

I Believe in Our Lord, the Glorious Judge of All People

- Last week PDW's sermon on major section of creed; humil/exalt; riches to rags to riches story (through Creed to "seated"). Part left out: "*From there...dead.*" On purpose, didn't forget: focus today – end world, J-Day, things that happen, what Jesus will do on Last Day. "*From there...dead.*" So today focus on how our Lord JC on Last Day will return as Glorious Judge of All People.
- Both passages say; two Gospels; look at both, because both teach what will happen end world. **Mt vs. 31-33.** What Jesus said he's do! Same tender Jesus: gathered little children, healed sick, fed thousand. Here see in much different role: seated glorious throne, surrounded angels, uncountable multitude of people before, waiting for his judgment, for him to point them L/R. J-Day! Final work of JC, not yet done, but will do, said he would: return Last Day, judge every person ever lived.
- **Jn vs. 22.** Task of judging at end of world assigned specifically to Jesus, so that: **vs. 23a.** Jesus deserves this honor. We remember many ways dishonored: spit on, punched, crown thorns, made fun of, even crucified. Then honored: raised, proclaimed victory in hell, ascended, now sits God's right hand. Someday when returns as judge, will be pinnacle of exaltation, because everyone will see him in all glory. **Vs. 27.** Jesus is God-man, took on everything human to save humanity. Truly is our Savior; last activity of saving us will take place when returns as judge on J-Day.
- What that day look like: ~**vs. 31-33;** sheep/goats. Then **vs. 34-36.** Believers who lived their faith. Important; otherwise sounds work-righteousness (heaven because deeds). Compare to **Jn 5:24.** There, basis for his judgment: faith; believing in Christ – that is standard for judging! Good thing: if based on how well helped others (ex), then might find ourselves with goats on left. None of us helped perfectly; better at not helping (or helping selves). Maybe sometimes do help, not always, not always for right reasons. Another way of saying: sheep are sinful; Christians/we. So real diff between sheep & goat really comes down to one thing: faith in JC. Only two types of people in world: believers, -un.
- Sheep on right say: **vs. 37-39. Vs. 40.** So believed in Jesus, lived faith in variety of ways (inc how helped others); then Jesus brings believers to heaven, forever, be with Jesus. Opposite for unbelievers. To them: **vs. 41.** Did not believe. May have done good things, from worldly perspective (help others), but not from heart of faith. So sends to hell, forever, apart from Jesus. Not just what church teaches; what Jesus Christ himself says.
- Today we slow down at part of creed "*From there...dead,*" need to understand: someday world end, he'll come back, scary sight; people divided into two groups; faith in Jesus standard for judgment, consequences eternal. Terrifying thought. No one likes thinking eternal damnation. Reason I became pastor – as few to hell as possible. Only thing really important in life. Worry in life, quibble in church – this is important! So important that Son of God left "rainbow-circled throne" in heaven to die on cross to free us from terror of eternity in hell. Yet sad reality: so many people reject God's gift of grace, live in unbelief, forfeit heaven Christ won for them. So not Christ's fault they end up in hell. Right after John 3:16 ("**For God so loved...**"), added, "**Whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son**" (3:18). Makes you shudder. Think of countless people who don't believe; think of people in own family that don't; think of ways Satan tempts to doubt, hoping to steal your faith (what he wants!). For all these reasons, thought of J-Day can certainly be terrifying.
- Yet same time, for all us who know Gospel, trust in Christ, find forgiveness of sins in Son of God, J-Day isn't terrible day; day of joy, redemption. Here's what day like: if die before J-Day (like everyone before us), on that day bodies rise from dead and stand before Jesus. **Vs. 28-29.** If still alive when J-Day comes (very real possibility; every day look to sky; maybe today he returns), see activity in cemeteries (bodies rising), see Jesus coming on clouds, stand before Jesus with everyone else. And that's day our bodies glorified, freed forever from mortality; we will live forever in very real, perfect place called heaven, with Savior and all believers.

- Maybe helpful to think of last judgment like trial in courtroom. Picture scene: heavenly Father asks on J-Day why let you into heaven. You say: “You shouldn’t; I’ve broken laws, not perfect. But I know one who is: your Son, my Savior JC, my perfect substitute who lived, died, rose for me, taken away my guilt. He is Son of God; he’s forgiven me.” At that moment Jesus steps into courtroom, takes seat at judge’s bench, because after all, he is the judge. There looks at you not with anger but love; says **vs. 34b**. J-Day day of joy, redemption because one who judges us is one who died for us. We have friend on judge’s bench. So for us J-Day isn’t terrifying at all. In fact, we look forward to Last Day with eager anticipation because that’s day finally get to meet face to face: *Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord* – the glorious judge of all people.

Matthew 25:31-46

³¹ “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. ³² All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

³⁴ “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, ³⁶ I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’

³⁷ “Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? ³⁸ When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? ³⁹ When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’

⁴⁰ “The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’ ⁴¹ “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’

⁴⁴ “They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’ ⁴⁵ “He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’ ⁴⁶ “Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

John 5:21-30

²¹ For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. ²² Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, ²³ that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.

²⁴ “Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life. ²⁵ Very truly I tell you, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. ²⁶ For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. ²⁷ And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.

²⁸ “Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out—those who have done what is good will rise to live, and those who have done what is evil will rise to be condemned. ³⁰ By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.

