

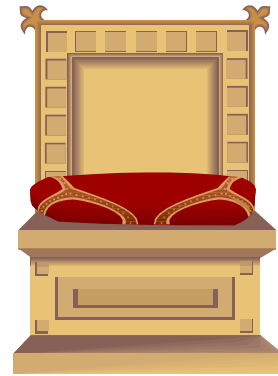
The Final Judgment in Daily Life ***Living every moment in light of Eternity***

*¹⁰ For we will all stand before God's judgment seat... each of us will give an account of ourselves to God. **Romans 14:10 and 12***

Why do we live!

How do we define "success?"

- Happiness?
- Having money and possessions?
- Enjoying pleasures?
- Being comfortable and secure?
- Achieving much in a good career?



The Radical Disciple lives for the day of his judgment

He or she lives to hear these words...

*"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!' **Mateo 25:23***

The Question of a true disciple -- *What will God say about my actions, words and attitudes in that day of his final judgment of my life?*

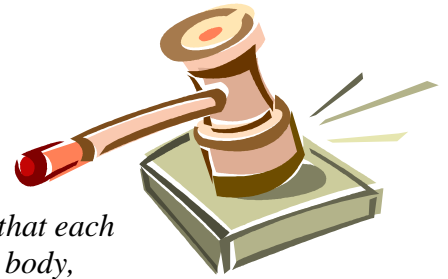
Two Judgments – the Bible speaks of the ultimate judgment on our lives before the great white throne (Rev. 21). This judgment decides our ultimate salvation or damnation completely on the basis on or faith, or lack of faith, in Jesus Christ the Savior. However, the Bible also teaches that *"we will all appear before the judgment seat of Christ"* where the content of our lives will be evaluated. In this moment we will receive either praise and honor from God or shame and regret. This awesome moment of God's evaluation of our lives should inform our daily life.

Our Goal - in this lesson – to begin to cultivate an eternal perspective in daily living

We consider...

- *How our lives will be evaluated?*
- *The difference between the judgment for salvation and the judgment of our works*
- *How to view life through an eternal perspective?*
- *Exercises for self-examination in light of the final judgment of our lives*
 - *How am I using my time?*
 - *If Jesus were to return today, how might I live differently?*
 - *Who really controls my life and decisions, moment by moment?*

Final Judgment – We all will give account to God!



¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. **2 Corinthians 5:10**

¹ This, then, is how you ought to regard us: as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the mysteries God has revealed. ² Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful. ³ I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. ⁴ My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me. ⁵ Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait until the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of the heart. At that time each will receive their praise from God. **1 Corinthians 4:1-5**

³⁶ But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken. ³⁷ For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.” **Matthew 12:36-37**

According to these verses, what are three ways that our lives will be evaluated before the tribunal of God?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

We cannot earn salvation – but we do earn “crowns!”

Our “works” do not go before us, but they do follow us!

The book of Revelation uses an interesting phrase about the good works of believers. While our works do not bring us to heaven, in a mysterious way, they do accompany us. The precise nature of “rewards” remains mysterious, but the concept emerges repeatedly in the Biblical teaching on heaven.

“Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.” “Blessed indeed,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!” **Revelations 14:13**

The Judgment before the great White throne – Read Revelation 20:11-21:8

According to this text, the only ones who will survive this particular judgment are those whose names are written in the book of life. How does one’s name become recorded there?

_____.

We are saved by faith and not by works!

*⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. **Ephesians 2:8-9***

*Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those that are in Christ Jesus... **Romans 8:1***

... But our works in the Lord will be evaluated one day! Paul said...

*⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing. **2 Timothy 4:7-8***

There are “rewards” in Heaven!

*²⁷ For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father’s glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done. (**Matthew 16:27**)*

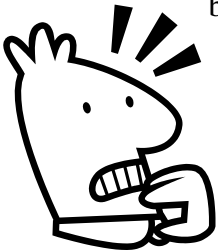
What do you think these rewards will be?

An Eternal Perspective – “Eternity stamped on our Eyes”

The great revivalist pastor and theologian, Jonathan Edwards, before he preached his famous, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” in 1740, said the following prayer...

“Lord, stamp eternity on my eyes!”

With this vision of eternity – of heaven and of hell – he preached with an anointing that provoked a tremendous revival that spread to thousands in the region. A perspective informed by eternity helps us to live a life of true commitment to the Lord – thinking not primarily of our own happiness or comfort, but of the purposes of the kingdom of God.



“If only...!!!” – The cry of the unprepared

As students, how many of us lamented, “if only” On more than a few occasions. We procrastinated and failed to prepare sufficiently for the big exam, and found ourselves unprepared when the moment of truth arrived. We lamented...

“If only I had studied more!”

“If only I had not wasted so much time in meaningless things!”

Likewise in the Christian life, all too often we fail to take advantage of the opportunities God has provided to invest our lives into His eternal purposes. Like the youth who fails to prepare for the big test, we can come to our ultimate judgment day poorly prepared for God's final evaluation of our lives.

We will lament...

"If only I had taken advantage of the opportunities I had to serve the Lord!"

If we were to dwell on this reality – that all we do will be tested done day – how might our lifestyle change?

Self Examination

The key to being prepared for the judgment

³¹ But if we were more discerning with regard to ourselves, we would not come under such judgment. ³² Nevertheless, when we are judged in this way by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be finally condemned with the world. **1 Corinthians 11:31-32**

²⁴ Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. ²⁵ Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. ²⁶ Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. ²⁷ No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize. **1 Corinthians 9:24-27**

Exercises to Examine Ourselves

1. **What will last?** How am I building "the house of my life" - "Go for the Gold" - How am I investing my energies in life? Am I making the most of the time?
2. **"Love the coming of the Lord"** – If I knew that Jesus would return at the end of this week, what might I do differently?
3. **"Throne Check"** – In the nitty gritty moments of daily life, is Jesus really the "Lord" of my actions, thoughts and words?

***1. What will last? How am I building the “house of my life?” –
Am I making the most of the time?
“Go for the Gold!”***



We can spend our lives on that which will last into eternity, or that which will disappear. It seems so contradictory, but it is possible to be saved, and yet waste our lives!! Let us embrace a quest for significance, a thirst for that which is of eternal value!

¹⁶ ...making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. Ephesians 5:15-16

How am I building the “house” of my life?



¹⁰ By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care. ¹¹ For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, ¹³ their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person’s work. ¹⁴ If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames. 1 Corinthians 3:10-15

No sloppy building – no hack jobs in our lives! “Wood, hay and stubble...”

When a true craftsman inspects a sloppily built house, he might exclaim, “Hack job!” Some materials, and some buildings, last better than others. Likewise in the way we “construct” our lives, everything will one day be inspected by the Lord, tested with fire. How are you building the “house” of your life? What type of materials, which is to say, activities, will last the ultimate testing of God? Do we invest our energies into that which has eternal significance?



According to the text, if our work burns up, what will become of our souls?

_____.

In contrast, if our work stands the test, what will become of our heavenly future?

_____.

The materials of a “well built” life: Gold, silver and bronze

All that which is done genuinely in the name of Jesus, will last!

*¹⁷ And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. **Colossians 3:17***

For example...

- Praying
- Studying the Bible
- Visiting the sick...etc.

But also...

- Calling your wife during the day
- Playing ball with your son
- Doing your homework!
- Learning English
- ...even taking a nap!!!



..... if it is done in the name of the Lord, and it is His will for you to do so!!!

The significance of any activity depends on God’s particular will for that particular moment!

Exercise #1: “Go For the Gold” ***“Golden” Actions in Daily Life***

Note below some activities that you could do this week which you are confident “would pass the test of fire” before the throne of God; activities you could do in the name of Jesus – which have eternal value.



“Golden” Actions – with eternal value, that you could do this week.

1. _____.
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Distractions are “thorns” that choke our lives!

“And others are the ones sown among the thorns. They are those who hear the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.” Mark 4:18-19

Many activities fill our time, but have no eternal value. Jesus refers to these activities and distractions in the parable of the sower, when he refers to the thorns that choke out the plant and keep it from bearing fruit. Like straw, these activities take up space, but have little substance, and burn easily. These “distractions” can easily fill our days and nights and take our attention away from the purposes of the kingdom. Some such activities may appear to be valuable, and even religious, but do not line up with God’s will for our life at that particular time. Take note of some activities that you might be tempted to do this week which in all likelihood would not stand the test of fire before the throne of God.

“Straw” Activities – (without eternal value) which you sometimes do

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

A Specific Step – A golden beam!

Think of one particular “golden” activity that you do not normally do, which you could plan to do this week. Be specific.

Activity: _____.

Day: _____

Time: _____

Place: _____

**2. Love the coming of the Lord! Live expectantly.
Watch – as if Jesus were returning this week!**



What does it mean to “Watch?”

a. Keep in mind the “prize” at the end of the race – the rewards promised in heaven

Example of the Apostle Paul

*⁶ For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time for my departure is near. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all **who have loved his appearing.** 2 Timothy 4:6-8*

The Apostle Paul approaches his own death with peace and confidence. How does he maintain this attitude? (based on the verse).

What does it mean “to love the appearing of the Lord,” in your opinion?

If we love the coming of the Lord, we live expectantly, thinking of the ultimate evaluation of our actions.

b. Beware of distractions!

³⁴ “Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you suddenly like a trap. ³⁵ For it will come on all those who live on the face of whole earth. ³⁶ Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.” Luke 21:34-36



According to the text, note three distractions that could make us ill-prepared for the coming of the Lord.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



c. Stay alert – like the homeowner expecting to be robbed!

Read Matthew 24:36-51

What does “watching” mean in this context?

How should we take warning from the story of the flood at the time of Noah?

Jesus teaches that we ought to be like a homeowner who knows the specific night when thieves plan to break in and rob the house. What do we learn from this comparison?

Be faithful and Active – Read the three Parables of Matthew 25

These three parables teach us the need to be prepared for the coming of the Lord and the ultimate judgment of our lives. Each parable touches on the distinct attitudes and practices which a disciple who “loves the coming of the Lord” ought to demonstrate in their daily living.



What do we learn from the parable of the ten virgins?

What do we learn from the parable of the talents?

What do we learn from the parable of the sheep and the goats?

Exercise #2 – If Jesus were to return tonight...?

Let's try to ask ourselves the following questions:

*If Jesus were to return tonight...
How would I live this day?
How would I use my time?
How would I treat others?*

If Jesus were to return tonight, how would you have lived today?

If Jesus were to return tonight, what would you have done *exactly the same*? Mention two actions, words or attitudes that you would not change.

1. _____
2. _____

If Jesus were to return tonight, what would you have done *differently* today? Mention two changes you would have made in your actions, words or actions.

1. _____
2. _____

If Jesus were to return tonight, how would you have lived the last week?

If you think that Jesus were to return tonight, what would you have done exactly the same this past week? What actions, words, or attitudes would you do exactly the same?

1. _____
2. _____

Now thinking that Jesus were to return tonight, what would you have done differently this past week?

1. _____
2. _____



Exercise #3 – Throne Checks!

Check the Throne... in the moments of decision in daily life

Who is really in charge?

While we live for many years, our life consists of the present moment. While we may think of Jesus as our Lord in an ultimate way – in order to live out our discipleship, we must learn to identify and evaluate the disposition of our heart in the present moment.

Am I living, in this moment, under the control and Lordship of Jesus Christ?

¡Throne Check! - consider the throne – the control room – of your life. Who is calling the shots?

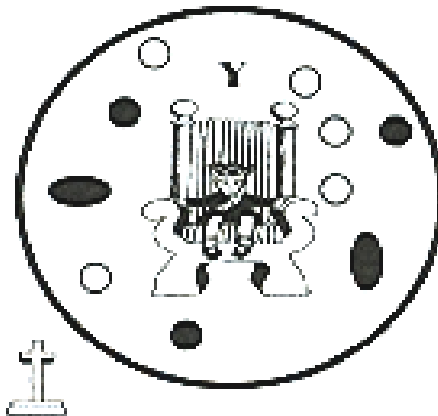
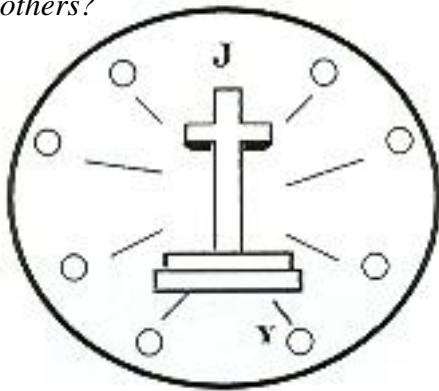
A Christian college student, when passing other Christian students on campus, would make the following comment: “*Throne Check!*” In other words, he would challenge his friends, at that little moment of daily activity, to stop and consider, “*Who occupies the throne of my heart right now?*” This light hearted, jocular game raised really serious questions...

How is my attitude at this moment?

At this moment, am I really honoring Christ with my thoughts and words?

At this moment, am I following God's will, my own will, or the desires of others.

When we do a “Throne Check,” we stop for a moment to consider our *interior throne* – who is really in charge? Am I acting, feeling and speaking according to *God's will, my will, or the will of others?*



Try it! -- Who sits on the throne of my life – in this moment?!

When I wake up -

Driving or taking the bus -

At work -

Talking on the phone -

Unwinding in my free time -

¡Throne Check!

¡Throne Check!

¡Throne Check!

¡Throne Check!

¡Throne Check!....etc.



Exercise #3 – Do “Throne Checks” this week

In each case

- *Mention the moment –*
What was “going on” when you did the “check?”
- *Honestly, who ruled your actions, words and attitudes at that moment?*
God, you, or someone else?
- *Explain your answer*

Examples

Throne Check #1

Moment - I complained when my wife asked me to take out the garbage

Who ruled on your throne? I did.

Explanation - At that moment I had a selfish rather than a servant like attitude

Throne Check #2

Moment – I was working on Tuesday morning

Who ruled on your throne? – God.

Explanation - At that moment I realized that I was working for the Glory of God with a positive attitude, fulfilling my responsibilities the best I could.

Throne Check #3

Moment: I was gossiping with my friend on the phone

Who ruled on your throne? - My friend.

Explanation – At that moment I realized that I was allowing my friend, not Jesus, to be in control of my actions and words.

Exercise #3: Do Four Throne Checks this Week

Throne Check #1

Moment - _____.

Who ruled on your throne? - _____

Explanation - _____

_____.

Throne Check #2

Moment - _____.

Who ruled on your throne? - _____

Explanation - _____

_____.

Throne Check #3

Moment - _____.

Who ruled on your throne? - _____

Explanation - _____

_____.

Throne Check #4

Moment - _____.

Who ruled on your throne? - _____

Explanation - _____

_____.

