

Judgment

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[0 : 00] The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God. And if it first begins at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

Judgment. Judgment. In some circles there is so much emphasis on God's love and compassion, which is true, but scarcely a mention of God's justice.

God is just and his judgments are talked about through the word of God. Psalm 711 it says, God judgeth the righteous and God is angry with the wicked every day.

Judgment must begin at the house of God, says Peter to the people he wrote to there. And if it first begins at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

Judgment is very real. It's true, it's real and it's something that's going to be happening in days to come. It's evident through the word of God. Judgment is something that we see right through the pages of scripture.

[1 : 06] We see for example a judgment in Noah's day of the flood that wiped out those who did not enter into the ark. Which we know the ark speaks to us of salvation. It speaks to us of Christ being the ark, the only place of safety.

Those who weren't in that place of safety in Christ in the ark were wiped out in God's judgment. We see judgment from God against nations through the word of God, against families, against individuals.

And God's judgment, we can take heart that God's judgment is always according to truth. It's according to truth it tells us in Romans 2 verse 2.

So God is going to be true and He's going to be fair in His judgment. It says in Genesis 18 verse 25 that He's called the Judge of all the earth.

And it says there that He will do right. That's Genesis 18 verse 25, I'll just refer to that. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

[2 : 12] It says in the latter part of Genesis 18 verse 25. He's a righteous Judge. He's going to do right. Now we can think of Judges in our world, in our day, sometimes you get a Judge who's not fair.

They will be impartial or prejudiced. Or a Judge can also make a wrong decision. We know it's a reality.

I know there's different folk, some who aren't here today, who are still affected by a judgment against them that wasn't true. And sometimes Judges can make mistakes.

But our Judge, the Judge of all the earth, shall do right. He will be righteous. He has perfect wisdom and justice and He's totally fair and just. So, Judgment is something that is evident.

It's evident in the Word of God and it's evident day by day. In every day of our lives we see that God is going to be righteous and He's going to do that which is just.

[3 : 12] And Judgment is also universal. Judgment is something that is going to be universal. It's going to affect everybody. It says in Romans 14 verse 12. This is a real telling scripture here.

And you're in this verse. You're in this verse. I'm in this verse. It's Romans 14 verse 12. It says that, So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

Now when I get to the judgment time, I'm not going to stand at the judgment place and give account for Terry. I'm not going to say how great a guy Terry is or isn't or Jasmine or Paul.

I'm not going to give account for you. But the Bible tells you that you're going to give account of yourself to God. You are going to give account of yourself to Him. That's a telling scripture, isn't it? It makes you think, wow, that's something I've got to get ready for. Judgment is universal. Because God's righteous judgment is going to be delivered to everyone according to His deeds.

[4 : 19] To everyone. Every one of us. That's every one of us in this room. Every one of us that's hearing this. Every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

That's personal, isn't it? And that should make us want to sit up and take notice about what does judgment mean?

How can I be prepared? How can I be ready for that? Ecclesiastes 12.13, it goes on, Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter.

Fear God and keep His commandments. For this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment.

With every secret thing. Whether it be good or whether it be evil. It says that God is going to bring every work, every secret thing.

[5 : 19] Whether it be good or evil, is going to be brought into the light. We know the scriptures our Lord said how those things that are hidden will be made open. They will be revealed, they will be exposed.

Those things that people hide, those sins that people hide. It's going to be evident, it's going to be revealed. There's going to be an embarrassment for many when judgment happens. It's universal. And judgment too is now. Judgment is in the very present tense in a sense too. In that we see through what's going on on planet earth today.

We see the judgment as God is bringing against the world even in the present day. We see things like the things that are going on around us.

Where there's violence and tragic things and diseases, accidents and difficult circumstances. Now that's not to say that necessarily that's God's judgment in every case.

[6 : 18] But we know where we see at times with great upheaval and wars and rumors of wars that we see these are the foretaste of Christ's coming. We see that these things are a result of man's sin.

And in effect God is judging that in many cases. And sometimes it's his chastening hand against those that should know better. And man's blindness keeps them from seeing the hand of God. When these things before humanity, these terrible things that go on, sometimes people don't stop and think, Wow, this is the one I'm going to have to deal with. This one that can wreak havoc in natural disasters.

This is the one that is going to be before me. I'm going to be before him and face him. Because judgment is coming too. Friends today, judgment is coming.

It's real. Life is short. All must die. Are we ready? Of course we know some may be raptured and not have to physically die.

[7 : 17] But by and large as the word says, It is appointed unto men once to die. And after that the judgment. Hebrews 9.27 Once we will die.

There's no second coming back like some in Buddhism or reincarnation views think that you get a second and third or however many chances. Or come back as some nicer looking person or an animal or what not.

Some greater or lesser being. There is no second chance. It's once to die. And after that the judgment. Are you ready? Are you ready for the judgment?

It's appointed. We don't know when that day is, but it's been appointed. God has appointed it. And there's no saying, no getting late for that appointment. No.

There's no excuse that can take that place of that appointment. That appointment is one that you will keep. You will keep. Every one of us. It says in Romans 2.16 There's a day appointed.

[8 : 17] A day coming when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ. All of your secrets are going to be judged. All of those secrets. All of those things that you think that no one would know about.

God knows about them. 2 Timothy 4 verse 1. It says, The Lord Jesus Christ shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing in his kingdom. The quick and the dead, the living and the dead will be judged at his appearing in his kingdom.

That's 2 Timothy 4 verse 1. So get ready for judgment. Get ready. It's on its way. Are you ready for it? The good news is, for the believer in Christ, that you can face the judge with a clear conscience. You can face the judge with a spotless record. Not one of your own, but because his record has been credited to your account.

The spotless lamb, his spotless, flawless life, his sinless life is credited to your life. His heart that is pure and clean is credited to your account.

[9 : 22] His perfect life is credited to your less than perfect life. It says in John 3 verse 36. He that believeth on the Son hath.

He has. Present tense. Now you have everlasting life. But he that believeth not the Son shall not see life.

And the wrath, the anger of God abideth on him. God's anger abideth on him. Now, again, it's getting the balance. We know that God loves with so much love.

He loves as the Father welcoming that smelly, stinking prodigal son, kissing his neck and embracing him and hugging him, even though he stank like a pig because of where he'd been and of what he had done, the lousy life he'd lived, the way he'd wasted his father's money and his inheritance.

And he deserved nothing from the father. And yet the father embraced him and hugged him and kissed him and received him and welcomed him. That's the kind of love God has. But there's also another side to God that God is angry.

[10 : 34] He's angry at the wicked every day. And I know it's easy when people misbehave. I know when I'm driving a bus and the kids are misbehaving, it's easy to get angry.

I've got angry with the kids and I've been very aggro with the kids because of their misbehaving and their bad behaviour. And sometimes God gets angry when we misbehave.

I'm sure he does all the time when we misbehave. God is disappointed, he's angry, he's hurt and rightfully so. He's got every right to be angry and God is angry at the wicked every day.

And so there's that aspect of God too. There's nothing wrong with anger. It's okay to be angry. The Bible says, be angry but sin not. Anger is a natural emotion.

It's a rightful emotion. It's necessary for us to at times experience anger. As Christ vented his anger, didn't he, in the temple and cast the money changers out.

[11 : 33] And those that were proclaiming to be his representatives on earth, the Pharisees, he was very angry with them at times. He told them how it was, didn't he?

He was straight with them. And he was quite firm and strong with them. We think of how there's time when that's called for. And God has got rightful anger. And the question is, has his anger been placated?

Has his anger been turned away from you? And in Christ at the cross, that's where the anger of God against our sin, the anger of the Father against our sin, was vented on Christ.

It was Christ who bore the anger of the Father. It's amazing, isn't it? To think that the anger that God rightfully would feel towards us and our wrongdoing and disobedience, that anger God vented and poured out on his Son who deserved none of that treatment.

And so we can have freedom and salvation because of it. Now, think of, there's a couple of judgments. We'll just take a look at, there's a couple of judgments in effect, and there's more than that, but in essential form.

[12 : 46] There's the judgment of the lost and the judgment of the saved. So whoever you are tonight, you're going to face it, one or the other. Now, the judgment of the lost, there's only one place to go from that judgment.

What shall the end be of those who obey not the gospel of God? It's a most dreadful day that is coming. A most dreadful day is going to come when the unbeliever faces and is judged by a holy God.

And if you're here tonight, it's going to be scary for them. There's going to be no excuse, no alibi, no excusing how they treated Christ, how they refused Christ.

Because if they haven't received Him, in effect they've refused Him. And they're going to be judged by a holy God for their sins. And whilst we wait for that dread day, that day of coming judgment, there's still a chance to be saved.

If you're here tonight and you're not certain that you're saved, there is a certainty you can find in knowing Him, in receiving Him. You can know that you have everlasting life as you trust Him.

[13 : 52] Think of that day for those who obey not the gospel of God. It's beyond our imagination. We can't really convey it in words. The horror, the anguish of soul, the terrible moment for that lost man, that lost woman on that day.

Revelation 20 paints some of the picture there of what it means on that day of judgment for the lost. 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.

[15 : 14] At that judgment day, it's whether your name is in the book or not. And the judgment of the lost, their names aren't going to be in the book. They're going to be cast into the lake of fire, the second death.

And many who claim to be Christians will be there. Many who claim to be Christians. Many preachers are going to be there.

Pastors, elders, deacons, Sunday school workers, youth group leaders, stewards, and upstanding church members.

They're going to be there. And they're going to be cast into the lake of fire that burns forever and ever and ever. Sunday school teachers, priests, nuns will be there.

Those who profess to belong to Christ, they're going to face the Christ that never really knew them. They're going to face the Christ that they never really knew and loved.

[16 : 15] Because the Lord Jesus says, Matthew 7, not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. But he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

It's something very critical, very important. And I can't stress it enough for anyone here today that you need to know that you know him. To know that you know. To know that you're saved today. And to trust him with all your heart.

This gripping account is a real place. It's a real point of time. It's a real happening. This isn't make believe. This isn't fairy stories. This is a real account of a real time and place that the world is going to see.

And according to Revelation 6, 15 on and 20, 11, men will seek to flee and hide from the face of him that sitteth on the throne. But there will be no hiding place for them.

They left it too late to trust him. Men hide their wickedness and sin now, but they will not be able to hide it then. Revelation 6, 15 says, And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond man, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains, Fall on us, hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.

[17 : 46] For the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand? Hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne.

But there will be no hiding place for them. Friends, it's going to be real. This is judgment. It's going to happen. Men are going to be crying for the mountains and the rocks to fall on them, so they can hide from his face.

The judgment of the lost. I pray that no one here tonight is going to go to that judgment. Because there's another judgment.

The judgment of the saved. You that are saved tonight, this is your judgment now. You that are saved, you will be judged still.

And this still should grip you as a believer, as a Christian man or woman here, that you are going to be judged. You're going to be judged for your works. For what you've done with the knowledge, with the light you've been given.

[18 : 45] For what you've done with your stewardship. For what you've done with how you've spent your days and time, your money, your living, your thinking.

For what you've said, what you've done, what you haven't done. As God's people. Now, just to lead in here, He has saved us from condemnation.

You're saved from condemnation because of His blood. Every sin has been wiped clean and taken. But there's still a judgment for you in terms of your faithfulness, in terms of what you've done, in terms of rewards.

This is a judgment for rewards here. And it says, as Peter said, judgment must begin at the house of God. So the house of God, in other words, the household, the family of God.

God, as the Father, rightfully judges us. He rightfully regards us. And we need to give account. We need to be accountable to Him. Just like a child is accountable to its father.

[19 : 47] And God's justice is perfect. We're accountable to Him. His church He has founded to be a witness. And He wants His church to be pure and to be going in His direction, led by His Spirit.

And He wants His family, His sons, His daughters, to be living as would be pleasing to Him. As would bring honour to the Father. To the Father's name. You profess to be a Christian.

Do you live up to that name? That name of Christian. Whatever your surname is, you don't have to bring disgrace on the family name, do you? There's that kind of saying, isn't there?

Where, oh, the disgrace of the family name. What would it be if you disgraced the name of Christ?

As you, as a professing Christian, you've disgraced His name. You've brought shame and reproach on His name.

So, as God's family, we want to honour the Father, our Heavenly Father, and bring pleasure to Him and bring joy to His heart. And God sets the highest standards for us.

[20 : 51] Sometimes we settle for second-rate, second-best, sloppy, second-rate Christianity. But there's no time for that. Even in workplaces now. I know where I work and other places I've worked or other agencies and organisations in our world, they've got different accreditation standards, haven't they?

You see these big tits that they like to put on their letterheads or their vehicles they drive around or on their office windows to say that this place is accredited.

It's reached a high standard of accreditation. It's been recognised that a high-quality standard has been met. How much more in the Church of God, the Almighty One, shouldn't we have a high standard?

Shouldn't we have a aspire to that very high standard that is possible, that we can meet? And of course, it's by His grace we can meet it. But as believers, shouldn't we want to attain to that highest standard, to that highest level that we can, to be the very best that we can be for God, that we can live the very most faithful we can find to be, to live, to not disobey Him, but to obey Him, to do His will.

And to not settle for complacency or carelessness, but to aspire to that, which is the highest, the highest calling. The highest calling, the highest calling that any man or woman can aspire to, is to live up to His standard.

[22 : 20] And of course, the reality is, we know that every day we can fall short. As the Word tells us, we all come short of the glory of God. We can all only try, and by God's helping, seek to live a life that is above reproach, that there's nothing second rate.

And 2 Corinthians 5.10, it says, For we must all appear. That's everybody here tonight. If you're a Christian, every one of us is going to appear at this place. So we should really think about this.

2 Corinthians 5.10, 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 has done, whether it be good or bad.

Whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. How can we get ready for this judgment? Now of course, you're saved.

When you trust Him, He wipes the slate clean. Every sin is gone. You're saved. You're assured of heaven. You're doing His will. You're knowing His will.

[23 : 32] As far as the penalty of your sin, it's been judged in Christ because it was vented at the cross. God's wrath was poured out on Christ as the lamb for you.

That God's judgment against your sin was paid fully at the cross. You've been redeemed forever from the curse of the law. Because Christ was cursed for you.

Through the death of His Son on the cross, the Father dealt with the curse that was against you. It was a once for all, a finished work. You can't repeat it. You can't earn it.

You can't deserve it. You can't keep on deserving it. It's done by faith in Christ as you've trusted in Him. But the question is now, because you've been given such a free gift, such a blessed grace, such a merciful offering of His salvation, shouldn't you want to live up to it?

Shouldn't you want to live in a responsible way and use your life, your talents after coming to know Christ to live in humility and obedience and faithfulness? As a result, you can gain great rewards.

[24 : 36] So there's a two-fold thing here. Redemption and eternal life is yours. By the sacrifice of Christ, by the virtue of His shed blood, you are redeemed from the curse of the law.

Rewards are what we will then notice here at the judgment seat of Christ. Rewards are the result of faithful obedience after we've come to Christ.

So, though our sins are washed away in the blood and our names are recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life, we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. So, every one of you, every one of us is going to stand before that judgment seat.

And there's only six materials talked about that you can build with. Six things are mentioned that are going to be the things you have done in one category or another.

The things that you have done with your life for Christ. And some of it will not stand the fiery test of the judgment seat. It will be burnt up. Just picture that.

[25 : 40] Whatever it is. Just wood, hay and stubble. Something that's going to burn. Poof! It's gone. That's what's going to be left for your life. If you're built with wood, hay and stubble. Those things that are going to be tried by the fire of divine judgment.

Those things that you've done in the flesh. That you've done from your own vein. Glory. Glory.

Those things that you've done that God didn't seek of you to do.

Maybe well meaning things. Yet wood, hay and stubble. It's not going to stand in the divine fire of the judgment seat of Christ. And yet there's these other three. Gold, silver, precious stones.

These are things that are going to last. They've been built on the foundation of Christ. These are the things that as a believer you've poured your life into serving Christ. You've given your heart to Him. You've given love and those secret works. The secret giving. The secret praying. The secret witnessing and testifying. The devotion. The love.

[26 : 41] Those unseen things. Those unrecognized works. They'll be glory for you. They'll be praise for you. As you know the Lord Jesus talked about the Pharisees. They've got their recognition.

They've got their credit. They've got their appreciation down the road. He says, But your Father that sees in secret will reward you openly.

There's people here today who fast. There's people who fast. They're not making a big show of it. And bragging about that they're fasting and praying. Because they're doing it secretly.

God who sees that which is done in secret. He will reward you openly. Those who are praying. Spending time in secret prayer. No one knows how much time they're spending in prayer.

God knows. God sees in secret and He'll reward you. People are giving in secret. They're not getting a pat on the back for what they give in whatever ways they give.

[27 : 40] But God sees what they give. And He's going to reward them openly. So these are the kind of things I believe that the Lord Jesus is through Paul referring to.

That these are things of gold, silver and precious stones. They're going to stand the test. But the other things are going to be burned away. So the judgment is a matter to think of carefully isn't it?

For every one of us to think carefully. I'm going to stand before the judgment seat of Christ. One day I'm going to stand. I don't know probably with nothing but my physical being.

In the resurrected body that God gives to me. Physical being. In the resurrected body that God gives to me.

And I'm going to stand before that judgment seat of Christ. After the second coming. It talks about the judgment seat of Christ. And you're going to stand there too. Empty handed.

[28 : 41] You can't bring anything of earth's earnings or doings. But you're going to stand before His judgment seat. And this judgment is going to be thorough.

It's going to be severe. The spoken words, the thoughts of our heart are going to be brought out into the open. And it's a reality that many who attend this judgment seat of Christ.

As Paul refers to them. Though saved as by fire. They're just going to get in by the skin of their teeth. It's done in God's grace that He opens the door to them.

Because of Calvary. They're going to stand before this judgment seat of Christ. And whatever they offer that they've done of their life. It's just going to go up in a poof of smoke. It's just going to go up in the judgment of the wood, hay and stubble.

The vain, worthless things. The selfish things that they thought were Christian things. That really were just vain. Even maybe their church attending. Or their working in service of various kinds.

[29 : 44] If it was done for the wrong ends. Or the wrong motive. Or the wrong object. Then it's just going to be valueless. In the sight of God Almighty. Because it was done for the wrong reason.

These ones are going to be filled with remorse and shame. As they meet Him face to face. The one who died to redeem them from their sins.

And it says of some. You could refer to 1 John 2.28. Of these ones. You could refer this scripture to these ones. That now little children abide in Him.

That when He shall appear. We may have confidence. And not be ashamed before Him at His coming. 1 John 2.28. We don't want to be ashamed before Him at His coming. Do we?

We don't want to have that shame. That embarrassment. Of the wood, hay and stubble. We want to have the gold, silver and precious stones. Friends.

[30 : 42] The Lord knoweth then that are His. It says in 2 Timothy. Chapter 2.19. So everyone that nameth the name of Christ. Should depart from iniquity.

Don't hang around with things that are going to do you harm. Don't hang around with the crowd. That's going the wrong way. Think about how you're living. Think about how you have to give an account.

Every one of us are going to give an account. There's a judge there. There's not going to be someone standing alongside saying this is a good guy. Or a good girl. There's not going to be. I suppose there's the advocate with the Father in a sense.

But in this judgment seat of Christ we're going to give an account of what we've done. And it's going to be gold, silver, precious stones. It's going to be wood, hay and stubble.

And you have to give an account of yourself to Him. So shouldn't it be pressing our hearts that we would want to be found faithful? I trust so. And I know we all, I need to be more faithful.

[31 : 43] I need to be more like Christ. I need to be more how He wants me to be. I need to be less fleshly and more godly.

I need to be less led by my own thinkings and wishes and wantings. I need to be less proud and vain and puffed up.

I need to be more mindful about the awesome nature of Christianity and of how, you know, as a teacher in effect there's a greater judgment.

So it's a heavier judgment. For any of us who teach, whether it's children or young people, it says that there's a heavier judgment for those who would be a teacher, for those who would try to exhort another.

And we want to get it right, don't we? We want to make sure we get it right and we're going to have to give account for all of those things to Him. So friends, it's a heavy word tonight, but yet it's a needful word.

[32 : 49] Because we need to be shocked a little bit, I think. Jarred a little bit from our apathy, from our complacency to think about, Wow! I, I am going to stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

My sins have been paid for. It's not about that. But it's about the faithfulness of the rewards for service. It's about, or the lack of rewards for service.

And the embarrassment that will mean if all that we've laboured and done has been in vain. It's been with the wrong motive, with the wrong purpose. And, friends, only God can answer that, can't He?

For yourself, for each one. And the Holy Spirit wants to convict us, to check us, to prompt us, to draw us closer to God's perfect will. To His way for our lives. And sometimes God, in the present day too, He chastens and He judges.

We talked about that in a late sermon lately. And it says that this kind of discipline from God in Hebrews 12, It says it's going to yield the peaceable fruit.

[33 : 55] It's going to yield fruit of righteousness to those who are exercised thereby. Sometimes in life, we're going to have some chastening, some correcting, some judgment. Even in the here and now, God's judgment might come.

As we know for wrong choices, we know it's a reality. So, just as one example, and not to pick on people that are smoking, but it's an obvious thing that if someone smokes, they're going to pay for it.

It's going to have a cost, a physical cost, that what you reap, you reap what you sow. You reap what you sow. And if you're going to fillet your body and defile it with cigarette smoke and that gunk in your lungs, and the obvious health damage it's doing to your body, you're going to die younger than you need to, likely.

And so, we need to take stock and think about just practical things. That's just one. Of course, there's other things too. People that drink a lot. I've seen people that drink a lot. They died very young. People that have been in this very church. We know Kent. His liver or kidneys.

[35 : 07] One or the other. It just got so inflated and poisoned. Cirrhosis of the liver, I think it was. Yeah. It just got so poisoned and damaged.

The alcohol does damage. And you've got to pay for it. Of course, we all need to make wise choices about everything we do in life. But these are obvious things that even the health department will tell you.

That some things it's obvious. It's common sense, really. Don't do yourself damage. Look after that body because it's the only one you've got.

And it's not going to get any healthier. By and large, it's going to get weaker. It's a corruptible vessel, isn't it? And it's just going to get worse. Those aches are going to get achier as we get older. But friends, think about in reality too the spiritual things we've talked about here. We've all got to give account. Even Moses. He was judged. The meekest man in all the world.

[36 : 06] He disobeyed the Lord. And what happened? He missed out on going to the Promised Land. He just got so close. Just so close to the Promised Land. But because of his disobedience, he was judged for his sin.

And he didn't get there. He didn't get to the Promised Land. It's been said too that sometimes we might look at it in life and think, as we look through life, and we see sometimes unbelievers having a wow of a time.

And they're blessed. They seem to be blessed. They might have lots of riches and affluence and wealth and everything going for them. Even though they don't have the health and wealth prosperity gospel. But Psalm 73, there's a picture here.

The psalmist couldn't understand in Psalm 73, why are the wicked prospering? And yet, I'm having such a tough time of it. He was plagued by this.

He couldn't understand why this was happening. But later he learnt their end. He saw what the end of the wicked was, and how foolish that he had been to envy the wicked. There's no point envying the wicked, all of their, you know, eat, drink and be married, and all of the happy, joyful life they seem to have, because the end of the wicked is not worth the waste of a life, is it?

[37 : 21] Don't make that mistake. Friends, we've joined to a close. Judgment must begin at the house of God. Judgment must begin at the house of God. Look in Acts, chapter 5, Ananias and Sapphira.

They thought they were doing everything quite nice, and the church thought they were really great people, giving such a big load of money, and, you know, people would have been really rejoicing, that they were so generous, selling some land, and giving it to the church, the cost of the land that they'd sold, the price of the land.

But then God knew that they were lying to the Holy Ghost. They were lying because they, whilst claiming it was all the price, it wasn't all the price. And whilst they got all the recognition from the people around, God knew their heart, and God judged them in that amazing account, where they were struck down by the Spirit of God.

And judgment must begin in the assembly, in the household of God. Get ready for judgment. Our sins must be forgiven by the blood. Firstly, are you saved tonight?

That's the critical thing for anyone here. Are you saved? Do you know Christ as your Lord and Saviour? Do you know what it means to have your sins forgiven by the blood of Christ? To have every sin washed away because of Calvary's cross?

[38 : 42] To know, to do the will of God. Are you saved? If you're not saved, you're going to go to the judgment of the lost. And there's only one destination from that place. It's hell.

If you're saved tonight, there's still a judgment for you. Not against your sin, but a judgment of your faithfulness.

A judgment for rewards. A judgment for that recognition of what you've done with your life, of how you've spent it. Some will be saved, so as by fire.

They're saved, but as by fire. So, they're just going to have a pile of cinders in their hands. A pile of ashes for all that they've done on earth.

It's just somewhat wasted. The stewardship of their lives was not wisely spent. But yet, for you, you can have the blessing of a life that the Lord Jesus will say, Well done, Thou good and faithful servant.

[39 : 44] Enter into the joy of thy Lord. Now, God loves you. His thoughts towards you are of peace and not of evil. Jeremiah 29, 11. And yet, there may be occasions where you don't understand, What's God doing to me?

What's God letting me go through here? This is a fire that I'm going through. It could be like Job. What did he say? The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. Maybe you've had blessings and they've been taken away. You can say like Job, Chapter 1, 21, or Chapter 2, verse 10, Blessed be the name of the Lord. Those things are not worth the stressing over.

God gives and He takes away, but I have Him. I have Christ. That's what counts. You can take heart in Psalm 119, 75. I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.

Maybe life will bring affliction for you, but God is going to do that which is right. His judgments are right. And our sin debt has been paid for by the cross.

[40 : 57] And people tonight, the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers, but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.

That's 1 Peter 3, verse 12. The eyes of the Lord are watching you. And we want to be found faithful, don't we? What we might think is hidden or secret, He sees.

What we say or do, He knows about. And all of us, every one of you, every one of us must give account of himself to God.

Let us pray. Lord, we praise you today that Calvary means that that lamb was slaughtered in our place, that your anger against our sin was fully dealt against the Son of God.

And Lord, we can't thank you enough for that. We can't thank you enough, Lord, for Calvary, that there in Christ you bore that sin and you paid for it in full.

[41 : 59] Lord, every bit of our guilt and shame, you paid the price for it. We praise you, Lord, for that. Help us, Lord, to now as Christians to walk in your truth. Guide us, Holy Spirit, Lord God, that we might be wise, the choices that we make, the things we do, in how we serve you, that it's not for our own glory or our own thinking, but that we might be led by your Spirit, in how we might serve you in secret prayer and giving, fasting, devotion, in love.

Lord, that you would be honoured and not to get the praise from anyone but you, that when the time comes that we stand before that judgment throne, we'll have a conscience clear, we'll have a heart that's free and glad, we'll have a joy in our whole heart, that our life has been lived as best as you've helped us to, as we've surrendered to your will.

And we'll be pleased to give you all the glory for that. In Jesus' name, Amen. Amen.