

# Chapters 56 - The Final Judgment and Eternal Punishment

1. Introduction.
  - A. We are in Wayne Grudem's Systematic Theology, Chapter 56 - The Final Judgment and Eternal Punishment (pp. 1140-1157)
2. The Final Judgment.
  - A. **Will people be able to change their minds about Christ after death and prior to the final judgment?**
  - B. Scripture Support.
    - (1). **Revelation 20:11-15.**
      - a. What does it mean by "death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them" and "death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire"?
      - b. Why does this reference say that "the lake of fire" is the second death?
      - c. **Luke 16:19-31** - rich man and Lazarus. Rich man is in Hades in torment. Interesting - Abraham refers to Moses and the prophets - there is knowledge of others. Prophets come after Moses.
    - (2). **Matthew 25:31-46** - sheep and the goats. Those on his left (the goats) go into eternal punishment, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. The righteous (those on his right/sheep) go into eternal life.
  - C. The final judgment is a culmination of God's reward and punishment throughout history.
    - (1). **What are some of those examples?** Noah and those killed in the flood, Lot's family and Sodom and Gomorrah, and Moses, Aaron, Joshua, and Caleb and the Israelites who left Egypt.
    - (2). **2 Peter 2:4-9** examples - **verse 9 then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to hold the unrighteous for punishment on the Day of Judgment.**
  - D. **Will There Be More Than One Judgment?** [p. 1141]
    - (1). Dispensationalist view - there is one after the tribulation and before the millennium. This is based on the treatment of the Jews. They also have a judgment of believers' works; Christians will get rewards.
      - a. Judgment of nations - **Matthew 25:31-46** to determine who enters millennium. [p. 1142]
      - b. Judgment of Christian works - "bema" - judgment seat - **2 Corinthians 5:10.** [p. 1142]
      - c. Final "great white throne judgment" - **Revelation 20:11-15.**
  - E. **When will the final judgment occur?** [p. 1142]
    - (1). After the millennium and the final rebellion (**Revelation 20:7-8**).

- (2). Satan is completely removed - Revelation 20:10 thrown into the lake of burning sulfur to be tormented day and night forever and ever.

F. **What will the final judgment be like?**

- (1). **Who will be the judge?** [p.1142]

- a. Jesus - this goes against the criticism of God being an unloving God. We mentioned Matthew 25:31-46 earlier about Jesus judging the sheep and the goats.
- b. **Will Jesus judge in love since he will be doing the judging and not God (though indirectly, it is still God)?**
- c. **Is God just in his judgment? 1 Peter 1:17 God judges each one impartially according to his deeds.**
- d. **2 Timothy 4:1 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, ...**

- (2). **Who will be judged?**

- a. Unbelievers.

[1]. **Revelation 20:15 anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.** Will they be thrown into one big party room? I've heard people say that they would not want to spend an eternity with God, because they see him as being unloving and uncaring.

[2]. **Will there be different levels of punishment?** We read **Revelations 20:12, 15, Luke 12:47-48**, and **Matthew 11:22**. I don't think it will be like Dante's inferno - there are devils tormenting. (I saw similar pictures in Bali.)

- b. Believers. [pp. 1143-5]

[1]. **Romans 14:10, 12 You, then, why do you judge your brother or sister? Or why do you treat them with contempt? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. <sup>12</sup> So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.**

[2]. **2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.**

[3]. Parables of the talents appear to speak of rewards.

[4]. **What if we don't get any rewards? 1 Corinthians 3: 11-15 For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. <sup>12</sup> If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, <sup>13</sup> their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire,**

and the fire will test the quality of each person's work. <sup>14</sup> If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. <sup>15</sup> If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved-- even though only as one escaping through the flames. The implication is not a jealousy of what each gets as a reward. **Is there a motivation for us to get heavenly rewards?** (I view the reward is better relationship with God and Christ.)

- c. Angels. [p. 1145]
  - [1]. **2 Peter 2:4 For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them in chains of darkness to be held for judgment;**
  - [2]. **Are we going to be involved in this judgment? 1 Corinthians 6:3 Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life!**
  - [3]. **When does Satan get judged? Revelation 20:10.**
  - [4]. Judging is not something new in Biblical history even if we may not understand the context of judging angels or the apostles judging the twelve tribes (**Matthew 19:28**).

G. **Is it necessary to have a Final Judgment?** [p. 1146]

- (1). Refers to Berkhof - it is a public display and declaration of God's glory, showing both God's holiness and righteousness, and also his grace and mercy. Our death may be secret but judgment is public.

H. **What is the implication/moral application of a final judgment in our current lives?**

- (1). It satisfies our inward sense of a need for judgment in the world?
  - a. Our trust is in God who judges, not that we have to have everything fair from our view. This goes back to the question about God being loving in this world. He loves us but he has let us live in our own sinful mess.
- (2). It enables us to forgive others freely. [p. 1147]
  - a. When people yell at someone to "go to hell", what are they really saying? They are saying that they want God to punish a person for eternity.
  - b. This mess includes death - Genesis 3:22 Adam and Eve were not allowed to then eat of the tree of life and live forever. Angels sinned once and then have received a sentence of eternal punishment.
  - c. In this world and life of sin and death, we have hope for life eternal despite our many sins. **Romans 5:16 the gift (of God) followed many trespasses.**

- d. **Romans 12:19 Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.**
  - e. Things will either be paid for by Christ or by the person in his punishment.
  - (3). **What is the motive for righteous living? Is it eternal rewards?**  
It is also a warning to unbelievers to not continue living after evil.  
[p. 1148]
  - (4). **Is there a greater motive for evangelism or are we complacent?**
2. Hell. [p. 1149]
- A. Definition - Hell is a place of eternal conscious punishment for the wicked.
    - (1). It is a place of outer darkness (**Matthew 25:30**).
    - (2). It is an eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels (**Matthew 25:41**).
    - (3). It is an eternal punishment (**Matthew 25:46**).
    - (4). It is where the "worm does not die and the fire is not quenched" (**Mark 9:48**).
  - B. **Why is there a denial of an eternal conscious punishment? What is taught instead?** Annihilationism - one suffers torment for a while and then God makes it so they don't exist.
  - C. **What is God's heart toward eternal punishment? Ezekiel 33:11 Say to them, 'As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Why will you die, people of Israel?'**
  - D. If God does not punish, his justice is not satisfied and he does not receive all of the glory due him. [p. 1152]