

April 7, 2024

The Last Judgement – Lesson 1

For the next few weeks, we are beginning a new series centered around **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, whether good or bad [worthless or wicked]

This is a most sobering verse. How does it make us feel?

What question comes to mind?

Probably most of us would ask:

How does what Jesus says in **John 5:24** apply to this verse--

...truly, truly [of a certainty], I say to you, he who hears My Word, and believes Him Who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.

Do these two Scriptures contradict each other?

No, because these two passages are speaking about two distinct judgments.

In **Acts 31**, Paul warns the Athenians that *...God has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in Righteousness through a Man...*

Then Paul says that the certainty of this judgment is proven by the restriction: V. 31 *...having furnished proof to all men by raising [Jesus] from the dead...*

In **Matthew 25:31-33** we read what will happen on this day:

...when the Son of Man comes in His glory with all His angels, He will sit on His glorious throne. 32 "All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; 33 and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left...

Then in **v. 34-45** we learn that this division and its results are based on the deeds of humanity:

34 Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. 35 'For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; 36 naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.' 37 "Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink? 38 'And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? 39 'When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' 40 "The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of the least of these My brothers, you did it to Me.'

This is the judgment that Paul was referencing in **2 Cor. 5:10** -

41 Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; 42 for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; 43 I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick and in prison, and you did not visit Me.' 44 "Then they will answer, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?' 45 "Then He will answer them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' 46 "These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

This judgment is also recorded in **Rev. 20:11-15** -

Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. 12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the Throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the Book of Life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds... 15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

This is the judgment that Jesus referenced in **John 5:24**.

From these two accounts we see that that all humanity is judged according to ...*their deeds*...

The Standard against which their deeds are judged is the Righteousness of God as displayed in Jesus' Life:

1 John 2:6 *...the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.*

We see here that ...walk... is a synonym of ...deeds...

Therefore, those whose ...deeds... [walk] are in keeping with Jesus' deeds are judged to be *...the sheep...*

those whose ...deeds... [walk] are not in keeping with Jesus' ...deeds... are judged to be ...the goats...

Next week we will look at Jesus' credentials as God's Judge and begin to consider how 2 Cor. 5:10 applies to every believer.