

One Word Study

“Judgment”

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Texts: texts on the Judgment Day (multi-text)
- B. **[S1]** God “has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.” – Acts 17:31
- C. “There is no truth more clearly taught in God’s Word, no fact more firmly established, and no warning more emphatic than the teaching that the books will be opened on the Day of Judgment. The Bible clearly teaches that at the second coming of Christ, there will be a resurrection of the dead and then the judgment” (V.P. Black 268).
- D. **[S2] Question: Will Christians Go Through the Judgment?**
 - 1. **[S3]** Some say that Christians will **NOT** have to go through the final judgment, based on John 5:24, where Jesus says this: “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.” – John 5:24 NKJV
 - 2. **[S4]** Others say, yes, we **WILL** go through the judgment, **but our sins will not be brought up there.** They base this on Hebrews 8:12, where God says, “For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.” – Hebrews 8:12
- E. What do you think? What is the answer according to the Scriptures?
- F. Let’s ask some more questions and seek to answer Scripturally...
- I. **[S5] On the Day of Judgment, Exactly Who and What Will Be Judged?**
 - A. **[S5A]** The answer seems to be that on that day, **all the works of all people will be judged.**
 - B. **[S6]** God is described as **the “Judge of all”** (Hebrews 12:23).

- C. When Hebrews 9:27 says that “it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment,” no exceptions are made.
- D. **[S7]** God is ready to judge “**the living and the dead**” (1 Peter 4:5; see 2 Timothy 4:1).
- E. God will “judge the world” (Romans 3:6).
- F. **[S8]** “When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy^[c] angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. ³² All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides *his* sheep from the goats.” – Matthew 25:31-32
- G. **[S9]** “¹¹But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. ¹¹For it is written: ‘As I live, says the LORD, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God.’ ¹²So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.” – Romans 14:10-12
- H. **[S10]** “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.” – 2 Corinthians 5:10
- I. We readily accept the idea that the wicked will be judged (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; et. al.), but some have been misled to think that the righteous will not go through the judgment.
- J. Again, **John 5:24** is sometimes interpreted to mean this...
1. **[S11]** “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.” – John 5:24 NKJV
 2. But this is a false understanding of this verse. The word for “judgment” (*krisis*) often means **a negative judgment**, i.e., “**condemnation**.”
 3. **[S11A]** The NIV gives the correct sense: “I tell you the truth whoever hears My word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life and **will not be condemned**; he has crossed over from death to life.” – NIV 1984
 4. See also Romans 8:1.

- K. “But as for the judgment event as such, **the universal references** noted above (‘all,’ ‘each one,’ ‘the world’) **clearly include believers**. This is especially true of Romans 14:10 and 2 Corinthians 5:10, where Paul uses first person plural (‘we’), including himself and all Christians” (Cottrell).
- L. In Matthew 25:31-46 the sheep (the righteous) are judged along with the goats (the wicked).
- M. Certainly, “the Lord will judge His people” (Heb. 10:30). See Jas. 3:1; 1 Pet. 4:17.\
- N. First Q&A -- On the Day of Judgment, Exactly Who and What Will Be Judged? The answer seems to be that on that day, *all the works of all people will be judged*.
- II. **[S12] Exactly What Aspects of Our Lives Will Be Judged?**
- A. **[S12A]** The answer seems to be, ***every one of them***.
- B. ***The Bible puts a lot of emphasis on the fact that we will all be judged according to our works, according to what we have done in this life.***
- C. Cf. OT passages such as 2 Chronicles 6:30; Job 34:11; Psalm 62:12; Jeremiah 17:10. In the OT see also Proverbs 24:12; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; Isaiah 59:18; Jeremiah 32:19; Ezekiel 33:20.
- D. The NT repeats this truth many times...
1. **[S13]** “For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works. “ – Matthew 16:27
 2. “⁵But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, ⁶who ‘will render to each one according to his deeds.’” – Romans 2:5-6
 3. **[S14]** “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.” – 2 Corinthians 5:10

4. The Father “impartially judges according to each one’s work.” (1 Peter 1:17).
5. **[S15]** “And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.” – Revelation 22:12
6. In the NT see also Matthew 12:36-37; 25:31-46; Acts 10:34-35; 1 Corinthians 3:13; Ephesians 6:8; Colossians 3:25; Revelation 2:23; 20:12.

E. Special emphasis is put on the fact that **even our secret or hidden deeds will be made known**, and **even the thoughts and motives of our hearts**.

1. **[S16]** “For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.” – Ecclesiastes 12:14
2. Secret piety will be rewarded (Matthew 6:4, 6, 18) and secret sins revealed (Luke 12:2), since “God will judge the secrets of men” (Romans 2:16).
3. **[S17]** “Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one’s praise will come from God.” – 1 Corinthians 4:5
4. **[S18]** (Heb 4:13 NKJV) And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

III. **[S19] By What Standard Will Our Works Be Judged?**

- A. **[S19A]** Quite simply, **by the standard of God’s revealed will**.
- B. Cottrell: “by the standard of God’s revealed will, whether it be that which is known only through general revelation (Romans 1:18-32; 2:14-15) or that which is known through special revelation also, i.e., the teachings of Scripture.”
- C. **[S20]** “He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.” – John 12:48

D. One of the books that will be opened on Judgment Day (Revelation 20:11-15) will be the Bible, God's Word, the Standard of Judgment.

E. **Review:**

1. First Q&A -- On the Day of Judgment, Exactly Who and What Will Be Judged? The answer seems to be that on that day, *all the works of all people will be judged*.
2. Second Q&A -- Exactly What Aspects of Our Lives Will Be Judged? The answer seems to be, *every one of them*.
3. Third Q&A -- By What Standard Will Our Works Be Judged? Quite simply, *by the standard of God's revealed will*.
4. This seems to apply to ALL people, including Christians!
5. **[S21]** "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." – 2 Corinthians 5:10
6. This includes Christians? Answer: **Yes!** Even the "bad stuff"? **Yes.**

F. Yet, we are also instructed in Scripture to enter the judgment with full assurance of our salvation. That would suggest that for the Christian, the Judgment of God is not something to be feared.

G. How can that be?

IV. **[S22] A Close Look at the Great White Throne Judgment**
(Revelation 20:11-15).

A. Cottrell: "The realization that we Christians will have to go through the judgment, and that even our sins will be put on display, is nothing to look forward to; but it should not cause us to fear for our salvation. A close examination of the judgment scene as described in **Revelation 20:11-15** show that even though we will be judged according to our works, this should not prevent us from entering the judgment with full assurance of our salvation."

B. (Rev 20:11-15 NKJV)

1. **[S23]** Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.
2. **[S24]** {12} And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.
3. **[S25]** {13} The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. {14} Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.
4. **[S26]** {15} And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

C. Cottrell: “Here John seems to say there will be **two stages** through which all will pass at the final judgment”:

1. “The **first** is a judgment according to ‘the books’;
2. “The **second** is a judgment according to “the book of life” (v. 12).”
3. **[S27]** {12} And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.
 - a. Cottrell: “When John says ‘***the books were opened,***’ this refers either to **{1} the books in which all men’s works are recorded**, or to **{2} the books that contain the standard by which these works will be judged[, or to both, DAS].**”
 - b. “In either case, judgment by ‘the books’ is a judgment according to deeds, a judgment to which everyone is subjected (vs. 12-13). Here is where even our [Christians] sins will come to light.”

- c. “What is significant, though, is that **this works-judgment based on ‘the books’ is not the final word in the judging process!**”
4. **[S28]** {15} And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.
- a. **“This works-judgment based on ‘the books’ is not the final word in the judging process!** Rather, the final determination of each person’s fate is based on judgment according to **‘the book of life,’** indeed, **the Lamb’s book of life** (Revelation 13:8; 21:27).”
- b. “The idea seems to be that, **after the first phase of the judgment, the one according to works, no one is found to be worthy of entrance into heaven.**”
- c. “But when **the Lamb’s book of life** is consulted, it is found that some have not trusted in their works but have accepted God’s offer of grace; these and these alone are admitted into heaven — not on the basis of their works but on the basis of the blood of the Lamb. But ‘if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire’ (v. 15). In the final analysis this and this alone — not our works — determines who will be in heaven and who will be in hell.”
- d. **[S29]** (Rev 21:27 NKJV) But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

CONCLUSION:

- A. Why require Christians to confront all of their works, even their sins, on Judgment Day?
1. **[S30]** “As a result of this full disclosure and remembrance of our works at the very threshold of heaven, it will be made perfectly plain that the only reason we are saved for eternity is because of God’s infinite grace and mercy.”

2. “God’s own mercy is thereby glorified, and we will enter heaven with hearts that are overflowing with eternal gratitude and praise to the Redeemer.” – Jack Cottrell

B. [S31] “For what sins will I give an account before God on Judgment Day?”

1. **[S31A]** Nothing that is covered by the blood of Jesus.
2. **God won’t “hold our sins against us.”** He has forgiven them through the blood of Jesus.
3. **[S32]** That’s the meaning of Hebrews 8:12 – “For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.” – Hebrews 8:12
4. The sins of the faithful child of God are covered by the blood of Jesus.
5. He took the punishment for my sins. He died so that I might live forever with Him in heaven.

C. How are our sins covered by the blood of Jesus? How can I have my name written into the Lamb’s Book of Life?

1. Place your faith and trust in Jesus (Acts 16:30-31), turn from your sins in repentance (Acts 17:30-31), confess Jesus before men (Romans 10:9-10), and be baptized (immersed) into Christ for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38). Then you will be found “in Christ” where there is no condemnation (Romans 8:1).
2. Then, continue to walk in the light of His Word, for the promise is: (1 John 1:7 NKJV) But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

D. [S33] (blank slide)

SOURCES:

Black, V.P. “When the Books Are Opened.” Premillennialism, True or False?” Edited by Wendell Winkler. The First Annual Fort Worth Lectures. Brown Trial Church of Christ. Fort Worth, TX: Winkler Publications, 1978. 268-276.

Cottrell, Jack. "Will Christians Go Through the Judgment?" Tuesday, August 16, 2011 at 10:39am. <http://jackcottrell.com/notes/will-christians-go-through-the-judgment/>