

At the judgment, eternal life will be given to those who have been faithful to God

The thought of our final judgment before God is disconcerting to many people. But in reality, the Christian who walks with God each day ought to anticipate the judgment with great love and hope. **At the judgment, eternal life will be given to those who have been faithful to God.** For this reason, we ought to contemplate the judgment day with faith, hope, and love — rather than fear. On that day, we will be united with the Lord who died to save us.

John wrote of the difference love should make in our anticipation of the judgment: “By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love” (1 Jn. 4:17,18). To the extent that we lovingly long to be with God, we will not dread the thought of judgment.

Judgment will be the realization of the reward that Christians have worked for. It is possible for us to think of that day as Paul did: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing” (2 Tim. 4:7,8). Judgment will hold no terror for those who have “loved his appearing.” That day will be a day of great reward for the faithful, and there is no reason why any of us can’t be in that number.

Jesus did not come to condemn the world, but to save it. Those who will be lost are those who have refused God’s offer of salvation. To those who have faithfully and obediently accepted the gospel, however, the judgment will mean salvation in its final sense. “And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him” (Hb. 9:27,28). This week, let’s eagerly wait for the judgment of Christ, who will appear for our salvation on that day. With Paul (1 Cor. 16:22 NKJV), may we gladly say, “O Lord, come!” And with Peter (2 Pt. 3:12), may we “hasten” the coming of the day of God!

Monday: 2 Corinthians 5:9,10

Key Idea: We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

Questions for Family Growth: What did Paul say his “aim” was? Is there anyone who will not appear before the judgment seat of Christ? What are we to “receive” at the judgment? What does Hb. 9:27,28 say?

Wisdom for the Day: Proverbs 11:2.

Tuesday: Galatians 6:7-9

Key Idea: On the judgment day, we will reap what we have sown.

Questions for Family Growth: What should we not be “deceived” about? What is the basic lie with which the devil tries to deceive us? On this point, consider **Gen. 3:1-4**. What will be reaped by those who have sown to the flesh? What about those who have sown to the Spirit?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 11:3**.

Wednesday: Psalm 139:23,24

Key Idea: We ought to want to see ourselves right now as God sees us.

Questions for Family Growth: What request did David make of God in this psalm? How is this thought similar to the thought in **Psa. 19:12-14**? What should we do when we become aware of faults in our lives?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 11:4**.

Thursday: 1 Peter 1:17

Key Idea: Knowing that we will be judged causes us to live reverently before God.

Questions for Family Growth: How are we helped by knowing that God is our Father? How are we helped by knowing that He is also our Judge? Consider **Rom. 11:22**. What is the “fear” spoken of in **1 Pt. 1:17**?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 11:5**.

Friday: 2 Timothy 4:7,8

Key Idea: If we are faithful to Christ, we can look forward to the judgment.

Questions for Family Growth: In **v.7**, what did Paul say he had done during the years of his life as a Christian? What did he say was laid up for him? When would he receive it? Who else will receive this thing that Paul hoped for?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 11:6**.

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