

Monday Week 52 Final Things

Bible Reading: Revelation 20:10-12

Q 205 What will happen at the great judgment?

A. The dead will be judged by their works at the great judgment.

“Hey, Buddy. Can you come and play?” Danny and Davey wanted their neighbor boy to come and play with them. “Just wait a minute. I have to finish the lawn. I only need to clip around the edges. And I know where my dad checks, so I don’t have to do it all.” Buddy clipped the edges of a few places on the lawn, and then the boys ran off to play.

Maybe Buddy got away without clipping all the edges. Maybe he didn’t. He thought his dad only checked a few places. It won’t be like that at the great judgment. When everyone stands before God, every work will be judged. The Bible tells us that all things are “opened unto the eyes of him.” In fact, everything is written in God’s books, and at the judgment “the books are opened.” God won’t miss anything. Make sure you are living so that you won’t be ashamed at the judgment.

Thinking Deeper

The concept of man giving account of his works to God is one that is completely unacceptable to the secular, naturalist mind. In fact, the naturalist holds to a religious belief in naturalism. The following quote illustrates it well.

“It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us to accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that we are forced by our *a priori* adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counter-intuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is absolute, for we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door.”*

Also hoping for a life without accountability to God, Carl Sagan said, “The cosmos is all that is or ever was or ever will be.” He claimed that man is “lost in the cosmos.” In contrast, the Bible declares that one day every man will stand before God and give account. Despite the wishful thinking and vain words of the naturalists, God has not ceased to exist. And not one word of God will fall to the ground. There will be a great judgment.

*Lewontin, R.C, "Billions and Billions of Demons", Review of "The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark," by Carl Sagan, New York Review, January 9, 1997.

Tuesday Week 52 Final Things

Bible Reading: Revelation 20:13-15

Q 206 What happens to people whose names are not in the Book of Life?

A. Those whose names are not in the Book of Life will be cast into the lake of fire.

“Have you ever burned your hand on a hot stove?” Woody asked. He was the teacher of a class of boys. He paused as the boys thought about how much that hurt. Burns are awful. Woody continued. “Hell will be ten times hotter than that!”

We don't really know how hot Hell will be. But we do know what the Bible says about the rich man in Hell. He said he “was tormented in these flames.” It also says that Hell is a place where “the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched.” People in Hell are in the worst possible place. “The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night,” according to Revelation 14:11.

God warns us about Hell so that we will make preparation to escape. Only Jesus can save us. Trust in Jesus as your savior from sin and Hell. “Whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:15).

Thinking Deeper

Fourteen-year-old Jenny had come from Russia to America with her family in 1929. They had come across the ocean and were in New York on Ellis Island, where the papers of immigrants were processed before they were allowed to be free in the society. While they were there, they noticed a man whose papers were not in order. On the other side of the fence were the man's wife and child. How they wanted their father to be with them in America as a free man! But that was not to be. Some agents in Russia had put together papers for him, but they were forged. The officials discovered the forgery and sent the man back across the ocean to Russia. For many, many years Jenny remembered how that man and his family were devastated. She often told that sad story.

Imagine how much more devastating it will be when people stand before God and find that their names are not in the Book of Life. No wonder there will be weeping and wailing. Now is the time to prepare for that day. Put your faith in Christ and commit yourself to Him. He is your salvation, sanctification and redemption.

Wednesday Week 52 Final Things

Bible Reading: Revelation 21:1-7

Q 207 What will heaven be like?

A. Heaven will be where all things are new and God dwells with his people.

Jenny and her family had arrived in America after escaping from repression in Stalin's Russia. As they rode through the streets of New York City for the first time, they were greeted by sights they had never even imagined. In Russia, they lived in a small village. Now they were surrounded by stores that were filled with things to sell. Neon lights lit up the city as though it was daytime. Jenny thought she was in a fairy land.

Compared to this world, heaven will seem like a fairy land. Everything will be magnificent. There will not be any sickness. There will not be any kind of suffering. Everybody will be happy. There will not be any sin. There will not be any temptation. No evil thing will be in heaven. No evil people will be there. Everything will be made new, and God will be with His people. Don't miss heaven. It's going to be wonderful!

Thinking Deeper

Joe Hill was a labor activist and a songwriter who wrote anti-Christian songs mocking preaching about heaven that included this phrase: "You'll get pie in the sky when you die -- that's a lie." Hill had a particular antagonism to the Salvation Army and "holy rollers" who "jump and shout." He went on to ridicule the concept of living for the next world and called the idea of a reward in heaven a "dirty lie." Factions of the labor movement have idolized Hill, who was tried and convicted for murder in Utah. He was executed in 1915.

Not all of the "struggling masses" have accepted Hill's earthly vision of what is important. One black minister reacted by defending the idea of heaven as something to look forward to. "Don't take that hope away from my people," he said.

That hope is more important than any other hope. Rich people who "have it all" are going to leave it all behind. The "workers of the world" who deny anything but having their pie now, will find their pie is rather unappealing when they step into the next world.

Christians have hope of heaven. That hope will not be a disappointment. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (1Cor. 2:9).

Thursday Week 52 Final Things

Bible Reading: Revelation 22:8-17

Q 208 What is God's final invitation?

A. God invites people who will to come to Him.

Jeffrey was excited. One of his friends had given him an envelope. In it was an invitation to a party. A lot of his friends were going to be there. There was going to be food and some games. The whole party was going to be a great time. Jeffrey was glad to get the invitation. He let the family know that he was going to go to the party. They were prepared for him when he got there. It really was a lot of fun.

At the end of the Bible God gives an invitation for people to come to Him. "Whosoever will let him come." Have you accepted God's invitation? Have you given your heart to Jesus, to believe in Him and to serve Him? If not, give Him your heart today. He wants you to be with Him forever.

Thinking Deeper

There is probably no greater contrast between Calvinism and Wesleyanism than their interpretations of the great invitation at the end of Revelation which says, "Whosoever will may come." Adam Clarke wrote that "no soul is excluded." In contrast, Herman Hoeksema wrote, that any sinner's "will to come is a sure manifestation of God's eternal purpose of salvation concerning him." That is, if someone will come, it is because God made him willing and he would come because that purpose of God in him is "irresistible." So there is really no will of man involved except as God places it in him. Furthermore, man can't resist it. The contrast is that in Calvin's scheme everyone is excluded from the invitation except the elect, whereas in the Wesleyan view no one at all is excluded from the invitation.

The verse is clear. Do you have a desire to come to Christ? Do you have a longing for God's forgiveness? Will you come? Then you may.

Friday Week 52 Final Things

Review the Week's Questions

Q 205 What will happen at the great judgment?

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Q 207 What will heaven be like?

A. Heaven will be where all things are new and God dwells with his people.

Q 208 What is God's final invitation?

A. God invites people who will to come to Him.

A small boy looked up into the starry sky. He saw the wonderful creation that God had made. He sensed the great expanse of space. He felt very small. Then he made a wish. "I wish I wouldn't have to die. I wish I could live forever." That boy grew up. Maybe he forgot his wish or maybe he didn't. But when he was a man he heard about Jesus. He heard how Jesus could forgive him of his sins and be his Lord and Savior. That man opened his heart to Jesus. He found what his heart longed for. He found eternal life in Jesus. All the rest of his life he lived with the hope that he could live forever.

You can find eternal life by trusting in Jesus as your savior. You can open your heart to Him. If you do, he will cleanse you from your sins and come into your heart. "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev. 3:20).

Thinking Deeper

If the Bible is true, we are in the midst of a great battle between truth and lies, between right and wrong, between Heaven and Hell. That battle rages in the spiritual realm and greatly affects the world we live in. At the end will be the great judgment. There all those who are involved in the battle will be separated. Some will be cast into the lake of fire; some will be welcomed into Heaven to ever be with the Lord.

You are involved in that battle. You are on one side or the other. It is important that you are on God's side, "earnestly contending for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." How you live and what you believe are closely connected. If you are walking in obedient faith which worketh by love, your life will be marked by holiness. If you are doubtful and self-assertive, your life will be stained with sin. How you live is an outgrowth of what you believe, and that will determine your eternal destiny. Jesus said it like this: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, if a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (John 8:51).

Walk in faith and obedience with Jesus and you win.