

Final Judgment

by Hyman Appelman

The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the final judgment, the Judge, the judged, and the judgment, and the need for salvation through JESUS CHRIST.

Scripture: Matthew 25

Topics: "Final Judgment", "Eternal Condemnation"

Description

Hyman Appelman preaches about the three future judgments described in the Bible: the Judgment of the Nations, the judgment of the Christian's works, and the final judgment for the unsaved. He emphasizes the importance of facing God's judgment, highlighting the universal, inevitable, and final nature of this event. Appelman urges listeners to consider the Judge, the judged, and the judgment, emphasizing the need for repentance, acceptance of Jesus as Savior, and living a life in accordance with God's will to avoid condemnation.

Transcript

And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before GOD; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Revelation 20:11-15)

IF I understand Scripture correctly, there are three judgments at least for the world in the future.

As they are recorded in the Bible, they are about like this. In Matthew 25 we have this:

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world . . . Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into ever lasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels . . . And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal"

We call that the Judgment of the Nations.

Another one is in the third chapter of I Corinthians 3:

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

We call this the judgment of the Christian's works. The third is described in my text. This last judgment is not for Christians, but only for the unsaved.

GOD has made three appointments with every man. One is at Calvary. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The second is at death. The third is in the judgment. You may foolishly avoid GOD at Calvary but you can? not refuse to face Him in death and in the judgment.

This judgment is universal, inevitable, authoritative, supreme, eternal, final. There is no appeal from that court. There is no higher tribunal. Execution follows the verdict of that hour. Because of the terrific importance of this subject, we should all know as much about it as we possibly can

find out from Holy Writ. May I, therefore, press upon your hearts three things involved in the Scripture before us: First, the Judge; second, the judged; third, the judgment.

I. First, Let us Consider the Judge

The Judge is not our opinion of ourselves. We Jews have a proverb which you Gentiles have borrowed. We say, "If I could buy you for what you are worth, and sell you for what you think you are worth, I would make a pretty penny." We look good to ourselves. We are so apt to excuse all of our faults, to excuse all of our transgressions, to argue and defend all of our weaknesses. We compare ourselves with each other, and find malicious joy and false security in the thought that in some things at least we are better than those with whom we compare ourselves. All this will do us little good when the records are opened at the Bar of GOD.

The Judge is not the opinion of others about us. Thank GOD, the Judge is not our enemies. He is not our loved ones and friends. Were our fathers our judges, they would minimize our faults and maximize our virtues. Were our mothers sitting on the bench at our trial, they would gloss, paint, perfume every evil spot of our lives, of our records; and hold out with much boasting and praise each little good that we have ever thought or said or done. It is something like the story they tell about the woman whose husband abused her dreadfully. He drank, he gambled, he broke his marriage vows, he beat her again and again. One day her pastor stopped her. Pointing to her bruised arms, he said, "You surely must have a beast of a husband."

"Oh, I don't know about that," replied the woman, "he gambles a little, he drinks a little, he beats me a little, but outside of that he is a pretty good husband." That is about the way it is with us.

Outside of a lot of things we are pretty good men, pretty good women, pretty good children. But, unfortunately, that is not the standard we shall have to face. That is not the yardstick that will measure us. That is not the balance which will weigh us. JESUS CHRIST will be our Judge. The Ten Commandments will be the criterion. The Gospel will be the authority. It is written: "And the times of this ignorance GOD winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent; because he hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that

he hath raised him from the dead." Again it is written, "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son."

This Judge is infinite in knowledge. There is no hiding facts from Him. Our lives are as the pages of an open book to His scrutiny. Many a criminal has escaped the wheels of justice in our human law courts because it is totally impossible for an earthly judge, jury, prosecutor, and witnesses to know all the facts. It is not so with CHRIST. Every detail of our lives is written before Him with a pen of iron in letters of flame. The whole world shall know about us unless our records have been washed in the blood of the LAMB.

This Judge is unlimited in power. There is no escaping from Him. There is no avoiding His long arm. There is no defying His authority. There is no brow-beating or compelling Him by any force or stress. A man can steal a thousand dollars in Wichita and lose himself in Kansas City without ever being apprehended. A man can murder a dozen people and hide in the crowds of Chicago or New York without ever being brought to justice. But where will you hide from CHRIST? If you take the wings of the morning and fly to the ends of the earth, He is there. If you bore into the molten core of the earth deeper than any man has ever been, He is there. If you cause your body to be cremated at death and the ashes scattered to the four Kansas winds, when your time comes to face the judgment, the power of CHRIST will bring your ashes together, and, soul encased in flesh, you shall stand facing the Judge.

This Judge is unspotted in justice. There will be no mercy that day. The hour for prayer, for penitence, for faith, for conversion, for grace, is long past. The justice of omnipotence will sway and rule the proceedings. You say to me, "If I can get justice, that is all I want." No, brother, no, sister, you are. deadly wrong, dreadfully wrong, desperately wrong. You do not want justice. GOD save me from His justice! You want mercy. So do I. We want all the mercy we can get. Were any of us to obtain the justice of GOD, the endless torments of a devil's hell would be our due and our doom. Justice is wrath. Justice is death. Justice is damnation. Mercy is our hope. Mercy is our plea. Mercy is our prayer. But in that hour JESUS will no longer be our bloodstained SAVIOUR, but the royal-robed Judge and Executioner. Be warned, friends! Let CHRIST

come into your hearts. Let His blood wash away your sins. Let Him write your name in the book of life. Let Him be your advocate at the bar of eternity.

II. Consider next the judged

Paul says: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord JESUS shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." Jude says: "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

John says:

"And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"

First there will be the out-and-out sinners, the men, the women, the children of the age of accountability, who have lived in open, notorious sin.

They carried on their lives as though there were no GOD,
as though there were no CHRIST,
as though there were no Bible,
as though there were no Commandments,

as though there were no death,
as though there were no resurrection,
as though there were no judgment,
as though there were no Heaven,
as though there were no hell.

Surely, you will all agree with me that this group will face the great white throne. All their wild living, all their disregarding of GOD's will, all their transgressions, all their iniquitous persistence, all of what they call their good times here and now, will be blazoned across the expanses of glory for all mankind to read. They seem to be having a good time here, without care or thought of any future, but that Day will terribly even all that out. They will learn that he who dances must also pay the piper, and this Piper asks a stiff price.

Next in line will be the moral worldings. These compose, perhaps, the hardest crowd for us to deal with. Their lives are morally clean, socially correct, economically faultless. Many of them are the civic, the political, the fraternal, the social leaders of our communities. They are so engrossed with the things of the world they have no time or thought for eternity.

They are not in trouble.

Their families are intact.

They have clean reputations,

They have the good will of their fellow men.

They are free from the grosser sins.

They feel no conviction for sin,

They feel no need of a SAVIOUR.

The Gospel to them is a pretty song, but it is not for them. They compare themselves with church members and find no fault in themselves. But they are without CHRIST, never having accepted and confessed Him as their personal SAVIOUR. If the Book tells the truth, if "he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" and "he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of GOD

abideth on him," mean anything, they declare that all these moral worldlings are lost in their sins, without GOD, without CHRIST, without hope. What a fearful realization it will be for them, with all their moral righteousness, to stand by the side of the murderer, the thief, the harlot, and the other offscourings of society. These, too, shall face the great white throne to give an accounting of why they rejected CHRIST.

In that judged crowd there will also be the procrastinators. There are so many of them - men, women, children. There are many of you in that category. You know you are sinners. You know you need CHRIST. You know CHRIST wants to, can, and will save you, if you will but trust Him. You know what you must do to be saved, yet you hesitate, you delay, you procrastinate, you put it off. What advantage you hope to gain by this unreasoning and unreasonable dilatoriness is hard to understand. Surely, you cannot believe GOD will be more ready to save you tomorrow than He is today, that you will be better fitted for salvation tomorrow than you are today, that it will be any easier tomorrow than it is today. No, brother, no, sister, it is the devil's choice. It is the devil's game. It is the devil's trap.

The way to hell is paved with good intentions. Were I to open the gates of hell tonight and bring the dead out of that pit to stand before you, I could almost guarantee you that ninety per cent, or more, would testify that they sank into the pit of torment because of needlessly tarrying. What excuse will the procrastinators have at the judgment? Surely, none that can stand the scrutiny of GOD in the fires of that trial.

The last in line in that ghostly, ghastly array to face the Supreme Judge will be the professing but not possessing church members. Oh, if only GOD would give me some new word of warning and appeal to you in that group. It is not enough to be baptized. It is not enough to have your name on a church roll. It is not enough to be a regular attendant upon the service of the Lord. It is not enough to give of your means. It is not enough to partake of the communion bread and wine. You must be born again. That is the dictum of GOD for all men for all eternity. Have you been born again?

"Have you been to JESUS for the cleansing power,

Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?...

Are your garments spotless, are they white as snow,

Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?"

Have you an experience of grace? Does your spirit bear witness with the SPIRIT of GOD that you are a twice born child of GOD? That is essential. That is the absolute qualification required by GOD. Without it nothing else will do. If you are not born again, if you have not personally accepted and confessed the CHRIST as your SAVIOUR, you are lost. You, too, will hear the sentence of doom on that awful day of reckoning.

III. Consider, third and last, the Judgment

There are three parts to every court trial. First, there is the evidence against you; second, there is your defense; third, there is the verdict of the court. It will be that way when CHRIST comes again. It will be the same when sinners from the ends of the earth are summoned to appear before His dread tribunal.

What will be the evidence against you?

"Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things GOD will bring thee into judgment."

"God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

"Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

"The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works."

"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."

"I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways,

and according to the fruit of his doings."

"Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city."

What a record! What an indictment! What a list! From the day that you reach the age of accountability until the day breath leaves your body, every detail, every circumstance, every venture, every adventure, every experience, every thought, every word, every work of your lives is written in the archives of Heaven with a pen of iron in letters of flame. There is nothing left out. The sins you have long since forgotten will stare you in the face. There is not a soul who has not some skeleton in life's closet, some secret that cannot be told. Unless these are covered over with the blood of GOD'S Son, not only GOD, but all the world, will see these skeletons, will know these secrets. That is a thought to give the bravest of us pause. Thank GOD, the blood of JESUS can cleanse us from all sin.

Now what is your defense? You will be given a chance to state it. Think it through. See if it satisfies your own heart and mind, let alone GOD's justice. What will you say?

Can you say you have not sinned? But there is your record. The holy angel of GOD has been writing all the time. He makes no mistakes. He makes no exaggerations. His entries are photographic in their clearness and carefulness. Your sins are indelibly engraved in the books of GOD's accounting. Can you say you were compelled to sin? But that also is not true. I hold no brief for the devil, but this I must say: Satan can tempt you, can lead you up to the sin, but it does not become transgression until you yourself, by an act of your will, practice it. There is no one to blame for your sins but yourself. The same circumstances surrounding you, surround the rest of us. GOD has provided too many ways out of temptation for you to have wallowed in it. No, indeed, you cannot say you were compelled to sin.

Can you say you did not know about CHRIST? How true is that? You have been to Sunday school. You have had a chance at the Bible. You have heard preaching. The songs of Zion have beat upon your hearts. Christian workers have come to you to plead with you to be reconciled

with GOD through CHRIST. You have been told again and again that JESUS died for your sins according to the Scriptures. You have been warned again and anew that to reject Him entails death, and to accept Him, life and peace. You know enough about JESUS to save an entire world. There is very little, if any, question in your mind about His willingness, His ability to save you. No, that excuse will not stand.

Can you say you were kept from CHRIST by difficulties, by obstacles, by hypocrites, or by any other cause? How true is that? A thousand people will shout, and cheer, and rejoice if some night you walk the aisles to the altar of GOD, if you close with the offer of the mercy of CHRIST. You are not kept from CHRIST. The way is as wide open now as were the arms of JESUS spreadeagled for your sins on the cross. There are not enough demons in hell or out of hell to keep you from CHRIST and salvation if you but make up your mind to accept them.

As a matter of fact, do you not see that you have no excuse, no alibi, no argument, no defense? What ever has stood between you and salvation is of your own choosing. Whatever has led you into sin is of your own inclination.

You have faced your record. You have offered your defense. One by one, your arguments have been answered by the Judge on the throne. What now? Hear the word of GOD:

"How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my SPIRIT unto you, I will make known my words unto you. Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me; for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: they would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them,

and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil."

Were GOD here in my place He would speak to you in these exact words. Will you hear them? Will you be warned by them? Will you turn at the reproof of GOD? Will you open your heart to the salvation which cost GOD so much and yet which He offers so freely to you? If you will not, then hear the verdict of the Eternal Magistrate.

"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death and whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."

"If we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels . . . and these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal."

"Say ye to the righteous that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him."

This is the final verdict recorded in Scripture. It will vindicate the holiness of GOD, showing

beyond peradventure that His righteousness may not be trifled with, that His power is omnipotent, that His judgments are sure. It will expose you to the world. All the shams, all the secrets, all the hidden evil of your souls will be flashed across the breadth of the heavens. Men shall see you as you are and tremble at the bleak blackness of your characters. The veil will be torn from the secret recesses of your souls. The shame and the blame of them will be bared in the sight of GOD and of men. You will be assigned to your eternal home, even the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, the endless hell of a never to be extinguished torment.

I must press one more word upon your hearts.

Brother, sister, man, women, child, you need never face that judgment. You need never be present at that dread assize. Your sins may be forgiven, your iniquities blotted out, your transgressions washed away, your name written in the Book of Life. You may be a child of GOD instead of a slave of Satan. JESUS CHRIST stands ready now to pardon your sins, blot out your transgressions, write your name in the Book of Life. He offers Himself to you as your SAVIOUR. He pleads with you to enlist Him as your advocate, for it is written, "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." He need not be your judge. He may be your friend, your counselor; more than all else, your REDEEMER.

The HOLY SPIRIT is pleading with you to step away from your sins, to turn away from Satan, to take your place in the bountiful mercy of GOD proffered in and through the Lord JESUS CHRIST. Friend, why should you tarry? Why should you hesitate? Why should you run the fearful chance of a Christless death, a Christless judgment, a Christless hell, a Christless eternity, when the way out is so open, so available, so sure, so free? Friend, come now. You will be very welcome. The angels in Heaven will tune their harps to a new song glorifying GOD, praising CHRIST, rejoicing over you a sinner who has come home. Come now! Accept CHRIST as your SAVIOUR. Confess Him before men so that He may confess you before His Father in Heaven.

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