

## **The Books of the Dead and the Book of the Lamb**

Revelation 20:11-15

#39 in our series “The Gospel According to Jesus: The Revelation”

Peter Hiatt

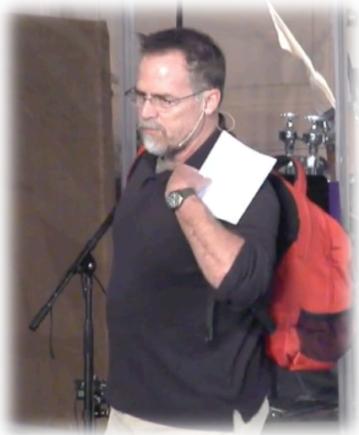
November 24, 2018

### **Prayer**

Lord God, here we are. I pray that you would help us to preach, in Jesus’ name, Amen.

### **Message**

I brought these books with me to help you understand Revelation 20:11-15.



We preached on this text last week, but this week I’d like to explain the books—both the books mentioned in Revelation 20 and the books I carry around with me.

I’ve shown you these books before so for some they might be familiar, but it will be a good review... and I wanted to hang with my kids over Thanksgiving rather than spend it writing the sermon.

Sorry, these are kind of awkward and make it rather hard to move.

I used to carry these with me wherever I went—and sometimes still do because I wanted the knowledge of the good, so I can make myself good.

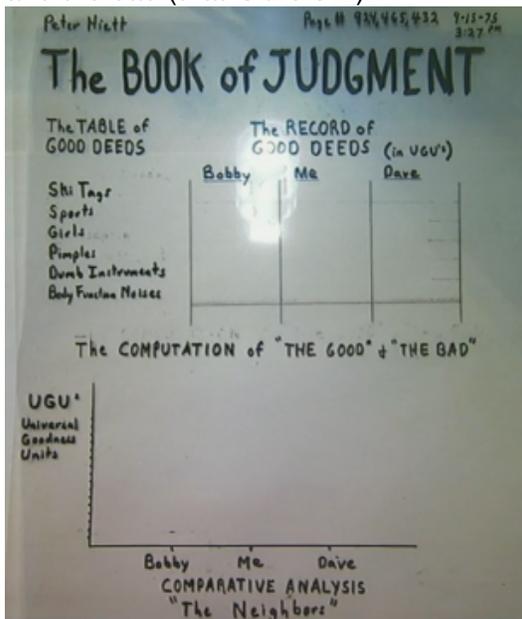
[Peter begins unloading several heavy books from his backpack.]



These are the books of judgment; they give you knowledge.=.  
 They're extremely complicated and so extensive I can't carry all of them anymore...  
 But I thought I'd show you some and explain how they work.  
 To do that, I'd like to explain one page from one book on one particular fall day in 1975.

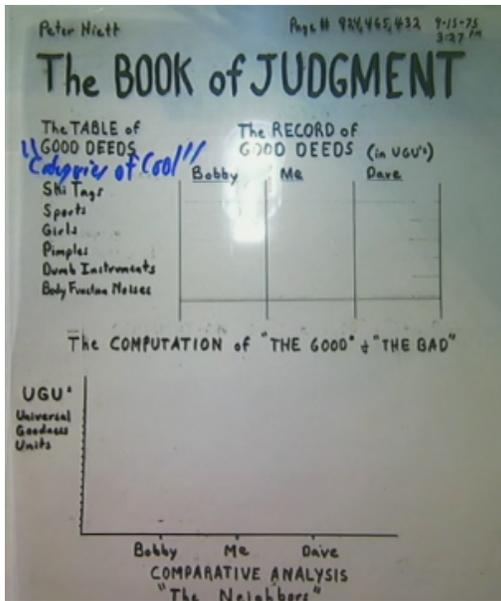
I've brought this cutting edge mid-70's audio-visual equipment, capable of reading my records from 1975 and projecting them on the screen for you.

This is one page, from one book, for one moment, on one day, in the fall of 1975.  
 For the sake of simplicity, I've edited this one page to include only 3 people: **Bobby, me, and Dave**. At any given moment this is how I would judge and determine the Good and the bad (that is the evil).



*\*Note the date and page number at the top of the page.*

On the left is the Table of Good Deeds (of course in 1975 I referred to this as "**Categories of Cool.**")



On the right is the Record of Good Deeds measured in UGU's  
**(Universal Goodness Units)**

It's calculated for me, and "my neighbors."

One category of cool that was really important when I was in high school was ski tags. If you had a lot of ski tags on your jacket that meant you were cool.

### Ski Tags

Bobby had a lot of ski tags (give him 2 UGU's)

I had a lot of ski tags on my jacket (give me 2 UGU's)

Dave never had any ski tags (give him zippo, nada, nothing!)

### Sports

Bobby was really good at sports (give him 3)

I, at least, tried to do a sport (give me 1)

Dave didn't do any sports (give him zippo, zero, nada)

Is this familiar to you? See all these computations happen extremely fast in the supercomputer of the human brain so I'm just slowing it all down so we can reflect upon it but it probably could've happened in a nanosecond in my brain.

### Girls

All the girls liked Bobby (give Bobby a 3)

I once talked to a cheerleader (give me . . . 3, right?)

Dave didn't have a girlfriend (so give Dave 0—nothing for Dave)

### Pimples

Bobby never had any pimples (give him a 3)

I had some pimples; I had some struggles with that (give me a 1)

Dave once came to school with dried Clearasil on his face! (That's, like, -1)

### Dumb Instruments

That's really important!

Bobby didn't play any dumb instruments (give him a 3)

I didn't play any dumb instruments (give me a 3)

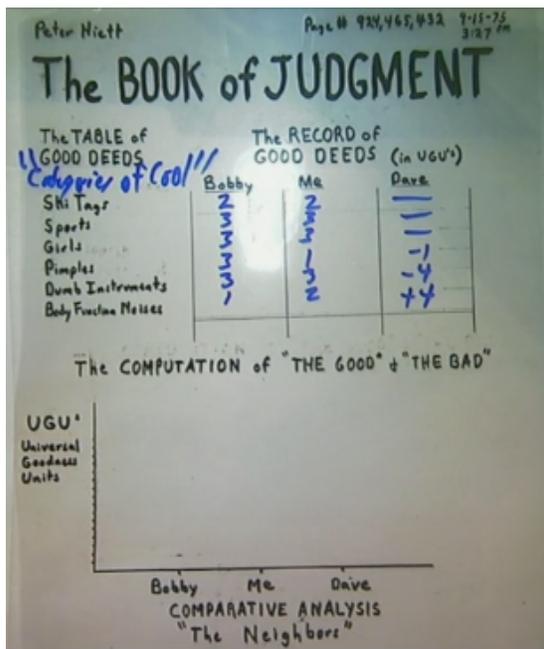
Dave was state champion cello player. (-4!)

### Bodily Function Noises

Bobby didn't have a lot of body function noises (give him 0)

I could do pretty well in that department (2)

Dave could burp the entire alphabet (that's +4) It was spectacular!!



These scores were constantly factored into historical scores...

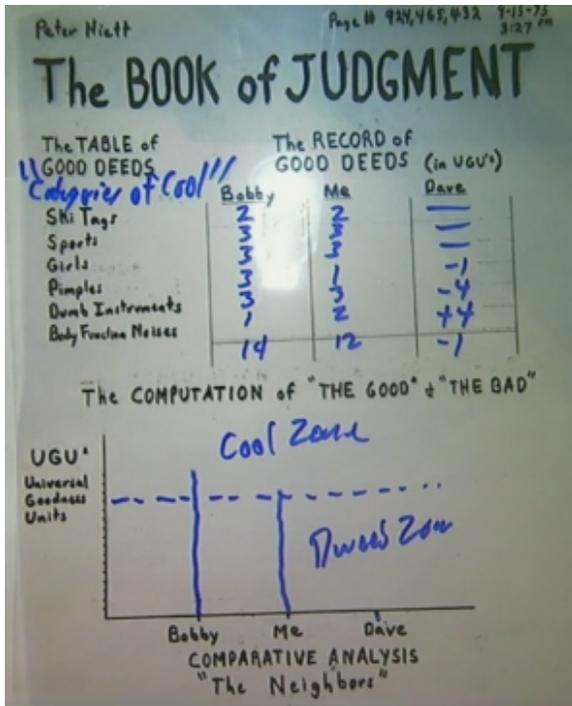
But for the sake of simplicity, we'll only plot the scores for this particular day in 1975 assuming that we had all started at zero.

1<sup>st</sup> You calculate and plot. Then...

(Bobby—14, Peter—12, Dave . . . )

2<sup>nd</sup> Directly under your score, you draw the Universal Geek Line.

(Above the UGL are "the Good (the Cool)" and below are "the Bad (the dweebs)"



Good and bad, that's how you "know."

I was ruled by these books of judgment:

It determined who I sat with at lunch...

It determined who I said, "Hey Dude" to, in the hallway.

It was the reason that I went out for sports that I hated.

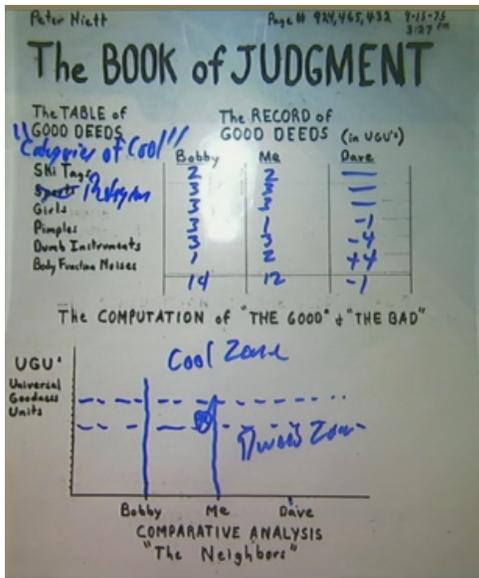
It was why I quit piano in third grade; the cool kids up the street didn't play the piano.

It determined my moods:

- If Bobby got a zit, I rejoiced . . . I was that much closer to my goal, my idol.
- And when I was down, I could watch Dave carrying his cello across the football field while I practiced soccer (in doing so, I could judge him last and least and feel better about myself).

Well, that year I got cut from the soccer team. In all my long life, I had never been that depressed. It wasn't because I cared about soccer; it was because I had suddenly fallen into the "Dweeb Zone" . . . I went down behind our house in Littleton, sat in a hole by the railroad track and wept for hours. In all seriousness, I remember thinking: *"How am I going to explain this to my grandchildren? 'Yes . . . your grandfather is a dweeb.'"*

That hurt like hell . . . but after a few weeks of moping, I just changed a few categories and then, lowered the Universal Geek Line. Not sports, maybe religion.



That's the beauty of this system, but also why it's so much work:

-All the computing.

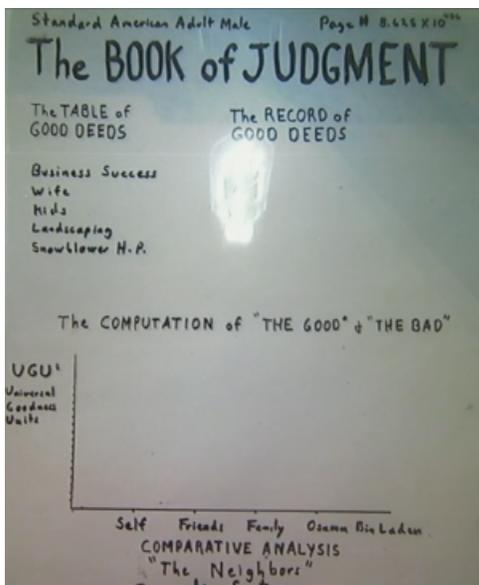
It's also why ya kinda live in fear all the time: things change.

-What if something changes?

-What if my calculations are somehow inaccurate?

- Dave's book may look different than mine
- What if I was Bob's dweeb, the "last and the least" in Bobby's book—the one that made Bobby feel better about himself?

Now, you might be thinking, "Yeah, 10<sup>th</sup>-grade boys are *so* immature!" Well, let me show you a page out of a book of judgment for the standard American adult male:



**The Standard American Adult Male:**

It's exactly the same layout... and same operation system

(It runs on pride, shame, envy, and fear)

It's just that the Categories of Cool have changed:

(Business Success, Wife and Kids, Landscaping, Snow Blower horsepower)

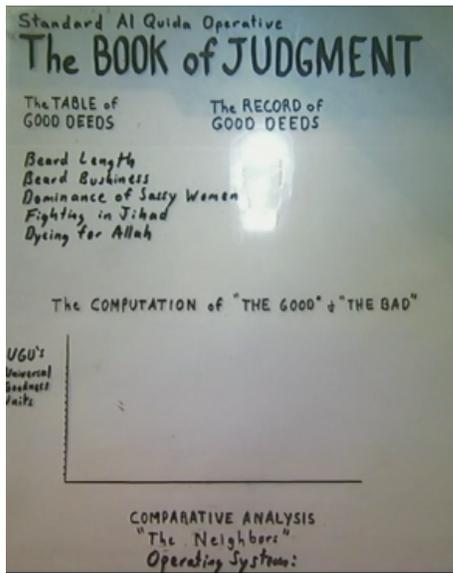
"The Universal Geek Line" has become "The Respectability Line"

(It determines who you might invite over for dinner: Above are successful adults and below are the "less fortunate.")

It's plotted against friends, neighbors . . . and Osama bin Laden.

(It's always important to put someone like this on your chart, so you can judge them "last and least" and feel better about yourself... "I may have my issues, but at least I've never bombed a subway!")

Hey, here's a page out of a book of judgment for a standard Taliban militant or Al Qaida operative:



**A Standard Taliban Militant or Al Qaida Operative:**

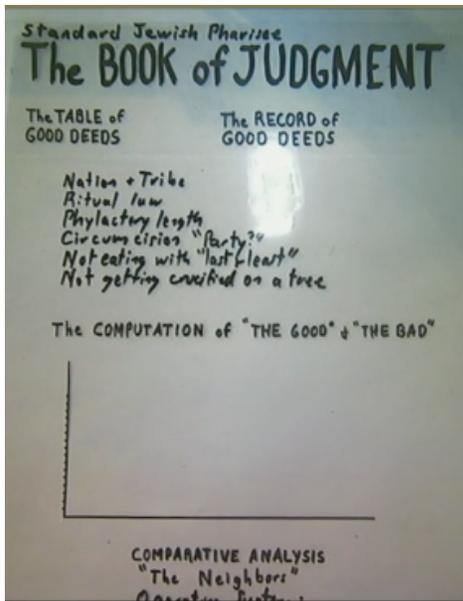
Same layout and operating system... pride, shame, envy, and fear.

It's just that the Categories of Cool have changed to things like;

Beard Quality, Control of Sassy Women (it's not all bad), Dying in Jihad, etc. etc.

The Geek Line is now the Fatwah Line: Above—the faithful, Below—the infidel.

Hey, here's a page for a standard Jewish Pharisee: [See next page]



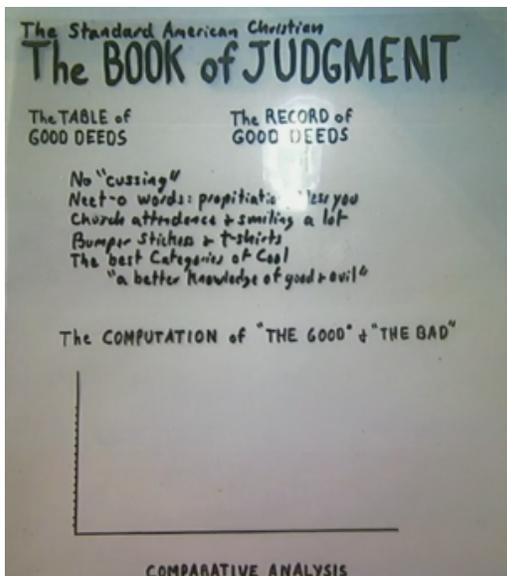
**A Standard Jewish Pharisee:**

- Nation and Tribe, Phylactery length, Circumcision  
 (Do you belong to the "Circumcision Party?")
- Not eating with tax collectors and sinners (the last and the least).
- Not getting crucified on a tree.

Categories of Cool have changed, but it operates just the same way;  
 It runs on pride, shame, envy, and fear.

Now, you may be thinking, "Good thing I'm not a Jew or a Muslim; I'm a Christian!"

Hey, here's a page for a standard American Christian:



### **A Standard American Christian:**

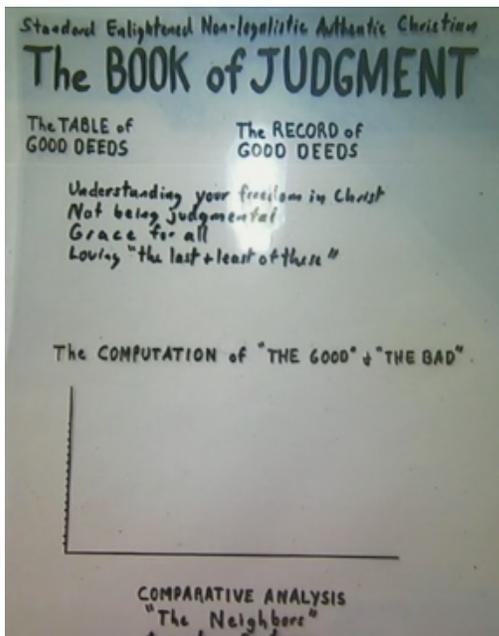
It's just the same but the Categories of Cool are now:

- Not cussing
- Neet-o words like "Bless you" and "propitiation"
- Church attendance and smiling a lot.
- The "right" bumper stickers and T-shirts
- The "right" categories of cool... a better "knowledge of Good and evil"

The Geek line is **Salvation!** (Above are Christians... below is the "I wonder if they know the Lord?" zone—we're not to judge, so we "wonder if.")

Now, you may be thinking, "OK, good point. I'm so glad that I'm not one of those 'unenlightened legalistic cultural Christians'"

Hey, here's a page for a standard enlightened non-legalistic authentic Christian:



### **Enlightened Non-legalistic Authentic Christian:**

The Categories of Cool ("knowledge of the good") are now:

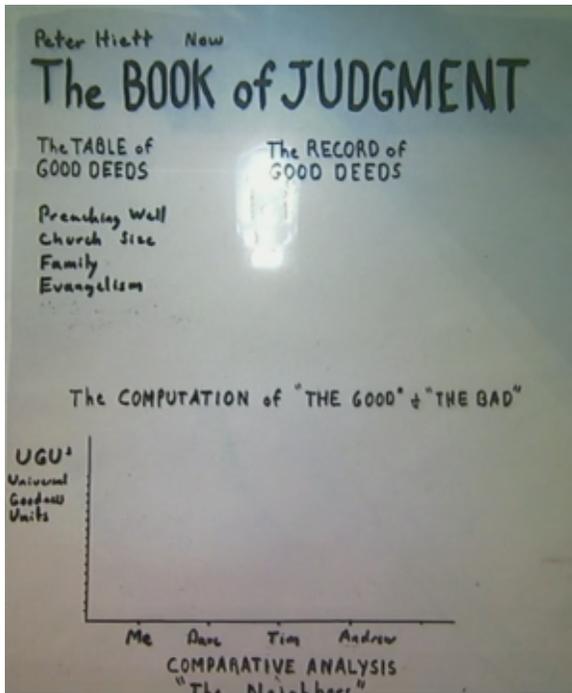
- Understanding your freedom in Christ.
- Not being judgmental
- Grace for all
- Loving "the last and least of these"

AND YET the operating system is just the same, so we end up

- Enslaved to acting free.
- Judging the judgmental.
- Driven to be graceful.

-And we use the last and least to earn points in our books.  
(We feed “the last and least” not because we love “the last and least” but because we want points in order to make ourselves “good” and impress God.)

Hey, here’s a page from my book of judgment for today:



### **My Book of Judgment for Today:**

The Categories of Cool are now:

- Preaching well
- Church size
- Family
- Helping people trust the Love of God in Christ Jesus

The Geek Line is the “You’re OK” line “Acceptable Pastor”

(Above is “I can rest zone,” below is the “get to work, no rest zone”)

But do you see? It operates just as it did in 10<sup>th</sup> grade:

(Competition, pride, shame, envy, and fear)

It’s just that the Categories of Cool have changed...

and I measure myself against my new neighbors.

Fellow pastors, like my old friend Tim Brewer, Andrew Trawick, and Dave Jones

(actually the same Dave Jones-the cello player).

This is surprising: but Jesus was in Dave Jones, (the state champion cello player). He turned out to be one of my best friends, the best man in my wedding. He’s an amazing guy: great mind, quick wit, big heart for God and a great speaker.

We did youth ministry together in LA, but I still kept the books in my heart— so when Dave spoke at youth group, I secretly hoped it didn't go well, cause then, I'd look better.

My friend Tim had a larger church than me, but in a depression he asphyxiated himself leaving behind his wife, children, and church. And something inside me said, *“Hey Peter, you won.” “You’re a winner!”*

I so clearly remember the night Dave fell to pieces in my arms sobbing as he cried, *“She’s leaving. She wants a divorce.”*

That was thirty years ago, and Dave is happily married to a wonderful woman now. But I need to tell you . . .

That night, as my best friend descended into hell, as I held him and I felt the waves of pain course through his trembling body...

Something inside me said, *“Hey Peter... you’re first, Dave is last. Be happy.”*

Andrew Trawick is like my brother. Andrew would come back from mission trips to places like Mozambique and share how hundreds or thousands of people came to Christ, and it would get me depressed. Why? Because in that same time I didn't lead anyone to Christ.

So, what's my desire? That people never come to know Jesus? What am I doing? I'm wishing people to Hell just to feel better about myself—just to feed my own fragile ego.

When I live by these books...

I end up hating my best friends, hating the Kingdom, and maybe even hating God. And then, when I see that, I hate myself! I condemn myself. I do the work of the accuser for him. I damn God, damn all people and then damn myself.

I think Scripture refers to all of these categories of cool as “the law.”

And the energy by which I play this game is called “the flesh.”

And the game is called “justification;” I’m justifying myself.

And when I play the game—when I live by the books—I walk in death.

I can't live gracefully carrying these books.

I can't dance well, sing well, laugh well, or live well.

I consume the Good like a beast, and I use love like a harlot.

Ironically, trying to be good, I can't be good, and I make myself bad.

I'm imprisoned in a body of death and a psyche from Hell.

That's the abomination of desolation: “What is an exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God,” said Jesus. (Luke 16:15)

Jesus said, *“You must lose your life (your psyche)... to find it.”*

You must stop thinking about your self—in order to love.

You see? Just keeping the books, I can't love others and I can't love God.

I can't even love myself.

1 John 3:14 *“He who does not love abides in death.”* I get trapped in “me.”

I become one of the walking dead—a zombie.

Genesis 2:16 God said, *“Adam you may freely eat of every tree in the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat for in the day you eat of it you shall surely die.”*

The knowledge of good and evil, taken from the tree, as if the Good were a thing to be consumed is called “the law.” At the dragon’s tempting, Adam took knowledge of the Good, got the law, and lost God... who is the Good.

Adam got knowledge that he was naked, bad, and dead—the walking dead—and knowledge that he was exiled from God, who is the Good and source of all Life. When I justify myself, everything dies—that’s **my judgment**.

Well, let’s look at **God’s judgment**, what we started preaching on last time: Revelation 20:11-12 John writes, *Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead...*

Now, in the previous paragraph, John saw “the living,” those who live and reign with Christ on earth, the first resurrection—those who’ve been born again.

So, whoever is alive in Christ is not one of the dead that John sees.

Or whatever *IN* you that is alive in Christ, is not one of the dead that John sees.

Your New Man is not the dead, but your old man—your old adam is.

That’s what we talked about last week.<sup>1</sup>

In Christ, you have a New Man that is Life Eternal, and you have an old man that is dead.

Revelation 20:12

*And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done (ergon, “their works, their deeds”).*

‘The dead’ are judged by the things in the books, according to their deeds—their works. Jesus said, *“Judge not that you be not judged, for with the judgment you pronounce, you will be judged.”* So . . . if you want to play “by the books,” you’ll get the books, and when you get the books, you’ll already be dead because playing by the books is death.

Have you ever wondered why it is that across the globe people have a “knowledge of good and evil?”

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<sup>1</sup> “The Living” don’t get judged, they’ve already passed from death to life—they believe (John 5:24). Believing in Christ is the Judgment of you—the old you.

We argue about the categories of cool—that is, the definition of the Good—but people everywhere know that there is such a thing as the Good. And people everywhere try to make themselves good by keeping score in these books . . .

I think it's because we all know, deep inside, that we have a Creator and He is Good, and He has access to books. It may be that He keeps no record of wrongs (as Paul says, "Love keeps no record of wrongs.") However, satan—the accuser (your accuser)—does.

We exist in fear of these books, constantly preparing our defense, for we know that one day there will be an accounting. Jesus revealed what that accounting is based upon. He quoted Deuteronomy saying, "*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment and the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. On this rests all the law and prophets.*"

By loving my neighbor (that's the people on the bottom of my charts) or not loving my neighbor, I either love God or I don't love God.

In Matthew 25:31-33, Jesus described the judgment this way (Jesus didn't talk about many judgments, just "the judgment"):

*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 [Or maybe He will just separate people, I think that might be a little more accurate] as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left.*

He then says some stuff to the sheep on his right, and then in verses 41-46:

*...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 [kolasin], but the righteous into eternal life."*

If you want to live by the books, God will give you the books.

He's in Lazarus sitting by the gate.

He's in the last and the least.

He's in the stranger, the emigrant, and sojourner...

The Judgment is happening all the time.

The goats say, "When did we see you?" Well, they didn't see Him... ever!

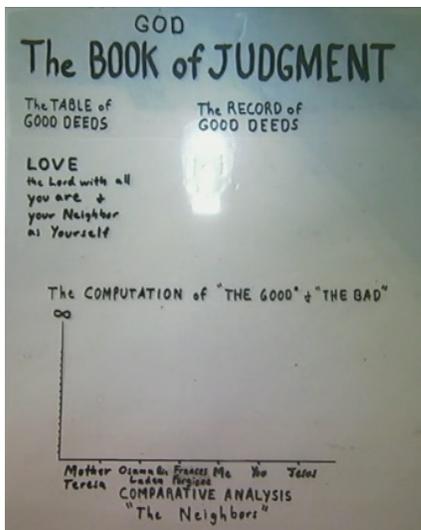
They just saw the last and the least, or at best, a way to score points.

Do you realize that just by judging someone the “last” or the “least,” you judge Jesus Christ last and least? “Whatever you do to the least of these,” he said.

Remember when He walked this earth almost everyone judged Him last and least, baby in a food trough and peasant on a cross—cursed by God—that’s very last and least. If you need someone to be last and least Jesus says, “That’s me.”

Anyhow, living by the books, I constantly crucify Christ and condemn myself. I hate my neighbor and so I hate God, and then hate myself, and I broadcast to the heavenly places, “*Yes! I stole fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil; I took the Life of the Good, and now I’m dead, pretending to be alive. . . at church.*”

Well, if we dare guess at God’s book, what do you suppose it would look like? I’m guessing, it would look something like this:



### Categories of Cool–Good Deeds

Perfect Love

“Love the Lord with all you are. Love your neighbor as yourself”

(Oh and by the way, Love keeps no record of wrongs, 1 Cor. 13:5)

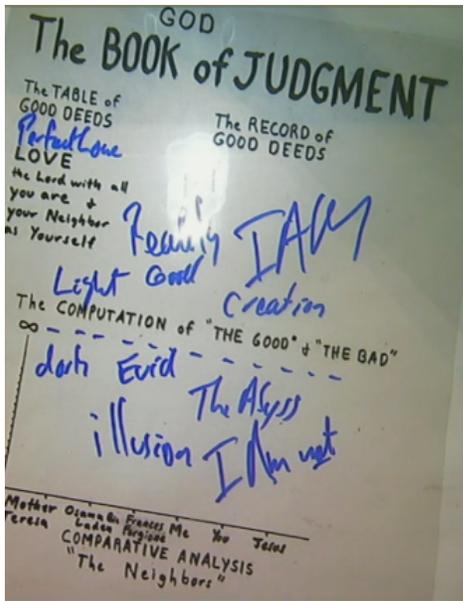
### The Universal Geek Line is Perfect Love

Above is *light*; below is dark.

Above is Good; below is evil

Above is *Creation*; And below is the abyss—*Hades, Sheol, loneliness, death.*

Above is Reality; below is illusion. Above is “I Am” below is “I Am not.”



### So how do you suppose we measure up?

Now, this is interesting because Scripture says, “Love keeps no record of wrongs.” But supposed he did. How do we measure up?

Mother Teresa, Osama Bin Laden, Frances (our Community Care pastor), Me (I’m as good as Osama) . . .

[Peter begins plotting people on the chart and even the best don’t even come close to measuring up.]

Where are you?

Actually, this really is all illusion because “Love keeps no record of wrongs.” Remember what God said to Moses, “Whosoever sins I will blot out of my book.” Just one sin and you’re already dead . . . Just to reckon according to the books is to take the knowledge of Good and evil from the tree... It is to crucify the Life and declare yourself dead.

So, we might wonder what good are the books and law?

1. Well, the law tells us we’re dead.
2. The “knowledge of Good and evil” tells Adam—mankind—that a walk with God in a garden is better than a law library.
3. The books tell us that we can’t create ourselves, justify ourselves, or save ourselves. Once you know that you can’t save yourself, maybe you’re ready to meet the Savior who is “the Good”—not dead but alive!

So anyway, where’s Jesus on this chart; how do we measure Him?

- Jesus lived a perfect life. Jesus died a perfect death. [Peter draws a cross on the chart representing that Jesus measures up; He *is* the Good.]

- He is everything the law of God describes, the Ultimate Adam (the *Eschatos Adam*), the Last Adam, the Finished Adam, the image of God who is Love.
- He is the standard. He is the measure. He is the Good.
- He is the Judgment of God.

He said, "I judge no one," yet He *is* the Judgment.

He said, "This is the Judgment: the Light has come into the world." And . . .

He said, "I am the Light of the World."

Well, in Revelation 20, on the last day, when "it is finished," books are opened. They are the record of our deeds according to the law, God's law and maybe any law. Books are opened and another book (singular) is opened, one book, *The Book of Life*. Jesus *is* the Life.

In Revelation 13 and 17, we read this book contains names written from the foundation of the world—names, it doesn't say deeds, but names.

To the Hebrews, names were persons.

These are persons who belong to the Lamb on the throne.

It's the *Lamb's Book of Life*. It's His choice, not our choice.

It's His book, not our book.

In the Gospel of John, Jesus says that He gives life to whomever He chooses.

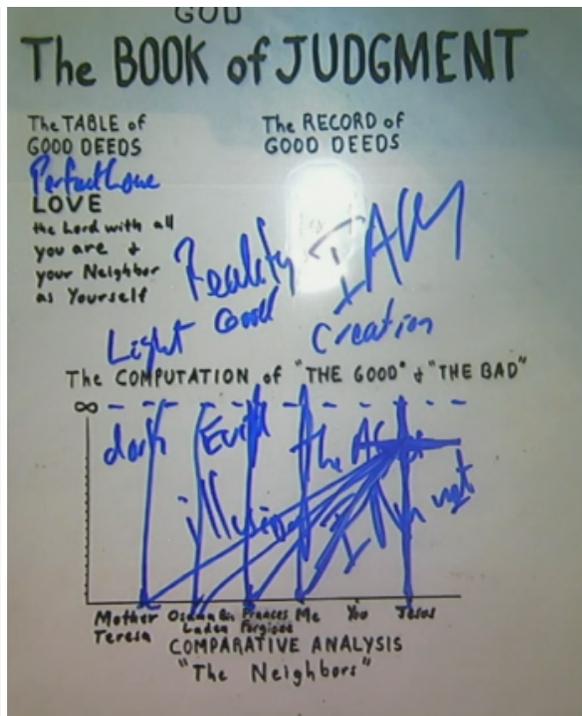
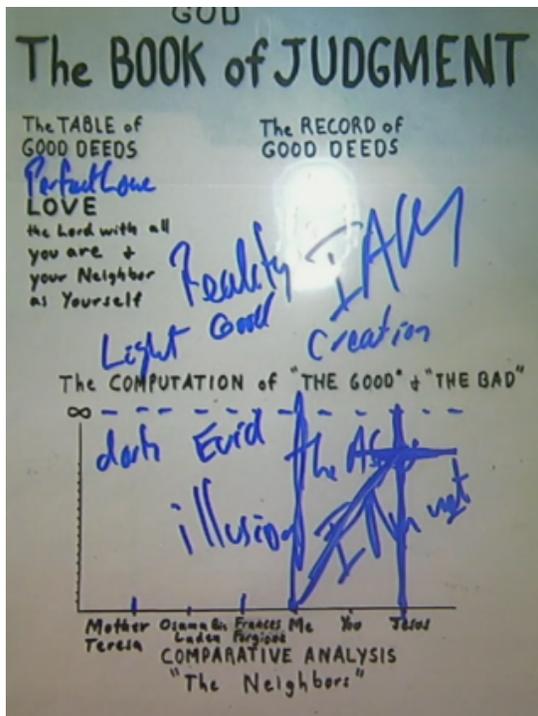
(John 5:21). So, knowing Jesus . . . do you suppose He wants to give it to a *few* or a *lot* . . . maybe all? How might He be most glorified?

Jesus is the Passover Lamb, which could be taken from the sheep or the goats (Ex. 12:5). Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Jesus is the sin offering, which was often a goat (or seven goats) and He is the burnt offering, which was usually a sheep.

Jesus atones for our sin—"He has born our griefs and carried our sorrows...and the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all." And He Himself is our righteousness—"Our wisdom righteousness sanctification and redemption," writes Paul. He is our Life—eternal Life.

*"For our sake, God made Jesus to be sin, who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."* (2<sup>nd</sup> Cor. 5:21)

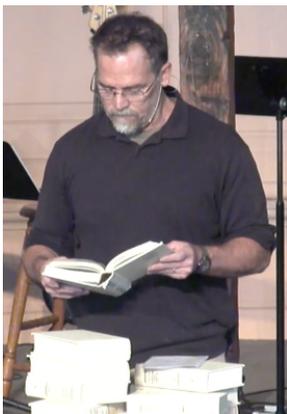
He bears our sin to destruction and His righteousness is imputed to us. It is imputed to me, and to you, to Frances, and to Mother Teresa, and to... Well, if there was any good in Osama bin Laden it must've been "imputed" to him; all good things come from God through His Word—Jesus. And if He "makes all things new," and Osama is a thing, then He must make him new with imputed righteousness. That must be how He makes everyone new: with His Word.



Actually, all righteousness is imputed—every good choice in you is God’s choice in you; it’s the fruit of the Spirit of Christ within you: Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faith... You are justified (made right) by faith—the faith of Christ within you. And this faith is not of your self it is the gift of God, lest none should boast. (Ep. 2:8)

In Colossians 2:13-15 Paul writes, *And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh [your old man], God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the principalities and powers and put them to open shame by triumphing over them in Him.*

At the cross, it’s like God opens the books; all the judgments of this world. At the cross, God opens your books and my books with their legal demands... And with His own blood, through all my history: past, present, future, with His own blood, He stamped cancelled on every debt. That’s what Paul’s saying in Colossians 2.



It’s like He picks up the record of Peter Hiatt’s deeds and begins to read: “Disrespecting his mother – fourteen times, August 13<sup>th</sup>, 1975.’ Hmmm... He takes a big old stamp, dips it in His blood [Peter pours communion wine] and stamps: “CANCELLED!”



“Lust- 5,347 times, between 4-10pm...” CANCELLED!  
 “Murder in the heart” – CANCELLED!  
 “Greed” – CANCELLED!  
 “Slander” – CANCELLED!  
 “Playboy at Tim Wrens’ House” – CANCELLED!  
 “Judging Dave Jones and becoming an accuser” – CANCELLED!

“Preaching the Gospel just to feed his own ego” – CANCELLED!

“Taking the Life of the Good, to justify himself—CANCELLED! CANCELLED! CANCELLED...by my blood!

No more books! No more living by the books of damnation. [Peter begins to toss the books to the ground.] “Drink of it all of you, stop living by the damn books—the books of damnation.”

And you can’t, if you take a second look, for they’re no longer books of damnation...

Take a second look, and you’ll see that the books of condemnation . . . have become the testimony of your salvation.



The blood of the Lamb poured out over every event in my life is the word of my testimony.

We overcome by the blood of the lamb and the word of our testimony.

For every moment, past present or future, that we believe God’s Grace we crush the head of the serpent, for all of his accusations have become gospel.

So, when He whispers in your ear, “Look what you’ve done, you are a wretch.” Don’t argue. Preach to him the gospel! Sing to him: *“Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me!”*

Everything you do in Faith by Grace is the Righteousness of Christ rising from the dead in you—the old empty tomb that you thought was you. Do you understand? At the cross Jesus didn’t just cancel out your certificate of debt, He filled all the empty places left by sin, with His very self... His Life.

So, now when you go to the tree of the knowledge of Good and evil, what do you see? [Peter turns and looks at the cross] You see Christ crucified and risen from the dead.

1. You see that Jesus died for you and with you . . . all is paid. Your old man was crucified with Christ.
2. But you also see that He rises in you. He is the Life within you. Your New Man is Christ living in you. You see Christ crucified and risen from the dead within you! At the cross, God transformed your certificate of death into the word of your testimony—the gospel according to you.

Satan really has been disarmed—His whole game is to convince you that you crucified Christ and cannot be forgiven. And the Gospel is that God willingly allowed you to crucify him in order that you would forever believe, that you are always forgiven and thoroughly loved, that you would love in the image of God your Father.

At the cross, Juan Carlos Ortiz used to say Christ has cancelled your certificate of debt. But Satan took Xerox copies.

See? Satan is disarmed and so his only hope is to convince you of falsified documents so his entire strategy is lies; it's trying to convince you that you're not forgiven and must therefore, justify yourself.

- For then you begin to live by the old books.
- You begin to condemn your neighbors.
- And then you condemn yourself and start to hate God.
- You choose death and do the work of the accuser for him.
- You put flesh—your flesh—on the evil one.

They asked Jesus, *“What must we be doing to be doing the works of God?”* And Jesus said, *“This is the work of God that you believe in him whom he has sent.”* . . . that you trust “God is Salvation”—Yeshua, Jesus—the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world and is the death of “me is salvation.”

Back to Revelation 20:13-15 where the dead are judged according to the things in the books, according to their deeds:

*And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done (their works, their deeds). Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if [Peter emphasizes “if” as he reads] anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*

Whose name does Jesus not write in His book?

Well . . . maybe those that He does not know.

Remember Jesus said that some will say to Him on that day, *“Lord Lord did we not do many mighty deeds in your name?”* (We say something like: *“Just look Jesus! They should be recorded in the books...”*) And He will say to them, “Depart from me I never knew you... Jesus is the Truth and the Truth doesn't know your false self—your ego.

But does He know your true self? Maybe He *is* your true self, hidden in the depths of your false self—your ego. (To speak truth—even if it is confessing a lie—is to speak Jesus because He is the Truth and the Life.)  
Maybe He is the breath that God first breathed into the clay. Like the light that enlightens *all* men according to John.

Whatever the case...

He doesn't know your self-righteous self because that self is an illusion. But He does know your true self, the honest to God self, the lost self: He came to seek and save the lost... not *some* lost, just "the lost". He saves each of us from our own sins—that is our old self, our ego, our flesh.

In Chapter 19 we saw the Word of God riding on a white horse. And He cut the flesh from *all* men, not *some* men, but *all* ("small and great" 19:18). Perhaps these are those corpses ("Great and small" 20:12) standing before the Lake of Fire that seems to also somehow be a throne.

In Isaiah 66 (It used to be the scariest passage to me, now I think it's the most hopeful!), at the edge of a New Jerusalem, *all* people look on the corpses of *all* people burning in the Valley of Gehenna and they can't help but worship because they have been saved from themselves.

At the cross, we surrender our old self and receive our New Self.

That old self is destroyed by Holy Fire or maybe . . . it's destroyed because it's *filled* with Holy Fire, like the disciples were filled on Pentecost.

And so Peter the coward became Peter the Rock.

And John the son of thunder became John the Apostle of Love.

And Saul the Pharisee became Paul the Apostle of Grace to the Gentiles.

And so, what was once an empty shell doing empty deeds—a vessel of wrath—became a Vessel of Divine Mercy bleeding Holy Love, which is Fire.

God is one, God is Love, God is Fire. Love is Fire. This Lake is burning Love.  
And you'll remember that the temple of God is to be filled with Eternal Fire.  
We are that temple and have been predestined to Love as God *is* Love.

In Rev. 22:12 Jesus says, "I'm coming soon bringing my reward to repay *everyone* for his deeds—*everyone, everyone, everyone.*"

We cannot pay for our empty and evil deeds; we can't pay for anything.  
But Christ is the payment for all our deeds—all our empty and evil deeds.

I think that means He renders Grace to each according to the shape of their sins. He is the Manifest Presence of God—that's eternal punishment to evil until that evil is destroyed and replaced by the Good, which is our eternal reward. He is our Payment for evil, and He is our Reward—that is the Good... He is the substance of God that fills the temple and we are His temple.

God is Love. God is Fire. Jesus is Holy Fire in human flesh.  
He is Life Eternal, and He finishes us in the image of God.  
Welcome to the Sabbath Rest; the Seventh Day, God's Promised Rest!

In Matthew 25:34-40 He says,

*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.'*

They don't remember.

I bet they don't remember because they weren't keeping score...

They weren't using Love to earn Life.

They just lived and so they loved; they loved Love.

They weren't conscious of the books...

And so they weren't conscious of first or last...

They weren't conscious of themselves...

As if, they were "dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus."

They weren't *trying* to be good; they just *were* good.

They loved the Lord their God with all their heart, mind, soul and strength, and they loved their neighbors as themselves, because love was their nature...

That is God was their nature.

He who loves is born of God and knows God; God is Love.

God is Holy Fire and you are His temple—His masterpiece.

"You are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for Good Deeds which God prepared *beforehand* that you would walk in them." (Eph. 2:10)

You're not saved by your deeds.

You're damned by your deeds so you can be saved by God and then do His deeds because you *want* to do His deeds—that's the greatest reward.

He is the Good, and Jesus is the Life, and you are His Body.

I work so hard at trying to be good, to impress God, and to impress you.

On Judgment day trumpets will sound, and Jesus will say something like this,

"PETER HIETT!!"

"August 7, 5:15am, 1087 You gave me a cup of cold water. Enter my Kingdom."

And I'll say,

"Ahh, but I don't even remember that?"

"What about all the sermons... the mission trips... and my 4.0 GPA?  
...I don't remember giving you a cup of cold water."

And He'll reply,

"Exactly, you weren't *trying* to be good, you just *were* good...

You just were good, because I made you good...

I made you good with my Judgment of Grace!"

So, what am I trying to say? "Try harder to love?" NO.

Confess that you don't Love, and receive His Love. . .

And it will change you:

*"The one forgiven little loves little,"* said Jesus.

But this is the Gospel: *"You have been forgiven much!"*

Several years ago, in Besarabia Romania, the Soviet army marched into a particular village. They rounded up all the Christians, some two hundred of them, and took them into a field. This was before 1990. They forced them to dig their own graves. They were to be shot. When they finished, the captain said, *"Whoever renounces Christ can go home immediately."* Some decided to be shot; some renounced their faith.

While they were returning to the village and the executions were about to begin, a man came running from the village to the field screaming—the man had been expelled from the church for gross sin—the man came running and screaming: "Shoot me too! Shoot me too! I'm a bad Christian, but a bad Christian is also a Christian. A bad Christian also has the right to die for Christ! Shoot me too."

Do you see?

He wanted to die for Jesus.

He wasn't a bad Christian. He was a New Creation.

He was the image of the invisible God.

Forgiven much, we love much, and we bleed Fire—like Jesus.

So when we did our absolute worst; He revealed the best . . .

### **Communion**

He took bread and He broke it saying, "This is my body given to you."

And He took the cup saying, "This is the covenant in my blood, poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Drink of it, all of you."

In Revelation 20 we read that death was thrown into the Lake of Fire—the Second Death (It's the death of death, and we'll read death will be no more in the next chapter). In 2 Timothy 1:10, Paul writes that Jesus abolished death (past tense).

Jesus bled Holy Fire—the Life and Love of God. You don't need to fear the Lake of Fire if you've already been filled with Holy Fire—just as Isaiah prophesied: "On this mountain I will swallow up death forever." On that mountain, Jesus was crucified.

In Jesus' name, confess your old self and receive your New Self.  
Believe the Gospel.

Pray that with me:

Father, I confess that I just seem to live by these books all the time. Even as I'm preaching I feel the judgments of the books pulling at me. God, I'm sick of the books and sick of sin. I think my friends are too so this morning we want to surrender our books. We surrender our judgments to your Judgment. We surrender our sin and we receive your mercy. In Jesus' name, thank you. Amen.

Come to the table. The wine and the juice are both Fire and you are the Sanctuary—the Temple.

[Communion]

### **Prayer**

We thank you that you washed us and our garments in the blood of the Lamb and you made them white as snow.

### **Benediction**

We want to know: "Is my name written in the Lamb's Book of Life?"

Well, what's your name? Is it a name you've made for yourself . . . maybe a name you consider to be a "good" name like Dr., Professor, or Reverend or maybe a bad name like Loser, Thief, or Whore. If it's a name you made for yourself, no; it's not in the book. That's the offense of the Gospel; that's the scandal of the cross: you cannot save yourself, justify or redeem yourself. But that's the Good News! That was never actually your name. You thought you made a name for yourself but that is not who you are! In fact, you're just beginning to discover who you truly are.

You know, in the gospel of John, John referred to himself as "the beloved." That's what the Father called Jesus: "*...beloved son in whom I am well pleased.*" And in 1 John, John wrote, "*We don't know exactly what we will be, but we will be like Him...*" Do you see? God is revealing who we are. And the truth is that you are far better than you ever could possibly imagine. So, there is *no way* that you are going to stand before the throne and be disappointed in you because the New You is a unique expression of the living God, made in His very own image.

So, is your name in the Lamb's Book of Life? Well, not the one that you make for yourself . . . but the one God has made for you? Absolutely! It's all over Scripture, we just freak out because we realize we're not the person that we think we are, which is great news! In John 6:37 Jesus says, "*All that the Father gives me will come to me...*" John 6:44 "*No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him...*" He already told them in chapter 3: "*The Father loves the son and has given **all things** into his hand.*"

You're God's creation and everything that God makes is good.  
In Jesus' name, believe the Gospel. Amen.

*Disclaimer: The author has not edited this document. Therefore, there may be discrepancies. Some discrepancies may be minor; some may have to do with theology. When in doubt, please refer to the audio or video version of the sermon on this website and don't be shy about informing us of errors.*