

Th122 Foundation Doctrines

Lesson Th122 – 29 Eternal Judgment – Judgment of the Wicked

There is a town in Mexico named Tijuana. It is located right on the Mexican and USA border, across from the American city of San Diego, California. A very powerful drug lord lived in Tijuana. He was called “The Little Child.” But his name was very deceiving. He led a drug gang that was very violent, murdering many people and selling illegal drugs. The government police had sought to capture this drug lord for many years. Finally, in the winter of 2010, the police got the lead that they were waiting for. The drug lord, known as the Little Child, would be in a particular house that evening.

A small army of police officers, armed with guns, descended on the house and arrested the drug lord. Also arrested with the drug lord were five of his gang leaders. But the big surprise was that there were also five corrupt police officers there in the house with the drug lord. They too were arrested. They all would be tried, found guilty, and sentenced to prison. It is really sad that the five corrupt police officers had to go to prison. The prison had not been built for police officers, but rather for criminals. But those five police officers had decided to follow the leadership of the drug lord. Thus, when they all were arrested, they would follow the drug lord “Little Child” to punishment in prison.

In the Bible, we read in the book of Hebrews that “it is appointed for men to die once, but after this comes the judgment” (Heb 9:27). Every person who has ever drawn a breath will one day stand before Jesus sitting upon his throne. On that day, everyone will be judged. The apostle John saw a vision of that judgment. This is what he wrote in his book, the Revelation:

Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire” (Rev 20:11-15).

In our previous lessons you learned that there are two resurrections. The First Resurrection is for all believers. Every believer will be resurrected with a new immortal body that will never become sick, suffer pain, or die. But we also learned of the Second Resurrection. This is the resurrection of the wicked. They too will receive a body that will not die. Together, everyone will stand before the Great White Throne and be judged. At this judgment, books will be opened which will reveal everything a person has ever done—both the good and the bad.

There has been no perfect person except for Jesus Christ. Thus, everyone who stands before the throne should be condemned for the sins in their lives. Indeed, the apostle Paul wrote, “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:23). But believers have nothing to

fear on this day. All of our sins have been washed away—erased from the books of our lives. The Lord spoke through the prophet Isaiah and said,

“Come now, and let us reason together,”
Says the LORD,
“Though your sins are like scarlet,
They shall be as white as snow;
Though they are red like crimson,
They shall be as wool” (Isa 1:18, NKJV).

So, the books of the believers will record only the good deeds of their lives and their names will appear in the book of life. They will live forever with God as their Father. They will be joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

But for the unbelievers, those who were part of the Second Resurrection, things will not go well. Their books will reveal and make public every word and deed. Unfortunately, God will not weigh their good deeds against their bad deeds. This is not a school test where there is a minimum passing grade and if you get more questions correct than incorrect you pass. Paul wrote that “the wages of sin is death.” James wrote “For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it” (James 2:10).

Thus, judgment before the Great White Throne is very straightforward. One has either sinned or not sinned. The blood of Jesus Christ has washed away all believers’ sins. Therefore, believers stand before the Great White Throne as if they had never sinned. But the unbelievers will all stand condemned, because of the sins of their own lives. Their names will not be found written in the book of life. And they will be thrown into the lake of fire, where they will suffer great torment for eternity.

Many people argue that this punishment is unfair. After all, the lake of fire was created as a place of punishment for Satan and his fallen angels. In many ways, this eternal judgment is like what happened to the corrupt police officers in our story. The Mexican prison had not been built to imprison police officers. It had been built to punish lawbreakers like the drug lord and his gang. But when the five police officers became a part of the drug lord’s gang, they became guilty of breaking the same laws. The very law that condemned the drug gang to prison, would also judge and condemn the corrupt police. Since unbelievers followed Satan into sin, they will also follow Satan into the eternal punishment of the lake of fire.

This lesson is **important** because it shows us again that the blood of Christ cleanses us from every sin. Believers need not fear the Great White Throne judgment; their names are written in the book of life.

The **main truth** of this lesson is that everyone who has ever lived will stand before the Great White Throne to be judged according to their works. When the books are opened, believers will have no sins recorded, and their names will be found in the book of life. Unbelievers’ names will not be found, and they will be condemned because of their sins.

Answering these questions will help you remember the points of this lesson:

1. Who will stand before the Great White Throne to be judged? [Pause 5 seconds]
 - a. If you answered that everyone who has ever lived will stand before the Great White Throne, you answered correctly.
2. What is the eternal punishment for the unbelievers? [Pause 5 seconds]
 - A. If you said that all unbelievers will be cast into the lake of fire, you are right.
3. At the Great White Throne judgment, why are no sins found in the books of the believers? [Pause 5 seconds]
 - A. If you said that the blood of Jesus has washed all of the believer's sins away, then you are correct.

Your **assignment** for this lesson is to listen to this lesson at least three times until you fully understand the Great White Throne judgment. Then share this teaching with fellow believers, encouraging them to testify to unbelievers so that the lost might be saved.