

"The Coming Judgment"
2 Timothy 4:1
(Preached at Trinity, October 23, 2022)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. At the end of **Chapter 3** our focus was upon the nature of the Word of God. We saw that it is inspired of God – literally God Breathed. We've seen from these verses that the Bible is essential for salvation. **Verse 15** describes the Bible as "able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."
We also saw that the Word of God is essential for our growth in Christian maturity. It is essential in the work of sanctification.
"so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."
 2. As the fourth chapter opens Paul charges Timothy with His responsibility as one entrusted with the Word of God.
Chapter 4:1 opens with, "I solemnly charge you in the presence of God." In other words, because it is the infallible Word of God which is able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation, and because it is profitable to fully equip the Christian for every good work, I give you this charge, "Preach the Word."
 3. In these verses Paul sets forth the primary work of the Pastor. "Preach the Word." Before we begin to look at this Divine commission to preach, I want to pause for a moment longer at **Verse 1**.
 - A. Last time we looked at the weightiness of Paul's charge – "I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus" – "Coram Deo"
 - B. Then Paul makes a statement here that should cause all of us to pause and take notice. He tells Timothy three important things that were meant to be the guiding force behind his ministry.
 - a. First, Jesus Christ is taking notice of everything we do.
"I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus"
 - b. Second, Jesus Christ is coming back
"who is to judge the living and the dead by His appearing and his kingdom"
 - c. Third, Jesus will judge everything we have ever done
"who is to judge the living and the dead by his appearing and His kingdom"
 4. Last week we looked at the first. Jesus Christ is taking notice of everything we do.
"I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ" - "Coram Deo"
 - A. Nothing passes by without His notice – Everything in this world is continually before Him.
 - B. God knows every detail of every event since the beginning of time
 - a. He remembers the details of the fall of Satan and the fall of Adam and Eve.

- b. He remembers the flood and every individual that perished – several million people – their births, their names, their lives--.
Genesis 6:5 NAU - "Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."
He knew even their thoughts
- c. He remembers Sodom and Gomorrah and every detail of the lives of those that perished.
- C. He has seen every detail of your life
- a. He was there when you were born, when you took your first step, your first day of school.
- b. He knows every sin.
- Every time you disobeyed or disrespected your parents.
 - Everything that has entered into your mind-- every lustful thought, every covetous thought, envy, jealousy, hate, anger, thoughts of revenge, selfishness, racist thoughts, prideful thoughts.
 - Every lie you have ever told.
 - Everything you have taken that did not belong to you.
- c. Not only does He know, He remembers.
 In the day of judgement all will be brought to God's remembrance.
5. This morning I want us to continue examining these important truths. These truths should also be the guiding force in our life. They should be continually on our mind. They should help us to maintain a proper perspective in this life.
- I. Jesus Christ is coming back
 "who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom:"
- A. Scripture plainly teaches the return of Christ
Acts 1:9-11 NAU - "And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. ¹⁰ And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them. ¹¹ They also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven."
Matthew 24:42-44 NAU - "Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. ⁴³ "But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. ⁴⁴ "For this reason you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think *He will*."
- B. The imminency of His return
1. Grammatically – "Who is about to judge"
 It could happen at any moment.

2. Each passing second brings us one second closer to the end. Paul said His return is nearer than when we first believed.
Romans 13:11 – "And that, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed."
3. Jesus will return at a time most unexpected.
 Illustration of the Days of Noah –
Matthew 24:36-39 NAU - "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. ³⁷ "For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. ³⁸ "For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be."
 - a. Many use this verse to point to the wickedness of that generation. They say, "We are living in days just like the days of Noah" While this may be true, this is not the context of the passage. The teaching here points to the unexpectedness of the return of Christ.
 - b. Life was going on as usual for the wicked of Noah's day They were eating and drinking. They were beginning new families and planning futures until the very end

II. The third element to consider here: Jesus will judge every man that ever lived "who is to judge the living and the dead"

- A. Every man will stand before His throne of judgment
John 5:22 NAU - "For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son,"
Romans 14:10,12 NAU - "But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God."
¹² So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God."
2 Corinthians 5:10 NAU - "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."
Revelation 20:11-12 NAU - "Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds."
- B. It is a universal judgment. All men will stand before God to give account.
 1. Most close their eyes to this reality. They allow the numbing effect of the world to hide this fearful truth. They place greater emphasis upon living than upon dying. Pointing to eternity must be an important aspect of our preaching.
 2. The truth is death is only the beginning of an endless eternity.
 - a. All human beings are created with immortality – all of us will survive beyond the grave. All of us will exist for eternity.

- b. The question is, where will you spend eternity and in what condition will you spend eternity?
 - 3. Eternity begins at the Judgment Seat of Christ.
 - a. For some eternity will be spent in indescribable joys in the presence of Christ. Heaven is a place free from sin—free from trial and torment, free of suffering and sadness, free of disaster and destruction. Free from loss.
Most important, Heaven is the presence of Christ. We will behold His infinite excellence and beauty.
 - b. For others eternity will be filled with torment and indescribable anguish
Matthew 13:49-50 NAU - "So it will be at the end of the age; the angels will come forth and take out the wicked from among the righteous, ⁵⁰ and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."
 - 4. Hell is the ultimate expression of the wrath of God.
 - a. It is a place where men will be eternally given over to their sin. Hell is described as a lake of fire that will bring endless torment and suffering – heat that will singe the flesh, yet the flesh will never die.
 - b. It is described as a place of darkness – no beauty, no pleasures – only darkness.
 - c. Those in hell will know no mercy. There will be no hope. They will cry in anguish yet their cries will go unheard by God.
- C. For all of us eternity will begin at the judgment seat of Christ.
 - 1. The Bible says we must ALL appear before Christ
2 Timothy 4:1 NAU - "I solemnly charge *you* in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom:"
 - 2. Every human being will stand trial before Christ the Judge – none will be exempt. Our lives will be examined with perfect justice.
2 Corinthians 5:10 NAU - "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."
- D. Everything we do is moral.
 - 1. It is true that not everything carries the same weightiness. The Bible doesn't instruct us on every detail of life.
 - a. Most of the Christian life is what we call "adiaphorous." In other words, there are things the Bible describes as neither right nor wrong. It falls into the realm of liberty.
 - b. Most of our life is left without specifics. The NT doesn't give us a detailed list of rules, although it's amazing how we invent rules. We are not given specifics on politics, homeschooling, family size, vaccinations, hairstyles.
 - c. We naturally desire rules, specific do's and don'ts. And we tend to bind the consciences of others with our personal preferences.
 - d. The truth is, we are given great liberty of action.

2. On the other hand, everything has a moral dimension. Is that a contradiction?
 3. What is required of all? Our heart's desire must be to honor God with our lives. This must be our motive in all things. In this sense, there is nothing adiaphorous—nothing indifferent. Why do you do what you do? We are not permitted to live without a keen sense of direction and purpose.
 4. God says He is concerned about the details
1 Corinthians 10:31 NAU - "Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."
Matthew 12:36 NAU - "But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment."
- C. If all of our life will be tried and tested what are the things that are important?
1. Our relationship with our Savior – Ultimately the only thing that matters. All of the good works in the world without Christ will be worthless
 - a. He knows whether or not we love Him – He knows the things that capture our affections
 - b. He knows our true motives and our true desires
 - c. Paul says, "Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God" (Col 3:1).
 - d. We are not justified by our works, but our works put God's grace within us on display. It validates our faith.
 2. Our service for Christ – our good works
 - a. Only those done for His glory will endure. All others are polluted
 - b. Every man will be called upon to give account according to what he has done – all will be remembered.
 3. The souls we win for Christ.
 For some, their work will be consumed
See 1 Cor. 3:11-15

Conclusion:

1. These are the things we must focus upon.
 We must never forget that Christ the great Judge is ever with us. He sees all, He knows all.
 We must never forget that He's coming back. It may be soon, very soon.
 We must never forget that He is coming to judge the world. All will stand before Him to give account.
2. Are you prepared for this great day?
 Leonard Ravenhill at the age of 83 – "The more I read the Word of God the more it pierces my heart. It makes me stop, think, and meditate. I meditate now more on eternity than I ever have in all my life. Our people are not eternity-conscious. Do you think a person who is ready for eternity would miss a prayer meeting?"¹

¹ Mack Tomlinson, *In Light of Eternity, The Life of Leonard Ravenhill* (Conway: Free Grace Press, 2010), Page 491.