

# The Final Judgment.

by Edward Payson

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*The sermon emphasizes the certainty of a future judgment, where every individual will appear before Christ to receive their reward or punishment based on their deeds done in the body.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 7:21, Matthew 12:36, Matthew 16:27, Matthew 25:31, Matthew 25:46, Romans 14:12, 2 Corinthians 5:10, Hebrews 9:27, 1 Peter 4:17, Revelation 20:12

**Topics:** "Eternal Judgment", "Divine Accountability"

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## Description

Edward Payson preaches about the solemn reality of appearing before the judgment seat of Christ, emphasizing the importance of preparing for eternity. He describes the scene of immortals standing before God's tribunal, highlighting the eternal destinies of each individual as either heirs of glory or children of perdition. Payson stresses the certainty of a future judgment, the Judge being Christ Jesus, and the accountability of all human beings for their actions, thoughts, and intents of the heart. He urges listeners to consider the design of the judgment, which is to reward the righteous with everlasting life and condemn the wicked to everlasting punishment.

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## Transcript

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

2 Corinthians 5:10

a mind that looks beyond present appearances, to future realities; and with the eye of faith, sees things which are not, as though they were, how solemn, how interesting is the scene before us. In this assembly, we behold an assembly of immortals, an assembly of candidates for eternity; a part of that vast assembly, which will one day stand exulting in triumph, or sinking in despair, before the tribunal of an avenging God. In every individual here present, we contemplate an heir of glory or a child of perdition; a future inhabitant of heaven, or a prisoner of hell; an embryo angel, or an infant fiend.

Whatever diversity there may be in other respects, how different soever may be your character, pursuits and situations in life, to one of these classes, my friends, you all belong; for you must all appear before the judgment seat, to receive according to the deeds done in the body; and after the irrevocable sentence is pronounced, must each of you depart accursed into everlasting fire, or enter blessed into life eternal. As there is no middle character between the righteous and the wicked in this world; so there will be no

intermediate state between heaven and hell in the next; but one of these is the habitation finally appointed for all living.

And do you feel no anxiety, do you consider it a matter of no consequence, my friends, to know which of these will be your lot? You are usually sufficiently fond of looking forward beyond the present hour, and anticipating the future scenes of life; especially when any important event is before you. With anxious eagerness and curiosity, you look forward from childhood to youth, from youth to manhood, and from manhood to age; and perhaps not a single hour arrives, which has not been the subject of frequent anticipation.

Come then, and exercise for a few moments, an employment of which you are so fond. Let not your thoughts be ever confined to this narrow circle of three score years and ten; but for once take a bolder range and anticipate scenes equally certain, far more instructive and infinitely more important, than any which this life affords. Come and look forward to the final consummation of all things, when Christ shall be revealed in flaming fire, to take vengeance on those who know not God, and who are disobedient to the truth; when the heavens shall pass away with a great noise; and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; and the earth, with the works thereof, shall be burnt up.

Come and look forward to that tremendous day, far more terrible to the self-condemned sinner, than all the horrors of dissolving nature, and a world on fire; which will unalterably determine our final destinies; and bestow on each of us an eternal weight of glory, or consign us over to the mansions of despair. But the subject is too vast to be grasped at once by any finite intelligence. To assist our feeble faculties, let us consider it separately under the following particulars.

The certainty of a future judgment; the Judge who will preside; the persons who will be judged; the things for which they will be called to an account, and the design of the whole transaction. I. We are to inquire into the certainty of a future judgment, before which we all must appear, as the apostle asserts. Of this, my friends, we shall soon see there is no room for doubt. No proposition of natural or revealed religion, not even that which regards the existence of a God, is accompanied with more convincing evidence than this.

They are indeed truths necessarily and inseparably connected; for it is evident almost to demonstration, that he who created must govern, and that he who governs must judge the world. We cannot possibly suppose, that an infinitely wise being would create man, and then leave him to himself, or to the sport of blind accident. No, he must have had some suitable design in his creation; and the only design of a being infinitely holy, just, and good, of which we can form any conception, is his own glory as connected with the greatest possible happiness of his creatures.

To accomplish this design, certain laws and regulations are necessary; and if his creatures disobey these regulations, all his perfections join in requiring that they should be restrained and punished. Experience however, abundantly shows that, in this world, no adequate punishment is inflicted, that there is little or no apparent distinction between the bad and the good; but that all things come alike to all; that there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked, to him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

Hence it appears, that there must be a future day of recompense and retribution, when God will vindicate his own character, reward his faithful friends, and convince the assembled world that his righteous laws are not to be violated with impunity. Omitting the arguments which might be deduced from the present life, as being a state of probation, and others equally cogent, we may observe, secondly, that the existence of natural conscience also proves the certainty of a future judgment.

Wherever we see inferior courts and subordinate officers, we naturally conclude there is some superior power from whom their authority is derived, and by whom their proceedings will be ratified and sanctioned. In the same manner, when we see conscience summoning us to her bar and passing sentence on every thought, word and action, we cannot avoid concluding, that he who placed this monitor in our breasts, and from whom its power and authority are derived, will at some future period confirm her decisions by his own decree.

But without insisting on these, and other arguments of a similar nature, the certainty of a future judgment is sufficiently proved in the word of God; and I hope, my friends, you are not so little acquainted with this word as to render it necessary to quote the numerous passages in which it is taught in the plainest terms. Certainly none who acknowledge its divine authority, (and to such only do we address ourselves; for how can we hope to be heard by those to whom God has spoken in vain?) can possibly doubt that God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained.

This brings us, as was proposed, II. To inquire who will be the Judge on this solemn occasion; who is the man that God hath ordained; and this is no other than the man Christ Jesus, even he, who was born of the virgin Mary, who was crucified, and who rose and ascended to heaven, shall so come, in like manner; and before him shall be gathered all nations. This truth our blessed Saviour abundantly taught while on earth; and there seems in this appointment the same fitness and propriety, as in all other parts of the divine conduct.

It is certainly highly fit and proper, that he who bled and redeemed should also judge the world, and that he, who humbled himself below all creatures should also be exalted above all, so that to him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess him Lord to the praise and glory of God the Father. Then will his exaltation be complete. Everything will then manifestly appear to be put under him. The glory in which he will then appear will be greater than he has ever yet assumed, greater than we could support the sight of, while clothed with mortality.

At the creation he was surrounded by hosts of morning stars, who sung together, and the sons of God, who shouted for joy; and at the dispensation of the law on Sinai; he was arrayed in all the majesty and terror which the elements could afford. But on this still more awful occasion, he will come, not in his own glory only, but in that of his Father, and the holy angels. Heaven will pour forth all her armies to grace his triumph, and spread around him all her ineffable glories in one unremitted blaze of splendor, before which the sun will fade away, and even archangels veil their faces; while, From his keen glance affrighted worlds retire, he speaks in thunder and he breathes in fire.

His countenance, like the pillar of cloud between the Israelites and Egyptians, will present a double appearance; and though clothed with the rainbow of peace toward his friends, it will lower on his enemies like a stormy sky; and while his eye, at every glance, pours upon the former a flood of joy, it will flash lightnings on the latter, which will scorch their inmost souls, and fill them with unutterable, inconceivable anguish. Then shall he come in the clouds of heaven, and every eye shall see him, and yours, my friends, among the rest.

Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they who condemned him as guilty of blasphemy will find, to their eternal shame and confusion will find, that he uttered a solemn truth when he said, Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven to judge the world at the last day. Then shall his murderers find, that he whom they buffeted, scourged, mocked,

and crucified, was indeed the Lord of life and glory, and they, with all who have since despised and all who are now despising his offered grace, will then be convinced by their own sad experience, that whosoever falls on this stone shall be broken, and that on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

And remember, O sinner, that you too must see him. Remember that in the person of your judge, you will see the Saviour whose offers of mercy you are now slighting; whose commands you are disobeying, and whose institutions you are neglecting; and concerning whom you are saying, in your hearts, We will not have this man to reign over us. And O, that this remembrance might lead you to obey the Son, lest he be angry and ye perish from the way, when yet his wrath is kindled but a little.

But blessed are all they who put their trust in him; for they too shall see him. Yes, my Christian friends, you who now believe and rejoice in him, together with those who shall now confess him before men, shall see him who is so precious to your souls in that situation where you now desire and will then rejoice to see him, exalted to the throne of the universe, far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named in heaven or earth. Now perhaps rivers of tears run down your eyes, because men keep not his law, and because his sacred name is profaned.

But then his name shall be glorious, his law shall be magnified, and all tears shall be forever wiped from your eyes. In your judge, you will see the friend, whose love was stronger than death; the physician, who healed your wounds with his own blood; the shepherd who gathered you in his arms and carried you in his bosom; nay more, your head in whom you are all united and in whom you will judge the world. But it was proposed to consider, III. The persons who will be judged. And these are the whole human race, for we must all appear.

There will be no exceptions. In vain shall any call upon the mountains to fall on them, and the hills to cover them. Flight, resistance, threats and entreaties will alike be vain. There must appear rulers, with their subjects, parents, with their children; ministers, with their people; masters, with their servants; and blind guides, with their blinded followers. There will be present all who have lived in the world, from creation down to the present day; there our first parents will contemplate, with various emotions, the long line of their descendants, while they, on the other hand, will behold their common father.

There will be found the inhabitants of the old world, the men of Sodom and Gomorrah, the host of Pharaoh, with their proud king, and the ancient inhabitants of Canaan, with the Israelites, their rebellious and idolatrous successors. There will be seen Noah and Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Enoch and Elijah, Joseph and Moses, with all the other patriarchs and prophets, in a long succession. There will also be assembled the proud, cruel, hypocritical Pharisees, with the priests and rulers who with such inveterate malice persecuted him, who will then be their Judge.

There Pilate, with Herod, shall appear before him, who once stood at his iniquitous tribunal, and receive the reward of his injustice and cowardice. There will be found all of whom we read in profane and sacred history; the Apostles and Martyrs, with their persecutors, the famous heroes and conquerors, who have so often deluged the world with blood, and were highly esteemed among men, but were all abomination in the sight of the Lord; the statesmen, the philosophers and great ones of the earth, with all that is noble, all that is vile among mankind.

Further, there will be present all who are now on the earth, they who now fill the mouths of men with their greatness, and think this world too narrow for their fame; they who are now envied for their beauty, wealth, honors, or accomplishments; they who now excite the love or hatred, the hopes or fears, the admiration or

contempt of mankind, will then stand out in their naked characters. All disguises will then be stripped off, all human distinctions will be destroyed, and the only difference which will then be of any avail, is the grand, the eternal distinction between saints and sinners.

The scoffers who are now asking, where is the promise of his coming, who have wasted their lives and abused their talents in neglecting or denying a future judgment, will find to their cost, that, verily there is a God who judgeth in the earth, and that while they have been following lying vanities, they have forsaken their own mercies and destroyed themselves, with all their disciples. But what is this, my friends, that we are doing? Have we forgotten that we too must be present on this solemn occasion, and that we shall be too much occupied with our own concerns to feel any curiosity respecting the affairs of others?

Yes, every individual in this assembly, they who hear as well as he that speaks, must there make his appearance. As certain as you are now assembled in this house; as certain as you now behold each other; as certain as you now hear these words, so surely shall you all be assembled at the judgment seat of Christ; behold his face and hear the sentence, Come, ye blessed! or Depart, ye cursed! addressed to each of yourselves. IV. It was proposed to consider the things for which this innumerable multitude will be called to give an account: --and these are, as we learn from our text, all the things done here in the body, whether good or bad.

By the things done in the body, are intended not only external actions, but also words and the thoughts and intents of the heart. Of every idle word that men shall speak, says the Judge, shall they give an account in the day of judgment. God shall bring every secret thing into judgment, and will judge the secrets of men by Christ Jesus. The great rule by which these things will be tried, is the divine law; and how this law will be interpreted, our Saviour has himself informed us.

He has declared, that every sinful desire, is no less a breach of its requirements, and no less exposes us to its dreadful curse, than the most open violation; and he will condemn, as breakers of the sixth command, not only all actual murderers, but all who have at any time indulged feelings of malice, hatred, envy, or revenge against their neighbors. Not only all adulterers and adulteresses, but all who have not maintained the strictest purity in thought; word and deed, will also fall under his just condemnation.

He who has coveted, as well as he who has actually stolen his neighbor's property will be found guilty. Nay more, not only they who hate God and their neighbor, but they who do not love God with all their heart, soul, strength and mind, and their neighbor as themselves, must be condemned by the law of God. It is highly worthy of notice, that, in all the descriptions which our Saviour has given of the day of judgment, he represents himself as dooming sinners to the fire prepared for the devil and his angels, not for what the world call crimes, not for injuring their fellow creatures, or disturbing the peace of society; but for being unprofitable servants, for neglecting to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, to receive the stranger, and visit the sick.

It is not so much against sins of commission, that threatenings are denounced in the word of God. He that believeth not shall be damned. Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Not only every tree that bringeth forth bad fruit, but every tree that does not bring forth good fruit, shall be hewn down and cast into the fire. These regulations may seem, and indeed must seem to the unhumiliated heart, too rigid and severe; but, my friends, if the word of God be true; if Christ the Judge abide by his own positive declarations; by these regulations must every thought, word and action be tried.

To this standard must the conduct of every individual be brought. In this balance must every individual be weighed. And do you feel no apprehensions of being found wanting? Have you never committed one sin, in thought, word or deed; and have you perfectly fulfilled all righteousness? If the world at large knows of nothing criminal in your conduct, will your families, will your own consciences, will the all-seeing and heart-searching God acquit you? Remember that cursed is he who continueth not in all things, written in the book of the law; to do them.

If you have ever committed one sin, however small, if you have ever omitted one duty however trifling, you are exposed to this curse; and it will most assuredly sink you in everlasting perdition, unless you seek and obtain an interest in him, who has redeemed us from the curse of the law by being made a curse for us. Suppose you were to be called in question for those things only which you have done or omitted since you came into this house, could you hope to be acquitted? Have you indulged no wandering thoughts, no vain nor vicious imaginations; and have you felt perfect love to God and your neighbor during the short time you have been here present?

If not, you must unavoidably perish, though the remainder of your lives were as pure as that of Adam before the fall, unless you earnestly apply to him, who is exalted to give repentance and remission of sins; for, whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. And if you cannot justify your conduct for one hour; if you have been guilty of sins since you came into this house, which, unless repented of, expose you to eternal death; how will you answer for a whole life of iniquity?

How will you answer for the follies of childhood, the vices of youth, and the sins of riper years? What account can you give of the talents with which you have been entrusted; of your time, your property, your reputation, your reasoning powers, and your opportunities of doing or getting good? All these things must be accounted for, to the last tittle; and not only your external improvement of them, but, the motives from which you acted, will be closely examined. Then all disguises will be stripped off; every action will be traced to its true source; every work of darkness shall be laid before the sun, and all the foolish, vain, wicked and abominable thoughts, wishes and desires, which are now so carefully concealed, will then be exposed to the view of angels and men.

And how will you be able to bear this? Above all, how will you answer your long continued and obstinate rejection of Christ; for slighting his offers of pardon and reconciliation, and for neglecting his word, his Sabbaths, and institutions? This is the sin of sins; it is the most provoking and inexcusable offence of which men can be guilty; it is the sin which will heat seven times hotter the furnace of God's wrath, and render the doom of those who are guilty of it, more intolerable than that of Sodom and Gomorrah.

We come now, V. To consider the design of these solemn transactions, viz: That every one may receive the things done in the body whether they be good or bad. We are not to consider this trial as a mere matter of form, a thing of no consequence. No, it is intended to convince the assembled world of the justice of the sentence which is to follow, by which the righteous will be called to inherit everlasting life, and the wicked doomed to depart accursed into everlasting burnings, prepared for the devil and his angels.

By this sentence, every action however trifling, shall receive its just recompense of reward. Not a sin shall be committed, not a duty neglected, not a moment misspent, not a profane or idle word uttered, not a vicious thought or desire indulged, but shall aggravate the punishment of the finally impenitent. Yes, my friends, whether you know, whether you consider, whether you believe it or not, you are acting for eternity;

and innumerable millions of ages hence, you will continue to feel the consequences of your present conduct in its minutest part.

And while this consideration checks the sinner in his mad career, let it animate those of you who are Christians indeed, to run with new vigor and alacrity the race set before you; you too are acting for eternity, and your labor shall not be in vain in the Lord. Not a sigh shall you breathe, not a prayer shall you utter, not a tear shall you shed, not one good action shall you ever perform; but shall increase your future felicity. For even a cup of cold water given from love to the Lord Jesus shall, we are assured, by no means lose its reward.

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; for in due time ye shall reap if ye faint not; and he that soweth bountifully in this world shall reap also bountifully in the world to come. There will doubtless be degrees, both in happiness and misery; and as among a number of vessels thrown into the sea, some may contain more than others, though all be alike full; so some vessels of mercy will be capable of containing more felicity than others, though all will be happy to the extent of their capacities; and in like manner some vessels of wrath will be capable of containing more than others, of those vials of divine vengeance, which will be poured out upon the wicked to all eternity.

Improvement. Must we all appear before the judgment seat of Christ? Then surely it becomes us diligently to inquire whether we are prepared for this all-important event. And suffer me, with that solemnity which such a subject demands, to ask each individual here present, if you should, this moment, be called to the bar of God, what sentence have you reason to suppose he would pass on you? Pause and reflect, and let conscience answer. And what does she answer? To some, I hope to many of you, she whispers peace and pardon through the blood of Christ, and an assurance that you are accepted in the Beloved.

Yet even in this case, there is great danger of self deception; for though our own hearts condemn us not, yet God is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things. Many will come to the Judge in that day, saying, Lord, have we not eaten and drank in thy presence, and hast thou not taught in our streets? Have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils; and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

And so perhaps many here present can say, Lord, have we not eaten and drank at thy table; have we not called ourselves by thy name; have we not read thy word, attended thy worship, and kept thine ordinances? But if you can say nothing more than this, the Judge will profess unto you, as he will unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity. If you are trusting to any works of righteousness which you leave done; any external morality and decency of conduct: or if, on the other hand, you are pretending to trust in the righteousness of Christ, without imitating his example and obeying his commands; your hope is vain, your faith is vain, you are yet in your sins.

Faith without works, or works without faith, are alike, but a sandy foundation. Examine then, diligently, the foundation on which your eternal hope is built; and remember, that, not those who say unto Christ, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of our heavenly Father. But are there not also many here present, who have nothing on which to found a false hope; many whose consciences answer too loudly to be disregarded, that, were they now called to the judgment seat, they could expect nothing but the reward of the wicked? and that, if they die in their present state, they cannot see the kingdom of heaven?

If there be any of you, who are sensible that this is their alarming situation; how long, let me ask, do you mean to remain in it? Will you waste days, months and years, thus every moment exposed to irretrievable destruction? Do you consider, ye who sit thus calmly and unconcernedly on the crumbling brink of hell, that the brittle thread of life, which ten thousand dangers threaten hourly to break, is all that preserves you from everlasting burnings? O, could the cloud be dissipated; which conceals eternity from your view; could you see the slippery precipice on which you stand, and the unfathomable gulf which even now yawns to receive you; if the sight did not at once drive you to madness, despair and death, how would you cry for mercy and deliverance; you would neither give sleep to your eyes, nor slumber to your eyelids, till you had made your peace with an offended God.

I know, my friends, these truths are not pleasant. I know that death and judgment are subjects on which you do not love to dwell; but though they are unpleasant, they are important; and the time will arrive when you must make them the subject of your meditations. But why do you suffer them to be unpleasant? Why do you not so conduct as to make God your friend, and then the king of terrors will be viewed as the portal of paradise, and eternity will be the subject of your most delightful contemplations.

Remember that, if the thoughts of death and judgment be unpleasant, it is an almost certain proof that you are not prepared for their approach. If this be the case, delay not your preparation for a single hour. God is angry with the wicked every day. Do not therefore risk the consequences of living another hour exposed to his just displeasure, but suffer me to urge, to exhort, to beseech you, with all possible earnestness, to flee from the wrath to come. Secondly. Is the Lord Jesus Christ appointed to be the Judge of quick and dead? and does our final destiny depend on his verdict?

Of what infinite importance then is it, to have him for our friend. If you were soon to appear at an earthly bar, where your lives, your characters or property were at stake, how earnest, how anxious would you be, and how careful to omit nothing which had any tendency to secure the favor of your Judge, and produce a favorable issue? And will you there remain entirely idle and unconcerned, where your eternal interests are at stake? When the Judge himself offer, to be your advocate; will you madly refuse acceptance?

He is now willing to be your friend; nay more, he is beseeching you to be reconciled to God; and will you slight and despise his entreaties? Now his voice is love, his words are mild, his countenance beams with compassion, and his heart overflows with tenderness for perishing sinners. He now offers you a full and free pardon of your sins, and an interest in his righteousness, without money and without price. The only condition on your part is thankfully to receive it. And now, will you receive it on these terms, or not?

I call upon you to choose this day, this hour, nay, this very moment, whom you will serve. Will you have Christ to reign over you or not? Say that you will, say it sincerely, say it from the heart, and heaven is yours. But if you think proper to give a different answer, remember, I charge you remember, that you must give an account thereof in the day of Judgment. Then when the earth is wrapt in flames, when the atmosphere becomes like the blast of a furnace, when the ocean is but as oil to increase the conflagration, then you will feel the worth and the want of that friend you proudly reject.

Then you will find that it is not a light thing to have despised a crucified Saviour. Then will the door of mercy be forever shut against you, and the Judge will then refuse to be your friend. Then will his countenance be like lightning, and his eyes like a flame of fire; his voice more dreadful than the archangel's trump, and his breath like a devouring flame, burning even to the lowest hell. What iniquity didst thou find in me, O sinner, will he then demand, that then wouldst not have me to reign over thee?

Was not my yoke easy, and my burden light! Why then didst thou refuse to bear them? Why didst thou reject and despise my offers of mercy, and pour contempt on those blessings I died to purchase? Why grieve my Holy Spirit, why turn a deaf ear to all the warnings I sent thee in my word, my ordinances and providences? and why, when my faithful ambassadors besought thee for my sake to be reconciled to God, why didst thou refuse? Didst thou not hear what was thy duty? didst thou not live in a land of gospel light and liberty? wast thou not often told of this day, and did not conscience warn thee, that, for all thy sins God would bring thee into judgment?

Was there nothing due to me for my goodness? Did I not love, did I not die for thee? Was I not, for thy sake, scourged, mocked and crucified? Did I not, for thy sake, exchange a throne in heaven, for a manger on earth; and the praises of angels for the blasphemies of men? Why then hast thou despised my name, and cast my laws behind thy back? And what answer, O sinner, are you prepared to make to questions like these. Will you dare offer to your Judge those vain and frivolous excuses with which you now quiet your conscience and deceive yourself?

Will you dare come to the bar of God, and tell him that he was a hard master; that his law was too severe, that his word was unintelligible, that you could not learn your duty, that you were unable to repent and believe? Consider, O consider well what answer you are prepared to give, and see that it be such an one as you dare rest your hopes upon, and defend at the bar of a heart searching Judge. Consider all these things, ye who are now forgetting God, lest he tear you in pieces as a lion, and there be none to deliver; and let this consideration rouse you from your lethargy to lay hold on the hope set before you.

Do not stand lingering and delaying as did Lot, in Sodom, but suffer me to hasten you as the angels did him; for the wrath of God is upon the state in which you now are, and the fiery storm of divine vengeance is ready every moment to burst upon your heads. O then fly, fly quickly, fly immediately; escape for your lives; look not behind you, but hasten to the mountains pointed out, even to Christ, the eternal Rock of ages, lest ye die. As sure, O sinner, as thy soul liveth, as sure as God lives, there is but a step between thee and death.

But flee now unto Christ, and your soul shall live. Here, my friends, I had intended to have done; but I know not how to leave you; I know not how to desist. Who can behold his fellow creatures, fellow immortals, running headlong the broad road to destruction; eternal, irretrievable, destruction, without endeavoring to arrest their progress, and pluck them as brands out of the burnings? If you be not firmly resolved to perish, if you be not bent on death, if you be not in love with hell; I entreat, I beseech, I implore you, for the sake of your own immortal souls, and by all your hopes of future happiness, to hear me.

And yet what more shall I, what more indeed can I say? If the joys of heaven cannot allure, nor the torments of hell terrify you; if the dying love of the Lord Jesus will not melt; nor the dread of his anger subdue your hearts, how can we hope that any other motives will be more successful? Yet hopeless as is the attempt, fain would I bring some new argument, some more powerful consideration to lead you to prepare for what is before you. Knowing the terrors of the Lord, fain would I persuade you to escape their pains; fain would I urge you, not utterly to destroy yourselves, not to plunge yourselves into remediless ruin, wretchedness and despair; wretchedness which will be dreadfully aggravated by the reflection that you were warned of its approach, and might once have avoided it.

Whatever you may now think, it is not a light thing to dwell with devouring flames; it is no trifle to inhabit everlasting burnings; it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. O, that you were wise, that

you understood this, that you would consider your latter end. But enough; words are vain, and vain are all human efforts. We cannot force you to be wise, we cannot compel you. But I call heaven and earth to witness this day against you, that life and death have been now set before you; that you have been warned of your danger and the remedy; and if you perish, your blood must be upon your own heads.

And now, my friends, what are your resolutions, what answer will you return to him that sent me? Some of you will perhaps adopt the language of the rebellious Jews, and say, As to the word which thou hast spoken unto us this day, we will not regard it; but will certainly do whatsoever goeth out of our mouths. If this be your determination, we may pity you, we may weep for you, we may pray for you, but we cannot help you. You must do as you please. But if there be any of a different purpose, any who tremble at the word of the Lord, let them retire from the house of God to their closets, and there throwing themselves at the feet of the compassionate Jesus, let them confess their sins, and implore that that blood, which cleanseth from all sin, may be applied to their souls, and they shall, most assuredly, find mercy.

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