

28.01.2012 THE GOD OF GRACE AND JUDGEMENT

Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed. Psalm 85:10

He is the Rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; righteous and upright is He. Deuteronomy 32:4

Does God pervert judgment? Or does the Almighty pervert justice? Job 8:3

God will judge the world in righteousness. Psalm 9:8

For the LORD loves justice, and does not forsake His saints; they are preserved forever, but the descendants of the wicked shall be cut off. Psalm 37:28

And enter not into judgement with Thy servant, for in Thy sight no man living shall be justified (declared righteous). Psalm 143:2

No weapon formed against you shall prosper, and every tongue which rises against you in judgment you shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is from Me," says the LORD. Isaiah 54:17

I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favour of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom. Daniel 7:21, 22

Our God is a God of grace and righteousness. He is therefore a just (righteous) God.

Because He is just, He cannot excuse sin. He therefore has to declare judgement *against* sin and sinners.

But if He were only a God of justice and judgement, Adam and Eve would have been struck down the moment they sinned; they would have no other destiny than condemnation to eternal death.

But because God is a God of love and grace, He has made a Way, through Jesus Christ, whereby no son or daughter of Adam need be condemned to eternal death.

Christ came as a ransom for all; and to as many as receive Him, who believe in His name, to them He has given power to become the sons of God (John 1:12). There is no human being who needs to face the *condemnation* of God in the judgement. For 'there is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus' (Romans 8:1). Rather, all who accept Jesus Christ and His salvation are *vindicated* in the judgement. For there are 2 possible verdicts in a trial - condemnation (judgement against) or vindication (judgement in favour of).

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life." John 5:24

"He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." John 3:18, 19

The Bible is full of stories from the Flood, to the Canaanites, the Israelites, and mankind itself – of the grace of God in delaying judgement so that all might come to repentance and be saved. While judgement is delayed, God raises patriarchs, judges, prophets, disciples, apostles and His Body, the Church, to proclaim a warning of judgement to **come** and the good news of salvation in Christ Jesus (Acts 24:25, Rev 14:6-12, Matt 24:14).

Judgement

There is definitely a Judgement (the pre-Advent for the professed righteous and the Judgement at the great white throne of the unrighteous).

Christ Himself declared it.

Matt 7:22, Matt 25:31-33, Matt 16:27, 2 Tim 4:1, 8,

See also: 2 Cor 5:10, Heb 10:30, Rev 20.

Christ our Judge

“Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.” Acts 17:31

See also John 5:22

The Hour of God’s Judgement

God’s everlasting kingdom is preceded by the Pre-Advent Judgement in heaven (Daniel 7:10-26) and the restoration of the gospel (Daniel 8:14) and the finishing of the mystery of God (Rev 10:7, Dan 12:7, Col 1:25-27, Eph 3:3, 5, Romans 16:25-27) **on earth**.

The Court was seated and judgment made ***in favour of*** the saints – all who have accepted Christ as Saviour and Lord are saints. Satan the Accuser is cast down by the blood of Christ, for it satisfies God; the saints who testify that their righteousness is only found in Christ Jesus and that their sins are washed in the blood of the Lamb, shut the mouth of Satan (Revelation 12:10, 11).

Judgement According to Works

Many Christians are afraid of the verses in the Bible that say we will be judged according to our works. But there is no need to be afraid if Christ is your Saviour and you are trusting in His blood for the remission of your sins, and in His righteousness for your righteousness, and in the power of the Spirit to produce the works of God in you.

No-one can stand in the judgement with his own works, produced of himself – see Psalm 143:2. No matter how good they seem, the Bible calls these works dead works (Heb 6:4, 9:14) and works of self-righteousness.

But if, like Christ, we can testify that the works we do are not our works but the works that God does in us and through us, for the life we live is lived by faith in the son of God (Gal 2:20), then our works

are the works of God and we have nothing to fear in the judgement. 'God looks upon us as He looks upon His Son'.

"But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God." John 3:21

The Works of God

See the following verses: John 6:28, 29, John 8:39, John 9:4, 10:25, 32-28, John 14:10, 12, Eph 2:10, 2 Tim 3:17, Titus 2:14, 3:5.

The Works of the World opposed to God

John 7:7

Our own works

Acts 7:41, Isa 64:6

...when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do. Luke 17:10

The Wicked and the Righteous Contrasted

All who reject Christ Jesus (the wicked) will be judged by their own works, for they have refused the grace of God as seen in Christ Jesus (Rev 20:12, 13).

In contrast, the righteous will stand in the judgement, washed in the blood of Christ and covered by the robe of Christ's righteousness. He is their great High Priest, who bears their names on His breast (Exodus 28:29). Because they have accepted Him as Lord and Saviour, God is for them, no-one can be against them; God has declared them righteous, no-one can accuse them and Christ is their High Priest, no-one can condemn them (Romans 8:31-39).

The wicked have their names blotted out of the Lamb's Book of Life (Psalm 69:28, Rev 13:8, 17:8, 20:15, 22:19) written from the foundation of the world.

The righteous have their sins blotted out of the book of records. Their names will remain in the Book of Life (Phil 4:3, Rev 3:5, 21:27).

John the Beloved's message – if we know the love of God, we shall not fear the Judgment

*Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. **Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.** And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. 1 John 3:1-3*

We shall be like Christ when He appears, for we have allowed His Spirit to purify us. We therefore, have no fear of the judgement, for we know the exceeding greatness of God's love to us; not only

has He redeemed us, but He has created us in Christ Jesus for good works which He Himself has prepared for us (Eph 2:10), and we will be His workmanship when He comes in glory.

*My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. For **if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things.** 1 John 3:18-20*

When we accept Christ, the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts (Romans 5:1-5) and we love Him and our brethren as He loves, unchanging, unselfishly and unconditionally. If despite this, Satan attacks our conscience and tries to condemn us, God will over-rule him. When we follow Christ, who is the Truth, we can be assured that we know Whom we have believed and are confident that He will keep that which we have committed to Him (our life which is hid in Christ Col 3:1-3)) against the Day when inquiry will be made of men's souls (2 Tim 1:12)

*Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. **Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.** There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. We love Him because He first loved us. 1 John 4:15-19*

If we know the perfect love of God, His perfect plan for us, that no-one who believes in His Son should perish but have everlasting life, we shall have no torment, but rather we will have boldness in the judgment. Boldness not in ourselves, but in the merits of Christ our Saviour who has loved us with an everlasting love. We are now the sons and daughters of God, brethren of the Firstborn from the dead, Christ Jesus. He is the Firstborn Son in heaven; we are the sons of God on earth. The Faithful Witness will Himself declare that His blood and righteousness will avail us in the judgement.

Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. Revelation 12:10, 11

And now, O Father, mindful of the love
That bought us, once for all, on Calvary's tree,
And having with us Him that pleads above,
We here present, we here spread forth to Thee,
That only offering perfect in Thine eyes,
The one true, pure, immortal sacrifice.

Look, Father, look on His anointed face,
And only look on us as found in Him;
Look not on our misusings of Thy grace,
Our prayer so languid, and our faith so dim;

For lo! between our sins and their reward,
We set the passion of Thy Son, our Lord.

-William Monk

Additional Note:

What about un-confessed sin in the pre-Advent Judgement? Many are worried that if they forget to confess to God even one sin, they will be left out of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Firstly, this means we have a wrong idea of God. He wants us to be in His Kingdom. He is greater than our hearts and knows all things (1 John 3:20). He sees the sincerity of soul and the longing to know Him more.

Secondly, we have a wrong idea of ourselves. If we are sincerely and joyfully living as God's children, we will always live in the consciousness of God's goodness and our unworthiness. Our lives will be marked by daily repentance as we learn new things about God's character, and daily confession as we see how far we fall short of His goodness and glory. Nevertheless, we also praise Him daily, for our hope is only in Him. Such a Christian, God will never forsake. He Himself will bring to our minds that which we need to lay before Him in confession.

Finally, it is also a warning. Those Christians who are living nominal Christian lives, professing Christ, but making no attempt to know and love Him are the ones least conscious of their sinfulness and the righteousness of God. In these last days of earth's history, more than outright acts of sin, Satan tempts us to worldliness, so that the priority of the life is not God and His glory, but ourselves (remember Lot's wife, and the days of Noah?). The gospel of God's grace is always accompanied by warnings not to despise it and reject it. We are living in one of the crisis points of history, and we are a people called out by God to proclaim His gospel and reveal His righteousness to the world and thus finish the mystery of God through the power of the Holy Spirit. With such a high and holy calling we cannot and dare not live complacent, nominal lives, professing a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.

Do you know of the Book of Remembrance?

Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD listened and heard them; so a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who meditate on His name.

"They shall be Mine," says the LORD of hosts, "On the day that I make them My jewels. And I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him." Then you shall again discern between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him. Malachi 3:16-18
