

The Great White Throne Judgment

By Dr. Steven J. Lawson

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Grace Gems!
15455 Glenoaks Blvd. #534
Sylmar, CA 91342

Website: www.gracegems.org
Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/gracegems

I'm sure you have God's word. If you would take your Bibles and open it to the book of Revelation, Revelation 20, and I want to begin by reading the text that we will be looking at tonight. It is one of the most sobering and most weighty passages of Scripture in the entire Bible. I want to speak to you tonight on "The Great White Throne Judgment."

Revelation 20 and beginning in verse 11, we come to the end of the Bible and we come to virtually the end of God's redemptive story as it relates to time. The new heavens and the new earth, as we heard this morning, will begin in chapter 21, and so as we come to the end of Revelation 20, in reality we come to the end of time. We come to the end of God's eternal purposes within time for the human race and we come to the final judgment.

Beginning in verse 11,

11 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. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. 14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. 15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Many today do not want to think about eternity, especially when they are young, because eternity seems so far away, but like Jonathan Edwards, if we would think about eternity, heaven and hell, it will change the very way we live our lives today.

As Jonathan Edwards pursued holiness in his life, he resolved to live not only with one eye upon heaven, we spoke about that this morning, but he was resolved to live every day with one eye upon hell. Edwards' purpose to turn one ear to hear the hallelujahs of heaven and with the other ear he purposed to strain to hear the shrieks and the groans of tormented souls in hell already, both heaven and hell occupied his constant attention,

even as an 18 year old young man. So we read in Resolution 55, quote, "Resolved, to endeavor to my utmost so to act as I think I should do, if I had already seen the happiness of heaven and hell tormented." In other words, Edwards intentionally chose to think about those already confined in the bowels of hell and suffering under the wrath of God. It would effect the way that he would preach, it would affect the way that he would pray, it would affect the way that he would live his life. Such a sober estimation and meditation on these tormented damned souls already in hell gave Edwards eternal perspective that marked his life every step of the way.

These verses in Revelation 20 tell us very clearly that there is looming across the horizon of time, a final judgment. It is known as the Great White Throne Judgment. Now this world is currently spinning through space and it is on a collision course with God's final judgment. The book of Romans calls it the day of wrath. The book of Jude calls it the judgment of the great day. The book of Romans also calls it the day of judgment. And Paul speaking in Acts 17 says God has fixed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness. That day is fast approaching. There is coming a final judgment day in which God will hold court and all the world will be on trial before God. In this final judgment, God will open the books and God will present his case and every lost sinner will be judged and God will announce his verdict and God will execute perfect justice and he will condemn every unbeliever to hell.

R. C. Sproul says, "Modern man is betting his eternal destiny that there is no final judgment." My friend, that is a bad bet because the holiness and the righteousness of God demands that on the final day, God execute his perfect justice. This is precisely what this text presents for us. This judgment will occur at the end of human history after the Great Tribulation, after the Second Coming of Christ, after the 1,000 year reign of Christ, and before the new heavens and the new earth. This final judgment stands at the end of time after God's plan for redemptive history has been fulfilled, and in these verses what is described for us is the final courtroom scene. This is the highest court in heaven and earth. This is the Supreme Court of the universe. It is the court of no appeal. Every lost sinner will be individually summoned to take their stand before this judgment bar and every lost sinner will have their day in court before the Lord Jesus Christ. The evidence will be presented and it will be irrefutable. There will be no rebuttal offered. There will be no defense rendered. There will be no sympathetic judge. There will not be one drop of mercy. There will be no grace. There will be no advocate to defend the sinner. There will be no mistrial of justice. There will only be perfect judgment. There will be no successful appeal by the guilty, no parole in prison from which any sinner will ever escape.

This scene is described for us in these few words but how laden they are with truth and we must hear this tonight. As we are focusing this conference upon heaven and hell, we must come to the end of time tonight, we must enter into this courtroom with those who will be condemned, and we must grasp the gravitas and the magnitude of this scene, and this day is more real than the day in which you and I are living this very moment. This is no imaginary scene. This is a day that is fixed on God's prophetic calendar and we are moving irreversibly towards this final day.

There are four truths that I want you to note with me out of these verses as we will work our way through this graphic text. I want you to note with me first in verse 11, the setting described. In verse 11, this scene begins in a stark and sobering and straightforward manner as John records,

11 Then I saw a great white throne

"Great" speaks to its power. "White" speaks to its purity. "Throne" speaks to its purpose. John's eyes are riveted upon this stark reality. It is a terrifying scene that is unveiled before his eyes. It is the highest court in the universe. It is the court of heaven and earth.

These three words: great, white, and throne, describe this setting. It is great. It towers over every other throne. This throne, it possesses universal jurisdiction over the entire created order. It overrides every decision of every lower court. It is great in its power. It is great in its authority. Its summons when it is issued, is irreversible. Its verdicts are final. Its sentences cannot be overturned. It is the greatest courtroom in the history of the world.

It is called white. "Great" speaks to its power. "White" speaks to its purity. It is a court of absolute holiness and inflexible justice. All of its judgments are perfect. All of its verdicts are perfect. There is no injustice at this throne. There is no partiality. Every sinful deed will be presented as it actually was. The secrets of men's hearts will be exposed and presented exactly as they were. There will be no exaggeration in this courtroom and every bit of evidence for every sinner, thought, mind, motive, deeds, will all be presented exactly as it was.

The word "throne" speaks of its purpose. It is a judge's tribunal. This throne is a seat of judgment. Every wrong will be presented here and will be judged. Every injustice will be made known here and it will be brought into account.

The entire Bible has looked ahead to this final scene of divine judgment. Let me give you some verses. Psalm 9:7-8,

7 But the LORD abides forever; He has established His throne for judgment,

Did you hear that? God has established his throne for judgment.

8 And He will judge the world in righteousness; He will execute judgment for the peoples with equity.

Psalm 7:11, hear the word of the Lord,

11 God is a righteous judge, And a God who has indignation every day. 12 If a man does not repent, [God] will sharpen His sword; [God] has bent

His bow and made it ready. 13 [God] has also prepared for Himself deadly weapons; He makes His arrows fiery shafts.

And every one of them are aimed at the heart of lost sinners, and as Spurgeon says, God never misses his target. In this final judgment, the God who has indignation every day with sinners will be the object of the righteous anger and fury of Almighty God.

Psalm 11:6,

6 Upon the wicked [God] will rain snares; Fire and brimstone and burning wind will be the portion of their cup.

Don't kid yourself, this day is coming and it is necessary that the holiness and the righteousness and the perfect justice be vindicated in the last day.

And would you note the judge in verse 11,

11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it,

Stop right there. This one who sits upon this throne is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ himself. He is seated, meaning he is actively presiding. He is enthroned. He is ruling. He is reigning and he is ready to judge in this day. All of Scripture identifies this one as the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said himself in John 5:22,

22 For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son,

Peter said in Acts 10:39,

39 ... They also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross. 40 God raised Him up on the third day

This is the one who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead.

Romans 2:16,

16 on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.

Acts 17:31,

31 ... [God] has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.

This Judge of heaven and earth is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ himself and in this day the Lamb shall become a Lion. A lion captures his prey by his mighty jaws and once it is caught, he crushes his prey and conquers his prey and consumes his prey. So it will be in this last day for the Lion of the tribe of Judah as he will capture and crush every unbeliever outside of himself.

So terrifying is this scene in verse 11 that we continue to read,

11 ... from whose presence earth and heaven fled away,

So terrifying that all unsaved guilty people when they see the awesomeness of this scene, they will do all that they can to retreat and to pull back in absolute terror, and we read,

and no place was found for them.

No, this throne and this Judge and this judgment are inescapable. All guilty men must appear before this Judge and they will have no place to hide in the final day. All their lives, they have ignored Christ. They have denied Christ. They have cursed Christ. They have blasphemed Christ. They have marginalized Christ. They have played games with Christ. They have put off Christ. And now in this final day, every lost sinner will stand face-to-face, coram Deo, in the very presence of this Lion, the Lord Jesus Christ, and as they look up, they will see this Judge Christ standing as with feet as glowing in a furnace, seeing with eyes of fire, and when this Judge speaks, he will speak with the sound of many waters and he will drown out every excuse and every word that would be offered to him and his verdict alone will be heard.

This is the setting described. I cannot think of a more terrifying scene than to appear at this Great White Throne and to have your day in court with the great Judge of heaven and earth and to stand and receive perfect inflexible justice.

I want you to note, second, the summons delivered because what power this Judge has to summon the guilty. He has no red tape to go through. He but issues the summons and they will all come and appear. This court date is inescapable. So we read in verse 12,

12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne,

These are all the unsaved dead since the beginning of time. They will be summoned to appear in this courtroom before this Judge, that all of the great will be there and so will the small. "The great" refers to those great men of history who lived with great power over others. Here will be Alexander the Great. Here will be Napoleon the Great. Here will be Hitler and Stalin and so many other notorious sinners who sinned on a grand scale with the world as their stage, but even they will be summoned to give an account to the Judge of heaven and earth. Then the small are standing here as well. Small in stature. Small in visibility. Small in influence. They lived lives of obscurity. These are men and women whose lives amounted to very little on the grand scheme. They just drew their breath and drew their salary. They are people like your next door neighbor. They are

people like your work associates. They are people like your classmate. No one else really knows who they are, they lived rather common lives, but the Lord sees and the Lord knows and the Lord will summon them to come and appear before his judgment on the last day.

As we look at the great and the small, I want to divide this out yet further. Who is it who will stand at the Great White Throne when this summon is issued? And I want to set before you five groups of people, perhaps represented even here tonight, who will be summoned to appear before this Great White Throne.

First of all, the out-and-out sinner will be there. Those who have sinned violently against God. Those who have broken God's law with a high hand. Those who have all but spit onto the face of the Lord Jesus Christ, and who hate God, who hate the church, who hate the Bible, who hate any form of morality. 1 Corinthians 6:9 says,

9 Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, 10 nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God.

Those who have lived lives of open shameless sin will be brought to stand before the Great White Throne Judgment and have their day in court.

There is a second group that will appear here. Not only the out-and-out sinner but, second, the self-righteous, those who prided themselves in being so good and so moral. This is the one who thinks that Gospel is for the thief; the Gospel is for the prostitute; the Gospel is for the out-and-out sinner but now me. This person has never been born-again but they think that they are good enough in and of themselves in their own morality and in their own good works to commend themselves to God. They are assuming that God will grade on the curve. They are assuming that they are better than others therefore God will surely accept them, but the fact is they have been weighed in the balances and found wanting, they have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, and they will be brought to stand in this last day.

There is a third group that will appear at the Great White Throne Judgment among the great and the small. Not only the out-and-out sinner and not only the self-righteous, but the religious cult members will be here. Those who have followed after other religious leaders. Those who have followed Mohammad. Those who have followed Buddha. Those who have followed Joseph Smith. Those who have followed Reverend Sun Moon. Those who have followed the virgin Mary. Those who have followed every other religious leader except Jesus Christ, they will be summoned and they will stand before the Lord because Jesus said,

6 ... I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

"There are not many roads that are leading up to heaven and Christianity is but one of those roads. You just have to be sincere and get on one of these religious roads that will take you to the top." No,

5 For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time.

Peter said,

12 ... there is salvation in no other name; for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

No, every follower of false religions will be summoned to stand before this Great White Throne Judgment.

There is a fourth group that will be there in that day and that is the procrastinator. Those who know that they are sinners. Those who know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and is the Savior. Those who intend to be saved one day but they keep putting it off and they keep putting it off and they say, "One day when I get out of college. One day when I get married. One day when we have children. One day once my career gets going. One day when I get a little further down life's path then I will finally give my life to Christ." But that day never comes. Proverbs 27:1 says,

1 Boast not yourself of tomorrow; for you do not know what a day may bring forth.

The Bible says,

2 ... behold, now is the accepted time; behold, today is the day of salvation.

Procrastinators who die without Christ will be summoned to stand before this Great White Throne.

And there is a fifth and final group that will be there that day. Lost church members will be summoned to appear before the Great White Throne. They have their name on a church roll but their name has never been written in the Lamb's Book of Life. They profess to know Christ but they do not in reality possess Christ. They are attached to a church but have never become attached to the Lord Jesus Christ. They have a form of religion but they deny the power thereof. These are those who will say,

22 ... Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name? Did we not cast out demons in your name? Did we not perform many wondrous works in your name?

And Jesus said,

23 ... I will say unto them in that day, Depart from me, you who work iniquity, for I never knew you. 24 Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears these words of mine and acts upon them is like a wise man who built his house upon the rock. 25 And when the rains came and the winds blew and beat against the house, it did not fall because it was built upon the rock. 26 He who hears these words of mine and does not act upon them is like a very foolish man who built his house upon the sand. 27 And when the rains came and the winds blew and beat against the house, great was its fall because it was not built upon the rock.

Unconverted church members, lost church members, will be summoned to appear before this Great White Throne Judgment because they have never been born-again. Jesus said,

3 ... Except you be born again, you will not see the kingdom of heaven.

So as this summons is issued in verse 12, I want you to also note in verse 13 how powerful is this summons to raise the dead. We read in verse 13,

13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it,

In this day and time, if someone was lost at sea and went down with the ship, the sea was a place in which one would be irretrievable. The body would go all the way down to the depths of the ocean and the sea, never to be seen from again, never to be recovered by any man. But on this last day, God has the power to raise the dead and the Lord Jesus Christ will issue his summons from this Great White Throne and the sea itself will give up the dead that lay at the bottom of the sea.

and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them

Death and Hades refers to the grave and those places land where their body lies there buried, their souls and spirit already tormented by God in a bottomless place, but on this day, their body will be raised up to be reunited with their tormented soul to have their official day in court and there they will stand before this fearsome and awesome scene on the last day.

Now I want you to note, third, I want you to see the sins disclosed at the end of verse 12 and at the end of verse 13 at this Great White Throne as Jesus Christ will present his case against every lost sinner. I want you to note in the middle of verse 12, Exhibit A, the books. We read,

12 ... and books were opened

These books contain God's precise and accurate record for every life. God has been keeping inscrutable books. The omniscient God who sees all and knows all has been

recording in his books every thought, every word, every deed of every unsaved person who has ever lived. Every sin is recorded. Every useless word has been written down in permanent ink by God himself. Every selfish deed. Every sensual thought. Every smutty joke. Every carnal comment. All that the sinner should have done and failed to do. All that he should not have done but did. Every influence that he exerted upon his brothers and sisters growing up. Every deed that was done in college. Everything that the sinner thought that no one else saw, no one else knew about. Even sins long since forgotten by that person will be presented in this day in court and skeletons will come dancing out of closets. Everything that was done in secret will be shouted from the housetops on this last day.

Ecclesiastes 11:9 says,

9 ... know that God will bring you to judgment

Ecclesiastes 12:14,

14 ... God will bring every act to judgment,

Did you hear that? God is not an idle talker. God is not a babbler. All that God says is true.

14 ... God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.

Jesus said in Matthew 12:36,

36 ... every careless word that men shall speak, they shall render account for it in the day of judgment.

Jesus said in Luke 8:17,

17 For nothing is hidden that will not become evident, nor anything secret that will not be known and come to light.

The Bible says, Hebrews 4:13,

13 ... there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

So there it will be in this last day. There it will be at the Great White Throne Judgment, the Judge seated upon his throne, the sea giving up the dead, Hades and death giving up their dead, every lost sinner standing before the Lord Jesus Christ who will open the books and everyone's life will be measured against the perfect holiness of Almighty God. Matthew 5:48,

48 Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

God will not grade on the curve in that day. Every sinner will be measured against the absolute, infinite, moral perfection of Almighty God. 1 Peter 1:16,

16 ... You shall be holy for I am holy.

We will all be weighed in the balances in that day who are there without Christ and been seen to fall short of the glory of God.

Now, God's justice demands payment for every sin of every unbeliever. So much sin, so much justice. So much justice, so much punishment. Ezekiel 18:4,

4 ... The soul who sins will die.

Romans 6:23,

23 For the wages of sin is death

Galatians 6:7,

7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man sows, this he will reap.

I told you this morning, every sin in the history of the world will be judged by God. No sin will be overlooked by Christ on the final day. From the sin of Adam all the way down through the end of the 1,000 year reign of Christ, every single sin will meet God's perfect judgment. Every sin will either be punished in Christ and pardoned in Christ or will be punished in hell throughout all of the ages to come, but every sin will receive a just recompense.

Think about it in that day. Think of what it will be to stand before Jesus Christ without any white garments, without any blood atonement, without any forgiveness for God, and in that day it will be too late. There will be no second chance. This is your day to stand before Christ, there will be no appeal, there will be no reversal of the verdict. This is your day and every sin you have ever committed in the entirety of your life, it will all be flushed out and there presented by Christ before himself as you see this whole record, a mountain of sin, and you will shrink back and say, "Oh my God, no!" And Jesus Christ will say, "This was your life. This is the reality of the sin of your life before you." And Jesus Christ with omniscience who knows all and who sees all, Jesus Christ who never forgets, who is the same yesterday, today and forever, he will present his case in that day against every lost sinner and it will be right and it will be just and it must come to pass.

Then Exhibit B. That was Exhibit A. We continue to read in verse 12, Exhibit B, that Christ will present not only the books,

12 ... and another book was opened, which is the book of life

Revelation 13:8, Revelation 17:8 tell us that the names of every believer, all the elect of God, their names are recorded in the Book of Life from before the foundation of the world. Names are not being added as each person is coming to Christ. Before the foundation of the world, in eternity past, a sovereign God chose his elect, he gave them to his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to secure their salvation and their names were written in the Book of Life before time ever began.

So the Book of Life will be opened and Jesus Christ will present his case and he will show every lost sinner that, "You have never believed upon my holy name. That your name is not written in the Book of Life. You have not come to cast yourself upon the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ. You have chosen to go your own way. There is a way which seems right unto a man but the end thereof is the end of death." So Jesus Christ after he presents the books, the entire record of their life, every sin, every iniquity, every lust, every immorality, he will then present the Book of Life and the sinner will see that they have no claim upon the Lord Jesus and no claim upon his mercy or forgiveness for they have never come to believe upon him.

So we read,

12 ... and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.

Understand this: salvation is by grace and judgment is by works. Salvation is by grace and judgment is by works and here each sinner will be judged by the Lord Jesus Christ according to what they did and the justice that is required for that sin. The result here at this point is pure unadulterated judgment and not one drop of mercy.

So we read at the end of verse 13,

13 ... and they were judged,

The "they" refers to the great and the small, all who are summoned to appear before this Great White Throne. None will walk away forgiven. None will walk away with mercy. None will walk away with a second chance. No,

13 ... they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds.

In fact, men and women will be judged in that last day not only by the deeds that they have committed, but also to the amount of light that has shined into their lives and the exposure that they have had to the truth, and those who have had a greater exposure to the truths of the word of God and to the Gospel, will be held to an even stricter standard of judgment. Jesus said in Matthew 10:15,

15 Truly I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for [this] city.

This city where Jesus preached the Gospel. This city where Jesus performed miracles. To have heard the truth like that and then to reject it and to go one's own way, Jesus said in the final judgment, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah, the most wicked culture that there has been upon the earth that lies beneath the bottom of the Dead Sea, than for these who have heard the Gospel. Listen, if you're going to go to hell, don't go to hell from resolve where the word of God is so clearly made known to you. If you're going to hell, go to hell from some dark remote place where you would never hear the name of Jesus Christ. Matthew 11:21, Jesus said the very same,

21 Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. 22 Nevertheless I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you.

In this final day in this final judgment, those who have had a greater exposure to the truth will be held to such a strict accountability and the judgment that will be rendered to them will be so much more severe than for those who had not heard the truth.

So I want you to see finally in verse 14 and 15, the sentence delivered. Having examined the evidence and having documented the guilt of every lost sinner, the defendants now await the verdict of the Judge. It is now time for the judgment to be rendered and for the verdict to be issued and we read in verse 14, do you see it?

14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire.

It will be at this point that Jesus will say, Matthew 25:41,

41 ... Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels

The primary image of hell in the Bible is fire. Death and Hades were thrown into the Lake of Fire. It is the most terrifying image that can be represented to us of what the eternal abode is in the place called hell. The Bible repeatedly refers to hell in these terms of fire. Matthew 5:22,

22 ... the fiery hell.

Matthew 13:50,

50 ... the furnace of fire.

Matthew 9:48,

48 ... where the fire is not quenched.

Mark 9:49,

49 ... for everyone will be salted with fire.

Hebrews 10:27,

27 ... the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries.

Jude 7,

7 ... the punishment of eternal fire.

Matthew 18:9,

9 ... the fiery hell.

Revelation 19:20,

20 ... the lake of fire which burns with brimstone.

Matthew 3:12,

12 ... the smoke of a great furnace, an unquenchable fire.

Revelation 20:10,

10 ... the lake of fire and brimstone... and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Think about this. Every lost sinner when they are condemned by the Lord Jesus Christ, foes. He says, "Depart from me, you who work iniquity. I never knew you." Lake of Fire called pits of darkness. Matthew 25:46,

46 "These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

The weeping and the gnashing of teeth. Not just weeping and gnashing but "the weeping and the gnashing," meaning the greatest does not even compare with the weeping and the gnashing of teeth. They spend forever and ever under his wrath. Christ who is omnipresent, who is everywhere present will be in hell himself, being the one to personally inflict the wrath upon the unbelievers. That the unbeliever will not be separated from Christ, they could only wish they would be separate. The presence of the

angels. Jesus Christ, the righteous Judge will be the sole afflictor of his vengeance upon them in hell.

This is a terrifying scene.

14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.

The first death is physical, the second death is eternal and spiritual. Jesus said in Matthew 10,

28 Do not fear him who has power to kill the body, fear him who has power to kill and destroy the soul and the body in hell forever.

Luke 12:5,

5 ... fear the One who, after He has killed, has authority to cast into hell; yes, I tell you, fear Him!

The writer of Hebrews in Hebrews 10:30,

30 ... Vengeance is Mine, I will repay... 31 It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

So verse 15 brings this terrifying scene to completion that is looming on the horizon, that is fixed on God's calendar,

15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

This fiery hell is forever. It will never come to an end and throughout all of the ages and the eons to come, those who were cast down into this bottomless pit, this lake of fire and brimstone that burns forever and ever, there will never be any relief, there will never be any escape, but that throughout all of the ages to come, they will be the object of God's fury and God's vengeance and God's wrath and God's judgment.

So what should this say to us? What should this require of us? 1. Humility. If you are a Christian tonight, if you have been born-again, if you know the Lord Jesus Christ, he who has the Son has life, he who does not have the Son does not have life, but if you have Christ as we look at this passage, every one of us in Christ tonight should say, "There but for the grace of God I stand. There but for the grace of God I am judged. There but for the grace of God I am condemned. There but for the grace of God I am damned forever." The only thing that makes a difference between me and the one who stands here is the unconditional love and the unmerited favor of the Lord Jesus Christ. Every one of us here tonight deserves to stand at this Great White Throne Judgment. Every one of us here

tonight deserves to be cast down into the Lake of Fire because we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

The fact that we are in Christ tonight, that Christ has taken our sins and placed them behind his back, that Christ has removed our sins from us as far as the East is from the West, that Christ has washed our sins away, that Christ has imputed his perfect righteousness to us, that we are covered with the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, that our sins will never be brought into account before God, how humbly we should walk before our God. What thanksgiving we should offer to the Lord, that there is now therefore no condemnation for them who are in Christ Jesus, that nothing shall ever separate us from the love of God, neither life nor death, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come. Nothing will ever separate us from the love of God, his mercy, his forgiveness for us who are in Christ. How this should cause us to treasure our eternal salvation in Christ. Consider the great sin that has been forgiven you. Consider the great sacrifice that has been offered to take away your sin. How we should say with Paul, "I am what I am by the grace of God." Every one of us should walk out of this grand meeting room, walking lowly before our God in great humility.

Second, evangelism. As we read this text, for each and every one of us there are people all around us who have yet to come to Christ, who are outside of the kingdom of God and being outside of the kingdom of God, they are already under the wrath of God. God's love is restricted exclusively for those who are inside the Lord Jesus Christ and for those who are outside of Christ, they are in a fearful place. It is incumbent upon each and every one of us to go into the highways and into the byways and to compel them to come to the banquet that has already been prepared by the Lord Jesus Christ. What responsibility we have that we go to our family, to our friends, to our classmates, to those who we work with, to those who are around us, and with a sense of urgency to share with them the love of God in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? You may be the very one that God has placed in their lives to tell them about Christ. You may be the only Gospel witness to that person. How incumbent it is for us to go into all the world and to preach to every creature repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

And finally for those of you who do not know Jesus Christ, God has brought you here tonight for this divine appointment for you to hear of what your future holds if you continue to go down this path. God has brought you here to speak the truth to you and if you are not yet saved...through the narrow gate that leads to life. I call upon you to come to faith in Jesus Christ, to repent of your sin, to turn away from the world, to forsake your pursuit of sin, to come to Christ. Humble yourself. Receive his mercy. Throw yourself upon him and say, "God, be merciful to me, the sinner!"

13 Enter through the narrow gate; for the way is broad and the gate is wide that leads to destruction, and many are those who find it. 14 For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it.

I call you to leave the broad path. Turn away from the easy road of sin. Come to the narrow gate who is Christ. That gate is open right now. His arms of forgiveness and mercy are extended to you right now in this Gospel message. Come to Christ. Believe upon him this moment and receive his mercy, and if you do not believe upon Jesus Christ, the infallible record of the word of God says there is coming a final judgment.

1 Boast not yourself of tomorrow, for you know not what a day may bring forth.

Come to Christ. Come to the water of life and drink freely Come to Christ and believe upon him or in that final day, you will stand before him, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. This is serious because this is your life and the eternity that is before you.

Let us pray.

Father in heaven, we understand that you have appointed all judgment to your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, that you have fixed a day in which you will judge the world in righteousness through a man whom you have raised from the dead, Jesus Christ. Father, we understand the perfect justice that will be meted out in that day. You are a God of inflexible holiness and righteousness and yet a God of mercy and grace, and at this very moment through the Gospel of your Son, you extend forgiveness, you extend your saving grace. Lord, I pray that in this great assembly hall tonight there will be those who will come to their senses, who will become sober enough to realize, "What I've heard tonight is the very truth of the word of God and I cannot put this off any longer. How shall I escape if I neglect so great a salvation?" Father, would you open eyes to see their need to be saved, open ears to hear this Gospel plea. May tonight they be saved. And Father, I pray for believers here tonight, that there will be a new sense of urgency to reach those around us who know not your Son, Christ. May we go to every length and effort that you would have us to expend, to go to the corners of the earth even to preach and to proclaim the glorious Gospel of peace in the name of Christ for there is salvation in no other name. Father, sober us tonight with the realization of heaven and hell, time and eternity, salvation and damnation, Jesus as Savior and Jesus as Judge. May these truths grip our soul and our heart tonight. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.