - *Matthew 11:21-24 - But I tell you that it will be more tolerable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom than for you."*
 - *Luke 12:47-48 - And that servant who knew his master's will but did not get ready or act according to his will, will receive a severe beating. But the one who did not know, and did what deserved a beating, will receive a light beating.*
 4. **There are various opinions regarding the nature of the judgment of believers.**
 - Some believe Christians will not be judged on their sinful actions on account of their justification through faith in Christ. (Romans 8:1, 33-34; Psalm 103:12).
 - The Scriptures indicate that believers will receive degrees of reward.
 - *1 Corinthians 3:12-15 - Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.*
 - *2 Corinthians 5:10 - we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done*
 - *Luke 19:17-19 - And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.' And the second came, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made five minas.' And he said to him, 'And you are to be over five cities.'*

Discussion Questions

1. How can the anticipation of the Final Judgment bring us comfort in the midst of the horrible injustices of our world?
2. How does the final judgment impact our motivation to forgive others (Romans 12:19)?
3. How can the Doctrine of Final Judgment motivate our behavior on a daily basis?
4. How does the anticipation of the coming Final Judgment impact our perspective and response to the lost souls living around us?

Reading Assignment

Systematic Theology by Wayne Grudem – Chapter 57: The New Heavens and New Earth.