



Judgment

March 26, 2023

Imagine two men on an airplane.

The first is given a parachute and told to put it on because it will improve his flight. As he straps the apparatus on his back, he notices the weight of it on his shoulders and he finds he now has difficulty sitting upright. Some of the other passengers are laughing at him because he is wearing a parachute inside the plane. Disillusionment and bitterness fill his heart.

The second man is also given a parachute. He is told to put it on because at any moment he will have to jump out of the plane at 25,000 feet. He gratefully puts the parachute on. He does not notice the weight of it upon his shoulders, nor is he concerned that he cannot sit upright. His mind is consumed with the thought of what would happen to him if he jumped without a parachute.

Let's now analyze the motive and result of each passenger's experience.

The first man's motive for putting on the parachute was solely to improve his flight. The result of his experience was that he was humiliated by the other passengers, disillusioned, and somewhat embittered against those who gave him the parachute.

The second man put on the parachute solely to survive the jump to come. And because of his knowledge of what would happen to him if he jumped without it, he has a deep-rooted joy and peace in his heart, knowing that he has been saved from certain death.

Many modern-day evangelists say, "Put on the Lord Jesus Christ and he will make you happy and improve your flight." The sinner responds and puts on the Savior to see if the claims are true. What does he get? The promised temptation, tribulation, and persecution. So, what does he do? He takes off the Lord Jesus, disillusioned and even embittered. Instead of preaching that Jesus will improve your flight, we should be warning sinners that one day they will have to jump out of the plane.

The reason the second passenger has joy and peace in their heart is because he knows that the parachute is going to save him from certain death. In the same way, Christians have deep-rooted joy and peace because they know that the righteousness of Christ is going to deliver them from the wrath to come.

Consider this: as the flight attendant is walking down the aisle, she accidentally spills the hot coffee on the lap of the second passenger. How does he react? Does he say, "Man, that hurt!"? Yes, he does. But he doesn't rip the parachute from his shoulders, throw it to the floor, and say, "That stupid parachute!" He didn't put the parachute on to have a better flight. He put it on to save himself when the time comes to jump.

Why is it that 94% of those who make decisions for Christ in evangelistic campaigns fall away and do not become incorporated into a local church?

Some say that they just need better follow up. But the Ethiopian Eunuch didn't need follow up. He had God and the Scriptures and that was enough for him to thrive and have an impact on his world. A true conversion needs little or no follow up.

The problem is that most "converts" are not truly converted. They have not been told the true gospel and what their necessary saving response is to that gospel. We must make sure that we are preaching the true gospel.

Mark 1:15 — "and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.'"

Matthew 4:17 — "From that time Jesus began to preach and say, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"

Acts 2:38 — "Peter said to them, 'Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'"

Acts 3:19 — "Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;"

To repent is to turn away from sin. In order to repent you must know that you have a sin problem. And you must know the consequences of not repenting, which is the judgment to come.

It is appointed once for a man to die and then comes judgment.

In today's evangelism, many are asked if they want a better life. They are not told that they have sinned against a holy God and judgment awaits them unless they repent and flee to Christ. They aren't converted and saved because they have not repented. And it isn't all their fault. It is also the fault of those who have failed to preach the truth to them.

Have you been truly converted? Are you truly saved? Have you repented and believed and fled to Christ as your Savior and Lord?

During the 5th part of God's Grand Story, the Divided Kingdom, God sent prophets to Israel and Judah to try to get them to repent of their idolatry and return to Him. But they would not. So, God had to send judgment.

Read 2 Chronicles 36:15-16 — The people mock God's prophets.

Despite prophets and invasions, none of the kings or the population as a whole repent of their idolatry except for brief moments. God gave them plenty of time, but they did not turn back to Him. **He tried everything to get their attention—even national devastation and humiliation.**

God reaches a point where the time for warnings and the time for repentance has come and gone. And that time will happen for all of us as well. A time of judgment is coming for every one of us.

Hebrews 9:27 — "...it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment,"

Every one of us is going to die unless the Lord returns before then. Most live as if that is not going to happen.

You and I are going to die one day. Then what?

Read Revelation 20:11-15

What a horrifying time. A time when books are opened. In those books, your name and every sin you've committed has been written down.

Psalm 50:21 — "These things you have done, and I kept silence; You thought I was just like you; I will reprove you and state the case in order before your eyes."

Just before the death of actor W.C. Fields, a friend visited Fields' hospital room and was surprised to find him thumbing through a Bible. Asked what he was doing with a Bible, Fields replied, "I'm looking for loopholes."

On Judgment Day, there are no loopholes. After all your sins are announced, the gavel will fall. There will be no retrials, there will be no mistrials, there will be no pleading guilty to a lesser charge, there will be no pleading insanity, and there will be no probation or parole.

Is there any way to prepare for that time up there while we are still down here? How?

Flee the wrath to come by fleeing to Jesus. You don't accept Christ, you flee to Christ.

The Bible says that books will be opened. And then there is the Lamb's Book of Life.

Those who have truly repented have their name written in the Lamb's Book of Life. If that is you, then something very different happens on Judgment Day. There will be One who has hair white as wool, His face shining like the Sun, His eyes aflame, and His white robes have written on them, "King of Kings and Lord of Lords." He interrupts the proceedings when it is your turn for judgment...

"I already bore their judgment on the cross."

When the early pioneers were crossing the central states to land that had been opened up for homesteading, they traveled in covered wagons drawn by oxen, and progress was necessarily slow. One day they were horrified to note that a field of dried grass was burning fiercely and the flames were coming toward them rapidly. They had crossed a river the day before, but it would be impossible to go back to that before the flames would be upon them. One wise man spoke up. He gave the command to set fire to the grass behind them. Then when a space was burned over, the whole company moved back upon it. As the flames roared on toward them from the west, a little girl cried out in terror, "Are you sure we shall not all be burned up?" The man replied, "My child, the flames cannot reach us here, for we are standing where the fire has been!"

The fires of God's judgment burned themselves out on Christ, and all who are in Christ are safe forever, for they are now standing where the fire has been.

If you have already fled to Christ as your Savior and Lord, then He already bore your judgment, and you will not enter into that horrible day of judgment, because your name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

If you haven't done that...what are you waiting for? If you are not sure if you have done that, make sure today.