

How to Judge the World

Matthew 25:31-26:2

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So Lord Jesus, thank you, and we pray that You would fill us up. And Lord, we pray that You would fill us up with Your Word, but help us not so much to be worried about comprehending Your Word as surrendering to Your Word, that Your Word would comprehend us. And then Lord, being comprehended by Your Word, transformed by Your Word, cut by Your Word, and changed by Your Word, may we be Your Word incarnate in this world of ours, and may You use the money in these plates for that purpose, Lord God, that the world might see You, and they might know You, Jesus, our Lord. It's in Your name that we pray, amen.

In Matthew 24 Jesus leaves the temple, prophesying its destruction. As He sits on the Mount of Olives, His disciples ask Him:

- 1) When will the temple be destroyed?
- 2) What about the sign of Your coming?
- 3) And of the close of the age?

In Matthew 25:31, Jesus tells of the close of the age, literally "the full perfection of the aion." Aion means age. Aionios means like God's age beyond this age. It's often translated eternal, but it isn't an exact equivalent. Scholars argue over its meaning, but whatever the case, Jesus is talking about the edge of our age and whatever is after it, around it, and before it.

He's talking about the judgment, so we must know:

- 1) When is it?
- 2) And who gets in?

In John 12 Jesus says, "Now is the judgment of this world."

In John 3 Jesus says, "He who believes in the Son of God is not judged, but He that does not believe is judged already." Jesus came not to judge the world, and yet He is the judgment.

In John 15 Jesus tells His disciples that "they are already made clean by His word."

But in John 12 Jesus says the one that rejects Him will be judged by His Word, judged on the last day.

So there's a last day (of the aion) judgment, and there's one now for even now you can have aionios life, eternal life from beyond this aion.

People say, "Okay... whatever. But who gets in?" We're evangelicals, so we want to know who gets in.

I was talking to one of our children's ministry staff recently, and she said, "Yah, it's kind of hard with some parents. All they want to know is, 'Did my child say the prayer? Did they get in? Did they say the sinner's prayer?'"

Well, what is the sinner's prayer? What does it take to get in?

Romans 10:9, "If you confess Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart God raised Him from the dead, you'll be saved." Is that it?

Four verses later, Romans 10:13, "Whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Well, are we talking Yahweh, Yeshua, Joshua, or the English Jesus?

Nowhere does the Bible use the term “sinner’s prayer” and the closest thing to a formula is “Help!” or “Save!” “God save,” “Jesus,” and He’s not a formula.

Well, James says, “Faith without works is dead,” so it must be faith and something else, maybe baptism.

Peter says, “Repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins.” Well, is it sprinkling or immersion? Is it babies or adults? What’s an adult?

What does it take to get it? How can I be soundly saved? Someone just sent me a couple cd’s, “Soundly Saved, and another called “True and False Conversions.”

People come to me and say, “Peter, you have to be more careful with who you invite to the communion table. I mean what if some believe they are saved and they’re not saved?”

That is, what if they have faith that they’re saved by grace through faith, and they’re not?

What if they have faith they’re saved by faith and they’re not? ...That’s confusing.

But we want to know who’s good and who’s evil, who’s saved and who’s not saved.

As we’ve preached through Matthew, Jesus has said some weird stuff, and the question has become even more acute.

- We preached on the wheat and the tares, noticed that wheat and tares don’t convert. So we wondered, “Are some vessels of wrath—incapable of love, empty vessels devoid of love... golem?”

Or perhaps we are each both a wheat and a tare, and God will separate us, harvesting the wheat and burning the tares.

- We also preached on the wedding banquet and all those given a wedding garment by grace through faith. But the one guy without a garment gets cast into outer darkness. We wondered, “Could that be Jesus for He descended into hell, our hell, our Hades?” “Many are called, but few are chosen.” Perhaps the few is one, and the one is Jesus.

Paul said, “We are chosen in Christ Jesus,” many in One. We enter the kingdom in His robe of righteousness, and He bears our naked shame, descending into Hades which in the end is cast into the Lake of Fire, Gehenna.

- We also preached on the parable of the Vineyard where the late workers got paid the same as the early workers. And I asked, “Hey, what if everyone got saved? Would that bother you because if it bothers you, maybe you’re not saved? ...because God wills that all would be saved.”

I read a bunch of Bible verses that seem to say all get saved. I just read ‘em and didn’t explain any of ‘em away, and it stressed us out, perhaps because of other scriptures, but also because of our hearts. I mean, how do we know who wins unless we know who loses? How do we know who’s first unless we know who’s last? How do we know who’s in unless we know who’s out? Who’s chosen?”

That was when we preached on the Jews. Some think they have a free pass, and if you bless them you get a free pass, too. Who's in and who's out?

Well, scripture's clear on this, "There's no other name under heaven given among men by which a man must be saved," Acts 4:12. "No one comes to the Father but by the Son," says Jesus.

But how do guys like Enoch, Noah, Moses, and Abraham get in? What about those that haven't heard the Gospel? Paul writes that "the Gospel (the Word) has been preached to every creature under heaven," Colossians 1:23. He wrote that in, like, 50 A.D. Was Paul drunk? How did Moses or Abraham encounter the Word?

Well, who's in and who's out, so I can judge, "Am I in or am I out? Come on, preacher, cut to the chase."

Okay. Matthew 25:31, Jesus' last public discourse, not a parable or a prophecy. The story of the Last Judgment. People have been waiting for me to get to this. Here we go. Jesus says,

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry

and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.” Then the righteous will answer him, saying, “Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?” And the King will answer them, “Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.” Then he will say to those on his left, “Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.” Then they also will answer, saying, “Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?” Then he will answer them, saying, “Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.” And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.

Okay, everyone take out your bulletin insert. Turn it over and refer to The Handy Dandy Final Judgment Scorecard. We're gonna settle this once and for all!

Right now, I only want you to look at the top section and ask yourself these most pertinent questions...

Check the boxes that are true for you. If any are checked on the left you're a sheep. If any are checked on the right, you're a goat.

Okay, fill out your scorecard now. [The Jeopardy theme song plays in the background.]

The Handy Dandy Final Judgment Scorecard®

**Present your scorecard on the Day of Judgment
to enter heaven.**

(Suggested clothing: Fire retardant jumpsuit)

Method A:	
<input type="checkbox"/> I have given a hungry person food.	<input type="checkbox"/> I neglected to feed a hungry person.
<input type="checkbox"/> I have given a thirsty person drink.	<input type="checkbox"/> I neglected to give a thirsty person drink.
<input type="checkbox"/> I have welcomed a stranger.	<input type="checkbox"/> I neglected to welcome a stranger.
<input type="checkbox"/> I have clothed someone.	<input type="checkbox"/> I neglected to clothe someone.
<input type="checkbox"/> I have visited a sick person.	<input type="checkbox"/> I have neglected to visit a sick person.
<input type="checkbox"/> I went to someone in prison.	<input type="checkbox"/> I neglected to visit an imprisoned person.
If you checked any of the above boxes, move to the side of the building labeled SHEEP.	If you checked any of the above boxes, move to the side of the building labeled GOATS.

Time's up. Sheep, go to my right. Goats, go to my left. Now, do it now! [Fran and Gary hold up signs on either side of the church. One says, "Sheep;" the other says, "Goats."] Sheep to the right; goats to the left! Sheep to the right; goats to the left!

What's wrong with you? Didn't you fill out your scorecard? Sheep to the right; goats to the left! [The congregation just sits still.]

After all that, and you just sit there. All right, you guys can put the signs down because I don't think they're gonna do it.

What's wrong?

You know, to be honest, when I filled out my card, I checked every box. So I guess I'm like a sheep *and* a goat. I couldn't go to either side because my sheep self is stuck to my goat self, and my goat self is stuck to my sheep self. For this to work, I'd have to be like cut in two... severed. In fact, verse 32 says the king will separate. The word separate literally means to sever. That's what "krisis," judgment means... to separate.

You know, the Word of God pierces to the separation of soul and spirit (Hebrews 4:12).

Do you ever feel cut, separated and divided by the Word? Have you ever read 1st John? Try it some time. The whole way through, I'm thinking, "I'm saved. I'm not saved. I'm saved. I'm not saved. I'm saved. I'm not saved."

"He who loves is born of God and knows God..."

I'm saved. Yeah!

"He who does not love, does not know God..."

I'm not saved. Dang!

I love, and I don't love. I mean it's like there are two people in me:

an old man and a new man,
 an old Adam and a new Adam,
 flesh and spirit,
 my old self and Jesus,
 a goat and a sheep,
 a golem and a Frodo.

Remember that scene at the end of The Lord of the Rings? It was the event that marks the end of that age and the beginning of the next. Frodo and Gollum are like one person. But Gollum is consumed with the Ring of Power in the Fire of Doom while Frodo is freed, and the Kingdom comes. He's severed.

Golem means "unfinished vessel." "And we all have this treasure in earthen vessels," writes Paul, "to show the transcendent power belongs to God." Yet our earthen vessel causes us to sin.

Twice already in Matthew Jesus says, "If your hand, foot, or eye causes you to sin, better to cut it off than be thrown into the fire with it."

Well, the problem is we'd have to cut off our golem, cut out our hearts. For Jesus said it's "what comes out of the heart that defiles a man," makes him sin.

I neglected to feed the hungry, welcome the stranger, and visit the prisoner because I have a bad heart and a dead self. And, yeah, I think there's a little sheep in me, but a whole lot of goat. So if I were to cut myself, sever myself, judge myself, I don't think I could survive the surgery.

So, what am I to do? Usually we try Auxiliary Method B. This is what most people do. It's included in

your scorecard in case Method A is inconclusive. It works like this...

auxiliary Method B (In case Method A is inconclusive):

1. Calculate the number of times you have done each deed (D), and the number of times you have neglected to do each deed (D').

$$\frac{D}{D + D'} = \text{Your Universal Righteousness Percentage (URP)}$$

2. Compare your percentage to others in case God grades on a curve. (According to some, there are 144,000 rooms prepared in heaven [Revelation 7:4]. If they're not filled by those who score 100%, perhaps you can still get in.)
3. If you score higher than your neighbor, you are first, and they are last.
4. You just judged them as "last" and "least"
which appears to mean...
you just judged the judge as "last" and "least,"
but no matter what...
"The first will be last and the last first."

If you score higher than your neighbor, you just judged them least. You are first, and they are last. You are greater, and they are lesser. They are least. You judged them least and just judged the King on the throne least. For the King on the throne says, "Truly as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me. . . . Truly I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these you did it not to me." He also said, "The first will be last, and the last first."

That makes Method B (competition) a little scary, don't you think?

Some will say, "Jesus said, 'The least of these my brothers...'"

Well, He said "brothers" in the first instance but not the second. So did He mean all the least are His brothers or

only some of the least are His brothers? And if that's the case, how do you judge which are His brothers? The Handy Dandy Final Judgment Scorecard? Isn't that begging the question, just a tad?

Already in Matthew we've discovered a Roman Centurion, a pagan Canaanite woman, and Matthew the tax collector are all brethren and family of Jesus.

And it turns out, the most notorious Pharisee of all, Paul of Tarsus, is Christ's beloved brother, and he didn't just become His brother on conversion for he was in fact "Chosen in Christ Jesus from the foundation of the world," chosen to "inherit" (like family) the Kingdom.

How on earth are you going to judge Christ's brethren when they're that well hidden... even to themselves?

So if you judge someone least,
 you probably just judged Jesus least,
 and if you judge Jesus least,
 I doubt you'd even want to enter His Kingdom, and
 if He appeared
 you'd probably run the other way.

Anne Lamott tells about a guy drunk in a bar in Alaska. He was telling the bartender how he'd recently lost whatever faith he'd had after his twin engine plane crashed in the tundra.

He said, "Yeah, I lay there in the wreckage hour after hour, nearly frozen to death, crying out to God to save me, praying for help with every ounce of my being, but He didn't raise a finger to help. So I'm done with the charade!"

The bartender squinted at him and said, "But you're here. You *were* saved."

“Yeah that’s right,” says the man, “that’s right because some God damned Eskimo came along!”

What if the One on the throne is a God damned Eskimo or spick or nigger or Samaritan or Jew or looks like a Pharisee, tax collector, or prostitute? I mean, what if He looks like one of the “last and least of these?” Would you want Him to save you? Would you want into His kingdom or would you run in terror, calling to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who is seated on the throne (Revelation 6:16).”?

We love Him only as much as we love the least of these. So I don’t think we can enter His Kingdom by beating our neighbor. That is, competition.

And please note, on your scorecard it says,

PLEASE NOTE:

If you were “aware” of doing any good deeds for Jesus, for religious reasons, or to score points, The Handy Dandy Final Judgment Scorecard is inaccurate and rendered null and void. If this is a problem, you may see the complaint department in the Valley of Gehenna.

Both the sheep and the goats say, “When did we see you, Lord?” See, neither knew it was Him. They didn’t know.

Robert Capon writes this, “Knowledge is not the basis of anybody’s salvation or damnation.”

They didn’t know. I don’t mean “know” as in Adam “knew” Eve. I mean “know” as in the knowledge of good and evil—knowledge of the law, knowledge of what it takes to get in. So you can’t just run out deciding to visit sick people so you can get in.

If we know we're doing it for the King,
 we're probably not *knowing* the King,
 not *loving* the King,
 just *using* the King to get to His Kingdom.

Remember Kierkegaard's story of the king who fell
 in love with a peasant and wanted this peasant to love him
 as he loved her?

He realized he could impress her with his kingdom...
 his financial power.
 He realized he could force her with his military...
 his fire power.

But he decided to lay down all power
 and become a peasant so that she could know his heart.

So she wouldn't love him for his things...
 which wouldn't be love.
 So she wouldn't love him out of fear...
 which wouldn't be love.

Maybe God is doing that all the time? So no one in
 the story loves in order to get to the kingdom. And it
 appears no one in the story loves because they're afraid of
 the fire.

The eternal fire is also called the eternal "kolasis,"
 translated punishment. It's fascinating that that word,
 kolasis, only appears in one other place in the New
 Testament, 1 John 4:18. "There is no fear in love, but
 perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with [kolasis]
 punishment. Whoever fears has not been perfected in love.
 We love because He first loved us."

Biblical scholar, Johannes Schneider, writes “This means that the man who lives in fear (before God) is already punished by this fear. His fear is his punishment, hence the unbeliever is judged already.”

That would mean it’s not the substance of the fire, but our fear of the fire that causes it to burn our flesh.

Whatever the case,

at Pentecost, there are tongues of fire.

Jesus came to baptize us with fire.

God is a consuming fire.

The fire comes for God and ignites Gehenna.

The fire comes from God and consumes the sacrifice.

The fire comes from God and fills the temple.

We are the temple,

and we’re baptized with the Holy Spirit.

God is consuming fire, and God is love. Perfect love must be fire. So a goat can’t love by fearing perfect love. And if a goat hates love, it will certainly be burned by the fire of love. Perhaps punishment is eternal for perfect love, God, is eternal. He doesn’t change, but that doesn’t mean the thing punished can’t change or be consumed.

No matter what, it appears no one loves in order to get into the kingdom, and no one loves out of fear of the fire. No one loves because of the knowledge of good or evil. That is, no one is saved by works of the law. No one is saved by working The Handy Dandy Final Judgment Scorecard. Sheep inherit the Kingdom; they don’t earn the Kingdom.

We evangelicals know we're not saved by works of the law, but we try to turn faith into a work and stuff like "the sinner's prayer" into a new law.

Did you notice Jesus doesn't mention any of the sheep saying "the sinner's prayer"? It may be that they don't even know the name of Jesus, and that's why they appear to not recognize Jesus. And yet, they're all saved by Jesus, and under the name of Jesus, for it's Jesus on the throne, and it's Jesus that says, "You loved *me*, fed *me*, clothed *me*."

But none loved in order to earn the Kingdom, and none loved out of fear of the fire. I guess love was just their nature.

But what man was ever all love and never unlove?

And what man was never love and only unlove? Well, if there was such a man, he must be simply a vessel of wrath. But we must all be at least part vessel of wrath, part goat, even if we're part sheep.

But what man never neglected to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and visit the sick?

What man was ever a perfect sheep... spotless, without a blemish?

What man ever loved perfectly (according to test A) and never judged (according to Method B)? I mean, never rejoiced at wrong, never labeled others last to label himself first?

And what man ever did all that unselfconsciously? I mean, didn't love because of some scorecard or some religion but just loved because it was his nature, his joy?

His joy to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and visit the sick.

His joy, “the joy of the Master,” to
sacrifice all his talents in love.

What man? Well, only One. The One telling this story.
The One on the throne.

But then, why is He telling this story? What’s the
point? We’d hoped we could use it to judge others, but find
we’re only judging ourselves, cutting ourselves.

I read somewhere,

There is so much bad in the best of us,
And so much good in the worst of us,
That it hardly becomes any of us,
To talk about the rest of us.

Jesus may not judge us, but His Word is cutting us
in two, into a sheep and a goat, and mostly goat. I can’t cut
out the goat without dying. I can’t grow the sheep by
simply trying. It’s the knowledge of good and evil—the
sheep and the goat—the knowledge of good, but it can’t
make me good. It can’t make me love. In fact it only makes
me more aware that I don’t .

So why is Jesus telling the story? What’s the point?
What’s the reason? The Logos? Do you see it?

We’re left cut and crying, “God help us! God save
us!” Do you see Him? Have you seen the One standing on
the throne? Have you continued reading the story?

You know, the chapter divisions were placed in
Matthew’s Gospel hundreds of years after he wrote it. So
he continues... Matthew 25:46

*“And these [the goats] will go away into
eternal punishment, but the righteous into*

eternal life.” When Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said to his disciples, “You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.”

In Exodus 12, God says to the Israelites, “Your Lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or the goats.” He tells them to place the blood over the doors so death can’t take them, then “eat the Lamb in haste. It is the Lord’s Passover.”

The Passover lamb could be a sheep or a goat. Jesus said the king will separate the people like a shepherd separates the sheep and the goats.

But you see sheep and goats are both the property of the shepherd. He didn’t say sheep and wolves, but sheep and goats.

It turns out the same word is often used for sheep and goats in Hebrew and also in Greek. Probaton means sheep or goat. “The good shepherd lays down his life for the probaton (sheep or goat).” In Matthew 25, sheep is probaton and goat is eriphes, which mean young goat, lamb goat.

I’m not sure exactly what all that means.

But when Abraham says to Isaac, “God will provide a lamb,” it means goat or sheep.

When God commands Israel to slaughter Passover lambs, he specifies sheep or goats.

When Isaiah prophesies the Messiah is like a lamb led to the slaughter, the word means goat or sheep.

Sheep and goats were the principal sacrifices in the temple which Jesus just said would be replaced.

The fire had descended on the temple from heaven as it would soon descend on the church in Acts, chapter two. Both sheep and goats got the fire. Sometimes they were consumed by the fire as a burnt offering. Sometimes they were cooked by the fire as a sin offering—a communion offering, a feast for God and the worshiper.

In Leviticus five we read that if a person sins they are to bring to the priest, “a lamb of the goats or the sheep.” Part was to be burnt up by the fire; part was to be roasted by the fire for a feast of communion. Part consumed by the fire; part transformed by the fire.

Every year on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), the High Priest made sacrifices for the sins of Israel, and on that day he was to cast lots over two goats in order to divide them, like soldiers would cast lots to divide the garments of Christ on Calvary.

Well, one goat would be eaten before the Lord as communion, and one goat would be driven into the wilderness for on the back of that goat, the High Priest would confess the sins of Israel, the scapegoat.

“He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. . . like a lamb,” said Isaiah. Lamb meaning sheep or goat. John the Baptist said, “Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world.” John the Revelator said, “Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne,” (Revelation 5:6). Then he hears all creation singing. They sing, “Worthy is the Lamb. . . . With Your blood You purchased men for God.”

Look on the throne. They couldn't see the throne when Jesus told the story, but you can. On the throne is the Passover Lamb of God. On the third day, they will celebrate the Passover. Then they will watch the Passover as the Passover Lamb is crucified for all to see...

hungry,
thirsty,
stranger to this world,
naked,
sick with our sin,
and imprisoned in our hell.

- He is being crucified on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
- He is being nailed to the Law and cursed on our behalf.
- He is cutting the new covenant and fulfilling the old covenant.
- All those temple sacrifices were all about Him and fulfilled in Him.

"How unsearchable are his judgments," wrote Paul. So I can't fully explain, but Jesus is the judgment.

He is the spotless Lamb of God, communion with God, food for the people of God. Anything good in you comes from Him. Any love is Him. He is the sheep... And He is the goat. He is your scapegoat. Confess your sins to Him, and He carries them into the eternal fire on His back.

A friend called me awhile ago and told me of an experience she had at the door to the prayer room at the back of the sanctuary. It was a Tuesday morning, and she'd come to pray with a group for another hurting friend. She

said the Lord told her to leave the room and stand by the door with her hands on the frame.

All of a sudden she said she felt like she was hanging on a cross. Then she saw Jesus' body imposed on her body. She saw the blood and the wounds on His back. Then she saw a fog come from under the door. She knew the friend inside was confessing sins. She said they were this fog. She could hardly speak as she left the message on my phone, but through her tears she said, "I watched this fog come up the body of Jesus, and I watched as those sins went into Him through the bleeding wounds on His back."

You see, she saw something eternal. She saw the High Priest. She saw the Scapegoat. She saw the Lamb of God taking away the sins of the world.

He's already died for the sins of the world and your sins, but He's asking you to believe so you'd let your sin go, so you'd see His love.

His Word cuts us, judges us, and separates us so that we'd surrender our sin, confess our sin and believe His grace, receiving His love.

When you come to the communion table, you come to the Passover, the altar, the sacrifice, the fire. You come to the cross. You come to the Word proclaimed and incarnate. You come to the sacrificed Lamb, standing on the throne, and you come to judgment.

We come not to judge others, not even to judge ourselves. We come to surrender to the judgment of God; God's judgment is Jesus.

He is the Word that cuts (but only to heal).

He exposes what is not love and then bears what is not love in His own body, on the tree.

He exposes what is love and gives it to us as food.

Here you come to judgment, and the judgment is absolutely good. The judgment is absolute love... bleeding love... mercy.

One Saturday night, my friend Dale had this vision. He writes,

The front of the church turned into a pit of fire. Then I saw Peter on the stage and a pair of huge hands appeared behind him and pushed him towards the fire. Then the hands moved out into the crowd and started pushing them all towards the fire. Each person would walk to the edge of the fire, take some bread, dip it in the wine, and eat it, and then kneel at the edge, and an angel would cut off their head. Their body would fall into the fire and the same hands would catch them in the midst of the Fire. Jesus would then breath on the broken body, and make them whole again, and look straight into their eyes and say, "Welcome home." At that moment each person would realize that their pain, their heartache, their tears were all gone, and Jesus was wearing them all.

The King issues judgment, and the King bears His own judgment on our behalf.

So on that night, Passover, the King took bread and He broke it saying, "This is my body, broken for you. Take and eat. Do this in remembrance of me." And in the same way after supper and having given thanks, He took the cup, and He said, "This is the cup of the new covenant in my

blood, shed for the forgiveness of sins. Drink of it, all of you in remembrance of me.”

So if you want Him, we invite you to come forward to one of six stations, tear off a piece of the bread, dip it in the cup. The black cups are wine. The purple cups are juice, and (I have good evidence for this) they’re both fire.

Come confessing your sins and receiving God’s mercy. In other words, come to the table giving up your goat and ingesting the Lamb of God. Behold the Love of God for you. We love because He first loved us, and this is Love. Amen.

[The worship band plays...]

“Lullaby”

By Creed

Written by Tremonti/Stapp Published by Tremonti/Stapp Music
(Adm. by Dwight Frye Music, Inc.)/Dwight Frye Music, Inc.
(BMI) Produced, Engineered & Mixed by John Kurzweg, Kirk
Kelsey and Creed

Hush my love now don’t you cry
Everything will be all right
Close your eyes and drift in dream
Rest in peaceful sleep

If there’s one thing I hope
I showed you
Hope I showed you
Just give love to all

Oh my love...in my arms tight
Every day you give me life

As I drift off to your world
Rest in peaceful sleep

I know there's one thing that
you showed me
That you showed me

Just give love to all
Let's give love to all

And so Lord Jesus, we thank You for what You have done, and we thank You that we are beginning to join the song of the angels, the song of the new aion, the song of the aionios. We're being born again. Thank you, Father, in Jesus' name, amen.

Now, some people will still have questions and confusions, and you need to know that next week we're going to keep preaching out of Matthew chapter 25. There is like way more cool stuff in here that we couldn't get to, and I'm sure there's more beyond that after we're done. Some people will say, "You know that one part I didn't understand, and that other part I didn't understand, and that was kind of confusing, and what exactly were you saying there?"

Listen to scripture,

*God has consigned all to disobedience that
He may have mercy on all. Oh, the depth of
the riches and wisdom and knowledge of
God. How unsearchable are His judgments
[That's what we were talking about today]
how unsearchable His judgments and how
inscrutable His ways. For who has known*

the mind of the Lord, or who has been His counselor? Who has given a gift to Him that He might be repaid? For from Him and in Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory, forever and ever and ever, amen.

And I do know this, Thursday night I didn't know what to call the sermon so I said, "How to Judge the World," let's call it, "How to Judge the World." This is how we judge the world. [Peter holds up the communion cup.] This is how we judge our neighbors. This is how we judge ourselves. This is how we are to see everything. In fact, we are actually His body, so we are to look through those eyes. That's how we judge. And this is what we ought to give. The measure you give is the measure you receive. Give this, judge with this. Use this. This is what we give to the world.

You know that word "evangelical?" Do you know what it means? It's so sad that the world right now thinks it means "law-givers." It means "good-newsers." And this my friends, is good news. Believe it in Jesus' name. Amen.

If you'd like prayer, we have a prayer ministry team in back, and they can be really helpful in helping you give up the goat, so go see 'em if you want to and have a great day.

Relevant Texts and Quotations (from bulletin)

Concerning Judgment:

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he

has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.

John 3:16-19 (NAS)

“Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die. . . . “If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day.”

John 12:31-33, 12:47-48 (ESV)

I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch of mine that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.

John 15:1-3 (ESV)

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Hebrews 4:12 (ESV)

But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God. . . . Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died.† But if we judged† ourselves truly, we would not be judged. But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.

1 Corinthians 4:3-5, 11:28-32 (ESV)

(See also: John 5:22-29, Romans 2:18, Romans 11:22-36, Revelation 20:11-15)

Concerning Eternal Fire:

... for our God is a consuming fire.

Hebrews 12:29 (ESV)

(See also: Deuteronomy 9:3, Jude 1:5-7, Ezekiel 15:6, 15:53-55, Isaiah 30:14, 30:30, Luke 12:49, Acts 2:1-3, I Corinthians 3:12-15, Revelation 20:14, 21:4)

Concerning Eternal Punishment:

And these will go away into eternal punishment [kolasis], but the righteous into eternal life.

Matthew 25:46 (ESV)

There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment [kolasis – This is the only other place in scripture where this word appears.], and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. We love because he first loved us.

1 John 4:18-19 (ESV)

Kolasis: This means that the man who lives in fear (before God) is already punished by this fear. His fear is his punishment. This thought may be linked with the express statement in John 3:18 that the unbeliever is judged already.

J. Schneider, Kittel's Theological Dictionary of the New Testament

Concerning Sheep and Goats and the New Man and Old Man:

“And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life”. When Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said to his disciples, “You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.”

Matthew 25:46-26:2 (ESV)

Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats, and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight. . . . In this manner you shall eat it: with your belt fastened, your sandals on your

feet, and your staff in your hand. And you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD's Passover.

Exodus 12:5-6, 12:11 (ESV)

Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: one lot for the LORD and the other lot for the scapegoat. And Aaron shall bring the goat on which the LORD's lot fell, and offer it as a sin offering. But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make atonement upon it, and to let it go as the scapegoat into the wilderness. . . . And he who released the goat as the scapegoat shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward he may come into the camp. The bull for the sin offering and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the Holy Place, shall be carried outside the camp. And they shall burn in the fire their skins, their flesh, and their offal.

Leviticus 16:8-10, 16:26-27 (NKJV)

Then he presented the people's offering and took the goat of the sin offering that was for the people and killed it and offered it as a sin offering, like the first one. . . . And Moses and Aaron went into the tent of meeting, and when they came out they blessed the people, and the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people. And fire came out from before the LORD and consumed the burnt offering and the pieces of fat on the altar, and when all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.

Leviticus 9:15, 9:23-24 (ESV)

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

John 1:29 (ESV)

Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals." Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

Revelation 5:5-6 (NIV)

(See also: Judges 6:19-21, 1 Chronicles 21:26-27, 2 Chronicles 7:1, Acts 2:1-3, Ephesians 4:20-24 NKJV, 1 Corinthians 15:21-24, 15:44-49, Romans 6:5-14, 7:20-24, 1 John 4:7-8)

In the election of Jesus Christ, which is the eternal will of God, God has intended the first-namely, election, blessedness, and life for man; but the second-rejection, damnation, and death for himself.

Karl Barth

Surely he has borne our griefs
and carried our sorrows. . .
He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,
yet he opened not his mouth;
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,
so he opened not his mouth.

Isaiah 53:4a, 7 (ESV)

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