

Back to Basics – Eternal Judgment Mt. 25:31-46

Thesis: To help us better understand the eternal judgment that we all face.

Introduction:

The eternal judgment that we face will occur at the same time of the resurrection of the dead.

I. There will be a time in which the world will be judged (25:31-33).

A. This judgment will occur “when the Son of Man comes in His glory” (25:31).

1. There is no time given as to when the Son of Man will come.
 - a. We do not know when Christ will come again.
 - b. Mt. 24:3 – Jesus is asked a question about the end of time.
 - c. Mt. 24:36-44 – Jesus tells that no one knows when He will return.
2. However, we know that it will be a great day when He does come; and we know a little about what will happen when He does return.

B. On this Day, Christ will divide the nations into two parts (25:32-33).

1. The sheep will be put on His right hand.
 - a. The sheep are the ones that have done good.
 - b. They will receive a great reward.
2. The goats will be on His left hand.
 - a. The goats are the ones who have done evil.
 - b. They will receive eternal punishment.

II. Those on the right hand will receive “eternal life” (25:34-40).

A. Jesus commends the faithful for the good that they have done (25:34-40).

1. Jesus will give the faithful eternal life.
2. Jesus is not giving a checklist of things that we have to do, but He is giving us the attitude and kind of life that we must live.

B. Heaven is going to be a great place to spend our eternity.

1. Jesus describes it as a kingdom that has been prepared for us (25:34).
 - a. Jn. 14:2-3 - In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. {3} And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.
 - b. Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people.
2. John gives us a great description of heaven.
 - a. Rev. 21:1-4 - Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. {2} Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. {3} And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and

He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. {4} And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”

- b. **Rev. 21:22-27** - But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. {23} The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. {24} And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. {25} Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). {26} And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. {27} But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.
- c. **Rev. 22:1-5** - And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. {2} In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. {3} And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. {4} They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. {5} There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.

C. Notice some characteristics of those that will spend an eternity in heaven.

- 1. **Lk. 10:25-37**
 - a. A lawyer asks Jesus, “what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”
 - b. After Jesus asks him about the law, he says, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,’ and ‘your neighbor as yourself’” (**10:27**).
 - c. After this lawyer tries to justify himself, Jesus tells the Parable of the Good Samaritan.
- 2. **Rom. 2:7** - eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality;
- 3. **Mt. 7:21** - Not everyone who says to Me, “Lord, Lord,” shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.
- 4. Getting to heaven is not an accident; it is something that we work for.

III. Those on the left hand will receive “everlasting punishment” (25:41-46).

A. Jesus condemns those on His left hand because of their unfaithfulness (25:41-45).

1. These are ones who have not done what God wanted them to do.
2. Again, this is not a checklist to follow so that we do not go to this place; but rather it is the attitude behind the list.

B. Hell will be a terrible place to spend our eternity.

1. Hell is a prepared place for an unprepared people (25:41).
2. Notice some descriptions of hell.
 - a. Pain – 7 times Jesus describes it as a place of “weeping and gnashing of teeth.”
 - b. No relief – Mk. 9:44 - Where “their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.”
3. John sums up the pain and torture of hell in the book of Revelation.
 - a. Rev. 20:10-15 - The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. {11} Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. {12} And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. {13} The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. {14} Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. {15} And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.
 - b. Rev. 21:8 - But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

C. Notice some characteristics of those that will spend an eternity in hell.

1. Paul tells us of those that will not “inherit the kingdom of God.”
 - a. I Cor. 6:9-10 - 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 homosexuals, nor sodomites, {10} nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.
 - b. Gal. 5:19-21 - Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, {20} idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, {21} envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you

- beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.
2. When it is broken down into its simplest terms, there are really only two types of people that will spend their eternity in hell.
 - a. **II Thes. 1:8-9** (those that do not obey the gospel) - in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. {9} These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,
 - b. **Heb. 10:26-31** (those that sin willfully after having a knowledge of the truth) - For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, {27} but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. {28} Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. {29} Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? {30} For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine; I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The Lord will judge His people." {31} It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Conclusion:

Both heaven and hell will last for an eternity.

They will never expire.

As Tom Holland says, eternity is the longest word in the Bible.

There are only two places where you will spend eternity.

Which one do you choose?