

**Judgement**  
**Message 04 in the series, “What Happens When We Die?”**

**After the resurrection, the Bible describes at least two distinct judgments:**

**1. The Great White Throne Judgment— the time where all people will be judged according to their deeds, and if their names are written in the Book of Life.**

“Don’t be so surprised! Indeed, the time is coming when all the dead in their graves will hear the voice of God’s Son, and they will rise again. Those who have done good will rise to experience eternal life, and those who have continued in evil will rise to experience judgment.” John 5:28–29 (NLT)

“And I saw a great white throne and the one sitting on it. The earth and sky fled from his presence, but they found no place to hide. I saw the dead, both great and small, standing before God’s throne. And the books were opened, including the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to what they had done, as recorded in the books. The sea gave up its dead, and death and the grave gave up their dead. And all were judged according to their deeds. Then death and the grave were thrown into the lake of fire. This lake of fire is the second death. And anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire.” Revelation 20:11-15 (NLT)

“But cowards, unbelievers, the corrupt, murderers, the immoral, those who practice witchcraft, idol worshipers, and all liars—their fate is in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.”  
Revelation 21:8 (NLT)

**Note:** First death = physical death | Second death = eternal, spiritual death

“But when the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit upon his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered in his presence, and he will separate the people as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep at his right hand and the goats at his left. Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.’ Then these righteous ones will reply, ‘Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ And the King will say, ‘I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!’ Then the King will turn to those on the left and say, ‘Away with you, you cursed ones, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his demons. For I was hungry, and you didn’t feed me. I was thirsty, and you didn’t give me a drink. I was a stranger, and you didn’t invite me into your home. I was naked, and you didn’t give me clothing. I was sick and in prison, and you didn’t visit me.’ Then they will reply, ‘Lord, when did we ever see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and not help you?’ And he will answer, ‘I tell you the truth, when you refused to help the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were refusing to help me.’ And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous will go into eternal life.” Matthew 25:31-46 (NLT)

**Note:** Good works are not the root of salvation; they are the fruit.

“Beware of false prophets who come disguised as harmless sheep but are really vicious wolves. You can identify them by their fruit, that is, by the way they act. Can you pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? A good tree produces good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit. A good tree can’t produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can’t produce good fruit. So every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire. Yes, just as you can identify a tree by its fruit, so you can identify people by their actions. Not everyone who calls out to me, ‘Lord! Lord!’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those *who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter*. On judgment day many will say to me, ‘Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.’ But I will reply, ‘I never knew you. Get away from me, you who break God’s laws.’” Matthew 7:15-23 (NLT)

“What *does it* profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,’ but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what *does it* profit? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, ‘You have faith, and I have works.’ Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, ‘Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.’ And he was called the friend of God. You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent *them* out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”

James 2:14-26 (NLT)

“God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.” Ephesians 2:8-10 (NLT)

**2. The Judgment Seat of Christ— does not determine salvation, which has already been secured in Christ; but evaluates the believer’s works, motives and faithfulness, resulting in rewards or loss of rewards.**

“For we must all stand before Christ to be judged. We will each receive whatever we deserve for the good or evil we have done in this earthly body.” 2 Corinthians 5:10 (NLT)

“For no one can lay any foundation other than the one we already have—Jesus Christ. Anyone who builds on that foundation may use a variety of materials—gold, silver, jewels, wood, hay, or straw. But on the judgment day, fire will reveal what kind of work each builder has done. The fire will show if a person’s work has any value. If the work survives, that builder will receive a reward. But if the work is burned up, the builder will suffer great loss. The builder will be saved, but like someone barely escaping through a wall of flames.” 1 Corinthians 3:11–15 (NLT)

“...Remember, we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. For the Scriptures say, ‘As surely as I live,’ says the Lord, ‘every knee will bend to me, and every tongue will declare allegiance to God.’ Yes, each of us will give a personal account to God.” Romans 14:10–12 (NLT)

“So don’t make judgments about anyone ahead of time—before the Lord returns. For he will bring our darkest secrets to light and will reveal our private motives. Then God will give to each one whatever praise is due.” 1 Corinthians 4:5 (NLT)

**Note:** Our actions and obedience in this life have eternal significance and implications.

The crowd was listening to everything Jesus said. And because he was nearing Jerusalem, he told them a story to correct the impression that the Kingdom of God would begin right away. He said, “A nobleman was called away to a distant empire to be crowned king and then return. Before he left, he called together ten of his servants and divided among them ten pounds of silver, saying, ‘Invest this for me while I am gone.’ But his people hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, ‘We do not want him to be our king.’ After he was crowned king, he returned and called in the servants to whom he had given the money. He wanted to find out what their profits were. The first servant reported, ‘Master, I invested your money and made ten times the original amount!’ ‘Well done!’ the king exclaimed. ‘You are a good servant. You have been faithful with the little I entrusted to you, so you will be governor of ten cities as your reward.’ The next servant reported, ‘Master, I invested your money and made five times the original amount.’ ‘Well done!’ the king said. ‘You will be governor over five cities.’ But the third servant brought back only the original amount of money and said, ‘Master, I hid your money and kept it safe. I was afraid because you are a hard man to deal with, taking what isn’t yours and harvesting crops you didn’t plant.’ ‘You wicked servant!’ the king roared. ‘Your own words condemn

you. If you knew that I'm a hard man who takes what isn't mine and harvests crops I didn't plant, why didn't you deposit my money in the bank? At least I could have gotten some interest on it.' Then, turning to the others standing nearby, the king ordered, 'Take the money from this servant, and give it to the one who has ten pounds.' 'But, master,' they said, 'he already has ten pounds!' 'Yes,' the king replied, 'and to those who use well what they are given, even more will be given. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away. And as for these enemies of mine who didn't want me to be their king—bring them in and execute them right here in front of me.'"

Luke 19:11–27 (NLT)

**Note:** Paul eagerly anticipated standing before Jesus and receiving his rewards. We should also live in a manner that allows us to share in this same expectation and hope.

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful. And now the prize awaits me—the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on the day of his return. And the prize is not just for me but for all who eagerly look forward to his appearing."

2 Timothy 4:7–8 (NLT)

"Don't you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win! All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize." 1 Corinthians 9:24–25 (NLT)

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