Section: Doctrine of the Last Things and Eternity (Eschatology)

Wednesday, April 28, 2021

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**TEACHING NOTES**

Good evening, I’m glad you guys are here tonight and we have a lot of good stuff to get into.

**Q117. What is the final judgment?**

God has appointed a day in which He will righteously judge the world by Jesus Christ, in Whom is all power and judgment. On that day, the fallen angels and all people who were conceived to life will appear before the judgment seat of Christ to give an account of all their thoughts, words, and deeds—whether good or evil. God's purpose for this day is for the manifestation of the glory, both of His merciful grace in the eternal salvation of the elect and of His justice in the eternal damnation of the reprobate.

Let’s pray:

The outline tonight is simple, I have broken our answer into 3 main parts and then unpacked each one. The first part of our answer reads:

1. **God has appointed a day in which He will righteously judge the world by Jesus Christ, in Whom is all power and judgment.**

If you have your bibles get them out and turn to Acts 17:16-34

Acts 17: Paul in Athens

16 Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols.

17 So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there. 18 Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him. And some said, “What does this babbler wish to say?” Others said, “He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities”—because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection. 19 And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, “May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? 20 For you bring some strange things to our ears. We wish to know therefore what these things mean.”

21 Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there would spend their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new. 22 So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: “Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. 23 For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: ‘To the unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. 24 The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, 25 nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. 26 And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, 27 that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us,

28 for

“‘In him we live and move and have our being’;

as even some of your own poets have said,

“‘For we are indeed his offspring.’

29 Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. **30 The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, 31 because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”**

32 Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. But others said, “We will hear you again about this.” 33 So Paul went out from their midst. 34 But some men joined him and believed, among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them.

This section of scripture really comes to life when you have a better understanding of the context.

There is a place called the Areopagus in this text so let me explain a little about what this place is.

The Areopagus was a hill in Athens, south of the Agora, to the north-west of the Acropolis. The term “Areopagus,” however, often refers to the “Council of the Areopagus”, a governmental institution that met on that hill. This institution was very ancient, existing long before the democratic government. Its history, which recedes back into mythological pre-history, follows closely the political history of Athens, and shows the ongoing tension between democratic and anti-democratic forces.

Originally, it was the central governing body of Athens, but under the democracy, it was primarily the court with jurisdiction over cases of homicide and certain other serious crimes. After an Athenian had served as one of the nine archons, his conduct in office was investigated, and if he passed that investigation he became a member of the Areopagus. Tenure was for life. The Areopagites those who served on this council were often said to have been so good that those who were accused and found guilty would not argue their guilt.

So picture this with me. The people of Athens have taken Paul to their court, one that was historical and prestigious, one that the people there would know well and respect. They wanted to try or hear about this new-to-them religion. So it would seem like Paul and his foreign God are on trial.

Now the people of Athens had many gods and in order to not offend anyone they even put out an alter for the “unknown” god. The mindset of their day was that everyone can believe their own god or gods as long they don’t “offend” anyone else’s beliefs. So Paul had entered a city where everyone had a “coexist” bumper sticker on the back of their horse drawn carriages. But there was problem with the God that Paul was confessing. Paul spoke about a physical resurrection. The major teaching of the time for these people was a form of Gnosticism, which at its basic level would say that the physical body is bad and the spiritual life was good. This helps us see why Paul’s teaching was offensive.

We see this in verse 18 “some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him. And some said, “What does this babbler wish to say?” Others said, “He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities”—because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection.”

They called him a babbler and said he preaches foreign divinities because he spoke of Jesus and the resurrection. This is why they took him to the Areopagus to try him. Now Paul wastes no time telling them the one true God is not an “unknown god”. He then goes on to explain the difference between the true God and their fake gods. Paul stands in the midst of this place of judgment and says your gods who are made of gold, silver, stone, and formed by the art and imagination of man, are not real but I know the true God. This one true God is not like your false gods for He does not need men to serve Him. In fact He is the very reason we live.

See Paul unpacking his case and the tension building but Paul doesn’t pull any punches in verses 30-31: 30 The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, 31 because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.” Paul basically says **you men thought you brought me here to try me and my God but it’s you who are on trial and found unprepared for the judgment to come!** **He calls them ignorant but quickly says that ignorance will not excuse them!**

Paul said to the Athenians that a day of judgment is coming and he said you think this God is foreign because of His resurrection but I am telling you His resurrection is the sure sign that God will use Him to judge you! Church do you see how scripture comes alive to us when we do work with and in the context!

Now the part that really gripped me when I read through this is that one of the Areopagites believed and followed Paul. We see this in verse 34:34 But some men joined him and believed, among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them.

One of the most honored judges, who would hold their position for life, believed and left all of that to follow Paul. The term used in the young’s literal translation was that he “cleaved” to Paul. A very strong language, church God will have His people even when it seems they are the most unlikely.

We see clearly in this passage that God has appointed a day for judgment. On that day Jesus will judge mankind just as sure as He has been resurrected. If we have not repented and trusted in Him alone for salvation, this day will be very dark. We will touch on this a little more later on.

Let’s look another passage:

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

The judgment seat is called the judgment seat of Christ, and is clearly naming Jesus as the judge whom we all must appear before. This verse brings us even more clarity to what the judgment is. Each of us will receive what is due for what we have done in the body, whether good or evil. This type of language cannot be misinterpreted. There is a day coming in which each one of us will be judged and the judge is Jesus Himself.

The first part of the answer we’re walking through ends with this phrase “**in whom is all power and judgment.**”

John 5:27 “And he [the Father] has given him [Jesus] authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man.”

Ephesians 1:20-22 20“that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church”

Jesus has been given the authority, power, and dominion over all things. He will execute the final judgment. I’m confident that these passages have brought enough clarity for the first part of our answer so let’s move to the second part.

1. **On that day, the fallen angels and all people who were conceived to life will appear before the judgment seat of Christ to give an account of all their thoughts, words, and deeds—whether good or evil.**

Romans 14:10-12 “Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; for it is written, “As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.” So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.”

I want to start with a short side note here. This passage begins with, “Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God;”

Paul is warning about judging or condemning your brothers based on Christian liberty issues. This is something we should all be careful of. There are things with which we are to judge each other as Christians things in which we hold each other accountable in love, but Christian liberty issues should not be the things we judge upon.

Let me clarify;

God **has** commanded us to hold each other accountable and to judge each other as fellow believers (you can see this in 1 Corinthians 5). This judging is to be done in regards to clear and unrepentant sin and rebellion—actual violations against God’s laws or core sound doctrine. We do not and should not judge fellow believers over our liberties, these are things that God has given us to enjoy but are not commanded to be done. This is why it is called a liberty.

Here is some important clarity. When it comes to enjoyment or abstaining from these things is up to us. We may choose to enjoy them or we may choose to abstain. This is not however an option when it comes to commands. If we have a biblical command to do something in a specific way, even if the way we are commanded to do it doesn’t feel right to us or stirs a conviction in us, we must see that this is not a **freedom** or **weakness of conscious** issue, rather it is a command to do something in a specific way. If it’s a liberty we can do it or chose to not do it.

If it’s a command then we need to change our conscious opinion about it and be obedient to our Lord.

So that being said let’s avoid judging over liberty issues, and let’s be diligent to lovingly hold our brothers and sisters accountable to the word of God.

Now back to the second part of our answer.

It’s of first and ultimate importance to remind ourselves of the gospel good news:

The gospel is the good news of the grace and power of God to redeem undeserving sinners to eternal life through Jesus’ perfect, sinless life; substitutional, sacrificial death; and victorious resurrection from the grave. These sinners are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus alone from the eternal wrath they deserved, and they are reconciled into an eternally secure relationship with God.

Church, as we consider the Final Judgment, let us ever remember that, *for all those given to him by the Father,* the Lord Jesus has fully satisfied the justice of God, obtained reconciliation, and purchased an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven. Christ has accomplished these things by his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself.

To all those for whom Christ has obtained eternal redemption, he certainly and effectually applies and imparts it. He intercedes for them, unites them to himself by his Spirit, and reveals to them in and by his Word the mystery of salvation. He persuades them to believe and obey and governs their hearts by his Word and Spirit. He overcomes all their enemies by his almighty power and wisdom, using methods and ways that are perfectly consistent with his wonderful and unsearchable governance. All these things are by free and absolute grace, apart from any condition for obtaining it that is foreseen in them.

The bottom line here, Church, is that all of us who had saving faith in Christ in this life will certainly be declared safe and redeemed in Jesus on judgment day.

We will point to Christ Jesus alone as the only reason we are right with God.

We will testify to God’s saving grace as we stand before the King of kings.

We will be seen *as holy* because Jesus’ prefect righteousness *was credited* to us. We will most certainly enter eternal blessedness with Christ our Lord.

AND, that final judgement is the appropriate time for God (the owner of all things) to hold His creation to account for how they stewarded the ability, gifts, opportunities, resources that He gave to each of them. In God we live and move and have our being…from God are all good gifts…from God is the right and good law for us to honor. …We will give an account as stewards of His varied grace, who lived under His righteous law.

And not just believers…ALL of mankind will be judged for how they used and stewarded the life God gave. Each any every person ever conceived to life has that portion of life to give an account for. ALL will bow to King Jesus (whether they are His friends or His enemies—they will bow) and give an account.

It is clear through this verse and others that we will all answer to God. “for it is written, “As I live, says the Lord, **every knee** shall bow to me, and **every tongue** shall confess to God.” So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.”

The point I want to make here is that even believers will be judged. Now as believers we will escape the eternal judgment for our sin because we will be found in Christ, however we will be judged for what we have done in our lives.

This statement needs some clarity. Heaven will be so much more amazing than anything we can imagine, however there is promise of greater rewards or greater responsibilities given to those who are more faithful with what they have been entrusted with in this life after Christ saved us. There will also be a greater judgment upon those who have been given more responsibility in this life. For example those who are allowed to be in leadership of the church. Your leaders will have to give a greater account for the way they led you. Let’s look at Hebrews 13:17

Hebrews 13:17 “Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.”

We see here that those who lead you will have to give an account or be held to a greater judgment for the way they led you. So, Elders, as the leaders of the church, you will have to answer for how you lead your flock.

And, applying this principle more broadly, husbands, as the leaders of your home, you will have to answer for how you led your family. Etc. Consider the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30

Three servants were given talents, each of them was given a different amount. Two of the servants invested and doubled what was entrusted to them. One servant hid what was entrusted to him.

What happened to the servants?

The two good servants were blessed for how they handled the money. They were told well done my good and faithful servants, you have been faithful will a little I will set you over much, enter into the joy of your Master. The bad servant was cursed and condemned for how he handled the money.

In fact the Master took what He entrusted to the bad servant and notice, He gave it to the servant who was entrusted with the most money and found faithful.

So we see again a clear account in scripture that believers or good servants are still judged by what they did with what God gave them! In fact in this parable both the believer and the unbeliever are clearly held accountable for their lives and how they used them.

Let’s look at one more verse that shows this point:

Ecclesiastes 12:14 For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.

Clearly according to this verse in Ecclesiastes there will be an account given by believers for apart from faith you cannot do anything good (see Romans 14:23, Hebrews 11:6). Therefore, if every deed is brought to judgment, **even good deeds,** then believers will give an account, for only believers are capable of good deeds.

It is also clear in this passage that every secret thing will be brought into judgment. So, if you have ears to hear tonight, quit hiding in your sin. The lie that your sin tells you is this: we can keep this a secret, no one will know about it, in fact you must keep it a secret because if they do find it out they couldn't possibly love you. I mean if they knew who you really were there is no chance they’d love you. Guys this is a lie. There is no secret that won't be made known. Don't give in to the deceitfulness of sin and allow it to have a stronghold on your life. Take it from someone who knows, it's far better to share the details of that sin now and let the genuine believer’s love you well in your repentance. Just think about how it would feel to be fully known and still truly loved. The truth shall set you free indeed.

So we see that all people including believers will be judged, and we’ve already seen some of the things we will judged for, but I want to look at one that’s particularly troubling.

Matthew 12:36 "I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak"

Church please listen to this, any word you speak that’s not righteous will be another careless word you will be judged for. What are you doing with your words? Do your words bring life to those around you? Do you spend your words building up, encourage, loving those you share them with, or are they careless, do they hurt those around you? We must not miss the seriousness of this passage! Every careless word spoken will be held up to us on the Day of Judgment.

Think about that for a moment; every careless text message, every careless comment or post on social media, every careless shout in bad traffic, every juicy story we tell our friends in private, we will give an account for all of these. As Christians we must guard our tongues carefully. I know I do not need to convince anyone here that this is an area of struggle for so many. Let’s be thankful for God’s grace, but let’s not continue on in sin. Guard your tongues, do not be loose with your tongues and abuse the grace of God.

It is clear through the passages we’ve read in this section that all men will be held accountable for every careless word, every thought, every deed, and every failure to obey God. We will also be judged for every good deed we do, and the held accountable for the responsibilities we have been given.

Our answer also says that fallen angels would be judged. We see this clarity in Jude 1:6:

Jude 6 And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day

This verse says “the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority.” These are what we call fallen angels. And it says they are under judgment too and will be forever. This is surely sufficient to prove the first two parts of our answer. Let’s move to our last parts of the answer for tonight.

1. **God's purpose for this day is for the manifestation of the glory, both of His merciful grace in the eternal salvation of the elect and of His justice in the eternal damnation of the reprobate.**

There are two main passages that unpack our final point. The first one will be in Matthew 25, and the second will be in Romans 9. So turn in your bibles to Romans 9 and place a book mark there then turn to Matthew 25.

I am going to answer this last point from multiple angles so hang in there with me while we go through this section. Our first passage is in Matthew chapter 25.

Matthew 25:31-34; 41, 46 “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’**... **41**“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. 46 And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

There is a day coming when Jesus will return and the purpose of His return will be to judge the world, finally separating the sheep from the goats. This language is similar to what we see in John 10, where Jesus speaks in great lengths of His sheep and His love and sacrifice for His sheep. He also speaks of those who are not sheep.

Scripture shows us that when Jesus returns for the final judgment He will be the Good Shepherd who separates the sheep from the goat. This Jesus- this Shepherd- is also the one who is the King that says to those He separated, to the ones on the right **‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world’.**

**And**

**41“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.

Now we can use this passage to establish that there are two groups of people like our answer says and that one of these people the “sheep” or the “righteous” will be given eternal life that has been prepared beforehand from the foundations of the world. These will be the subjects of the one true King. This eternal life will be lived in the kingdom that has been prepared for them before creation!

The other group is the goats or the unbelievers. They will go away into eternal punishment.

Another name we use for this group of people is the name reprobate. There are two definitions given in the Merriam Webster dictionary for this word reprobate.

***1*:**  to condemn strongly as unworthy, unacceptable, or evil

***2*:**  to foreordain to damnation

Both of these definitions fit the answer to our catechism lecture tonight. The reprobate or the goats-those **not** elect, are condemned strongly as unworthy, unacceptable, and evil. They were also foreordained to eternal damnation by a holy and just God. The thing we need to remember here is that, in ourselves, **all of us** were unworthy, unacceptable, and evil. The difference between the two is that we who are elect were never part of the second definition given for this word. Those who are reprobate are guilty and they will receive the just penalty for their guilt, the same penalty the Elect deserved before being saved by our gracious God! When we look at these things we must remember apart from God “No one is good no not one”. No one deserves to be Christ’s sheep and given eternal life, NO ONE!

If this sounds unjust, remember that the only truly humanly unjust event that has ever taken place happened at the cross. The trial, flogging, and crucifixion of the only innocent man to ever live was the only unjust event in history.

We must see that human injustice only happened to Jesus who was perfect but was treated like and died in the place of sinners. God ordained this human injustice as a mighty act of His grace!!!! The elect will not be standing on their merits, hard work, wisdom, or good deeds. They will be on their faces glorifying the Lord and His gracious mercy to save anyone. No one deserves to be saved.

When we begin to understand this foundation it helps us to see in a clearer way the beauty of what God has done. When Jesus judges all people, those who are not found in Him will be condemned, and those whom He has saved He will bring into glory.

Since no one was capable of earning Gods favor or having a perfect standing before God, God showed the world His grace, for His glory, through the planned death of His Son to save unworthy sinners! This is to the praise of His glorious grace!

But why? Why has God done this? I don’t think that people are as confused about what happens to us at the final judgment, but rather the question that usually comes up is why. Why does God do it this way?

Our answer says **“God's purpose for this day is for the manifestation of the glory both of His merciful grace in the eternal salvation of the elect and of His justice in the eternal damnation of the reprobate”.**

Let’s look to our Romans 9 passage to see the clarity it brings.

Romans 9:22-24 **What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction,** in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory—even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles?

As Paul unpacks the way God has chosen to save His people Paul anticipates the people’s response. Though we do not have time to totally unpack Romans 9, I do want to read more of it to show you the fuller context. If ever there was ever a passage of scripture that read me, it was this one.

**Romans 9:6-23 6But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, 7and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but “Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.” 8This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring. 9For this is what the promise said: “About this time next year I will return, and Sarah shall have a son.” 10And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac,**

**11though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God’s purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls— 12she was told, “The older will serve the younger.”**

**13As it is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.”**

**14What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God’s part? By no means! 15For he says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.” 16So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy. 17For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, “For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.” 18So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.**

**19You will say to me then, “Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?” 20But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, “Why have you made me like this?”**

**21Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use?**

**22What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, 23in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory.**

Though this chapter is thick and complex, it does bring some of the clearest reasons to why God does salvation and judging the way He does. In verse 22-24 we see this clarity.

Starting with verse 22 let’s look at the reasons God gives for the reprobate and what happens to them at the day of judgment.

Romans 9:22 What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction**,**

We see here are at least two reasons why God has created those whom He would not save from their sin. In fact the verse says He prepared them for destruction.

The first reason given is to show his power and the second reason given is to show his wrath.

Earlier in the Romans 9 passage Pharaoh was the example Paul used to illustrate this. God himself said the sole purpose of His creating Pharaoh and raising him up to the power Pharaoh had, was done so that God could display His power to the world through His interactions with Pharaoh (you guys remember what happened there, right?). And that His name, God’s name (or His glory) would be proclaimed in all the earth!

The same way God raised Pharaoh, for this purpose he also raises all the reprobate unto destruction. You see the reprobate (who, remember should have been all of us in our sin!) serve a purpose to display God's power and wrath which will bring Him glory. In our answer we state that the reprobate “are wicked and disobedient". This clarity is important and I've added it all throughout this part to ground our understanding here.

There could be a tendency to say that this is not fair or just on God’s behalf (like Paul assumes you would in the Romans 9 passage). We must remember the reprobate are guilty, they have a culpable will and a representative that did exactly what they would have in the garden. They are not the guiltless puppets of an angry god who forced them to sin then punished them for it. The reprobate are guilty, they are God hating.

God’s system of Federal Headship representation, and the will with which they live their life, is enough for God to condemn them and remain righteous. We must remember we are not guiltless. In and of ourselves we all deserve enteral punishment. No one is righteous, no not one.

The reprobate at the final judgment will be sent into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 46 And these will go away into eternal punishment…

So let's move on to the reason given for God to save His elect people:

Romans 9:23 in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory.

Now before we dive into the reasons given for the elect to be saved we must recognize one more reason for the reprobate to be punished. We who are saved have a much clearer understanding of God's grace and love when we see what he saved us from. God's punishment on the reprobate makes known to us (the elect) the Riches of His Glory!

God, for His glory, displays his mercy, in the elect whom he saves. In this design God receives the most glory possible and we who are saved receive the most joy, and understand in the clearest way, what God has done for us.

Before God laid the foundations of this world He had chosen a people unto Himself whom He would save for His glory. This is a hard concept for some people to accept but let me submit that it is not a “hard to find concept” when we look to the scriptures.

In my favorite book of all scripture we see God's grace to the elect and the purpose for it so clearly.

Ephesians 1:3-6 3blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

God blessed “US” in Jesus by His choosing us in Jesus “Before the foundations of the World” that we should be holy and blameless (or saved by grace alone through faith alone). God did this by predestining us for adoption to Himself as children through Jesus’s redemption.

This work, according to the end of this Ephesians passage, magnified the glorious grace of God! For the elect, those saved by God’s grace, this magnifying of God’s glory brings us overwhelming joy! Our God is so good to us that His sovereign design causes His glory and our joy to be tied together! So that whatever brings Him the most glory brings us, the true elect, those believing in God, the absolute most joy!

Christian our God is so good to us that we truly are incapable of grasping the fullness of His grace. When Jesus returns to judge and He finally separates the Elect from the reprobate, we will see the glorious grace of God and honor Him in our salvation.

Revelation 13:8 and 20:15 also confirm this plan of God.

God has chosen this plan and He will carry it out. There is a day that has been fixed by God when He will judge the world through Jesus the resurrected savior. On this day the fallen angels will be judged as well as the elect and the reprobate. Jesus will separate them and send them to their eternal place. Those who were not saved by grace through faith will be sent unto condemnation and eternal punishment for their wickedness—their sin, and those who were saved will be brought unto glory and life eternal with God through the work of each member of the triune Godhead. If God has saved you it is through His grace alone that this was done and oh how sweet that grace is.

At this point now in our lesson let me read to you the portion about our topic tonight from the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith. You’ll hear very familiar statements (as our catechism is in alignment with church history), and it includes application and encouragement:

**Chapter 32 - The Last Judgment**

1. God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ,1 to whom all power and judgment is given by the Father. In that day, the apostate angels will be judged.2   So also, all people who have lived on the earth will appear before the judgment seat of Christ, to give an account of their thoughts, words, and deeds and to receive a reckoning according to what they have done in the body, whether good or evil.3

2. God’s purpose for appointing this day is to manifest the glory of his mercy in the eternal salvation of the elect, and of his justice in the eternal damnation of the reprobate, who are wicked and disobedient.4 For at that time the righteous will go into everlasting life and receive fullness of joy and glory with everlasting rewards in the presence of the Lord. But the wicked, who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of Jesus Christ, will be thrown into everlasting torments5 and punished with everlasting destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power.6

(Now the application and encouragement in the confession) 3. Christ desires that we be firmly convinced that a day of judgment will come, both to deter everyone from sin7 and to comfort the godly more fully in their adversity.8  For this reason, he has determined to keep the day secret, to encourage people to shake off any fleshly security and always to be watchful, because they do not know the hour when the Lord will come9 and so that they may always be prepared to say, “Come Lord Jesus; come quickly. Amen.”10

Let me end tonight with this parable from Matthew 25.

Matthew 25:1-13 (ESV)

The Parable of the Ten Virgins

25 “Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. 2 Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. 3 For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, 4 but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. 5 As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. 6 But at midnight there was a cry, ‘Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ 7 Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. 8 And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’

9 But the wise answered, saying, ‘Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.’ 10 And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. 11 Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ 12 But he answered, ‘Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.’ 13 Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

There will not be a second chance. When Christ returns will He find you awake and in faith?

I want to say this to those of you here if you have not repented of your sin and trusted in Christ for salvation. Repent and believe.

Church the final judgment is coming. On this day we will give an account for every thought, careless word, secret sin, and failed obedience. God will at this time separate the elect from the reprobate. There will not be another judgment after this, it will be final and we will move on.

It is clear that there is an eternal place for all of Gods created beings. The reprobate will be in eternal torment under the just wrath of God.

The Elect will be in eternal joy with God as Psalm 16:11 says:

in your presence there is fullness of joy;

at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

So let me ask you this, what are you doing now with the time God has given you? What are you doing to spread the gospel for the hope of lost souls to be saved? Do not miss the joy of obedience to our Lord! He has commanded us to go into all the nations and make disciples.

How many of you have loved ones like myself that are desperate for Gods work in their life? Church we must be on mission, we must be on our knees in prayer, and we must be pushing back the darkness of this world for the final judgment is coming. Don’t waste the precious time God has given you, there will be no do-overs when Christ returns. I love you family I’m praying for you as you consider these things, and I’d ask for your prayers in return. The burden for the lost should weigh on our hearts. The joy of being with our Lord should bring us **great** hope!

Let’s pray.