

What if I'm Not Good Enough for Heaven?

Matthew 7:13-14: (NASB) ¹³*Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. ¹⁴For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.*



The vast majority of Christian belief systems may have a problem. What do they do with the billions of humanity who are not true followers of Jesus, but they are not terrible people either? These billions try to live a good life by being decent and kind to one another. Many of these have not heard the name of Jesus in any meaningful way. Can we say that God will destroy them for essentially being born in the wrong time and place? That does not make sense! Can we say that they go to heaven when they die? That does not make sense either. Jesus taught us that going to heaven is a call that is difficult and requires deliberate choices. God loves humanity so much that He sent His only son Jesus as our ransom. That being the case, what does happen to those billions who are not good enough for heaven?

The Bible teaches that Jesus DID die for all people, even those who never knew of him. Romans 5 is one set of many scriptures that show us how ALL are in fact redeemed by Jesus - not just Christians.

Paul begins his reasoning by highlighting how true Christians are specially blessed:

Romans 5:1: (NASB) *Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

We have peace with God, but sinful humanity does not and cannot have peace with God.



We - **only those who are called by God to follow Jesus.** This is an important distinction. In our discussion, we will alternate between the “we” - those who are called to God’s purpose now - and the “everybody else.”

Next, Paul begins to explain how true Christianity got into this amazingly blessed position:

Romans 5:8-10: (NASB) ⁸*But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

Jesus redeemed the entire sinful race with his sacrifice.

While we were yet sinners - this point is being made as the apostle begins to talk about the we, those who receive a special blessing.

⁹*Much more then, having now been justified by his blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through him.*

The words *much more then* transition us to the followers of Christ. *We shall be saved from God’s wrath.* Sometimes when these verses are read quickly some of the details can be missed.



What does *we shall be saved from the wrath of God* mean? Does this mean that true Christians do not live during the time of trouble?

No, but it means they are protected in a special way. This is building the argument of the blessed position the true followers have.

¹⁰For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

While we were enemies we were reconciled - the sacrifice of Jesus covers even his enemies.

Much more - another transition, referring to the followers of Christ. We are already reconciled which means we are saved; in other words, delivered and protected now.

The Apostle Paul lays out the whole journey of humanity and the role the ransom of Jesus plays in it.

His focus was on the called-out ones earlier. Now his focus changes to the history of humanity through sin:

Romans 5:12-14: (NASB) ¹²Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned...

Sin and death are an INEVITABLE inheritance from Adam applicable to everyone. Inarguably, no one can escape sin and death.

¹³for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

¹⁴Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of him who was to come.

Death reigned even before the Law was given, proving the death penalty was upon all humanity. There was not a strong barometer for sin and death when there was no Law in place to officially define "sin," but Paul establishes that sin and death were always there because Adam sinned. God said, *In the day you eat thereof, dying you shall die.* This specific consequence applies to all.



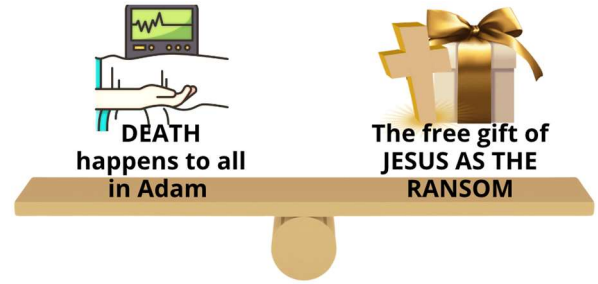
Romans 5:15-16: (NASB) ¹⁵But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, ("the many" refers to all humanity according to the previous context) much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many ("the many" again is all humanity. The grace of God and Jesus is undeserved favor for sinful humanity. God and Jesus did not have to be gracious, but they were). ¹⁶The gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification.

The Apostle Paul calls everyone *the many* because there are lots of them! *The many* (everyone) are subject to death because of the sin of one man, Adam. On the other hand, *the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification.* Everyone is included in BOTH the transgression of Adam AND in the free gift.



We have the *free gift* (Jesus as the ransom) pictured on one end balancing the *transgression* of Adam pictured on the other end.

DEATH to all in Adam would therefore be counteracted by the balance of Jesus as the ransom! This was the plan right from the start!



Picture a balance scale where Adam is on one side and Jesus is on the other. A perfect man for a perfect man. Justice is satisfied. It is balanced. God has balance in His plan.

Paul expands this teaching to bring out the key differences in how salvation is applied:

Romans 5:17: (NASB) *For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, (again, who did death reign over? Everyone! The “many.”) much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ.*

There IS a qualifier here applying to the called-out ones, those discussed in Romans 5:8-10. This shows them being given authority.

How can it be *much more* than the gift of the ransom for all? Reigning over what? These called-out ones are reigning with Christ, which is why they go to heaven. They are given an extra level of grace. It is much more than life after resurrection. That is why being a true Christian is not an easy task. It is a job that requires all of our effort and devotion, all of the time.

Paul’s focus now begins to shift to discussing Jesus’ ransom relating to sin and NOT death:

Romans 5:18-21: (NASB) *18So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness (the ransom) there resulted justification of life to all men.*

One transgression - this means someone broke a law; they did something wrong. This compares the *one transgression* (Adam’s sin) with *the one act of righteousness* (Jesus’ ransom). This is a legal aspect.



Jesus did not just do something “nice.” He did something legally righteous in the sight of God to cancel out the transgression.

All humanity is clearly included in being condemned to sin and death. We see Jesus legally acting on behalf of humanity. Justification (being free from the guilt of sin) is a result of the ransom.



¹⁹For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one the many will be made righteous.

For as through the one man's disobedience - this is now about the moral aspect. To disobey is to morally choose the wrong decision. The counterbalance is that through the obedience of the one, the compliance of Jesus, the many will be made righteous.



Jesus satisfies both the legal aspect and the moral aspect.

Here salvation is the open door for the pathway to being righteous, to being equitable. Jesus opens a door where all of humanity can approach righteousness in the sight of God. This had never happened before.



Check out our CQ Kids videos:
WHY DID JESUS COME TO EARTH?
Learn about the ransom
christianquestions.com/youtube



Check out our CQ Kids videos:
WHY DID JESUS HAVE TO DIE?
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²⁰The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,

The more clearly sin was defined, the more powerfully grace would apply.

²¹so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace (salvation) would reign through righteousness (the ransom) to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We see a clear-cut picture of how ALL are covered by the ransom of Jesus. There is a special gift of a heavenly reward to those who follow after Christ during this lifetime, but ALL are covered from both a legal perspective and a moral perspective. No one is left out.

GOD'S GRACIOUS PLAN FOR THOSE NOT GOING TO HEAVEN:

God's plan - right from the start - ALWAYS had salvation built into it for every man, woman and child who would suffer the consequences of Adam's sin. **Salvation through Jesus is FOR EVERYONE**, but it is NOT a free ride for anyone!

Salvation is available and everyone is included. However, it requires action on the part of the recipient. For those of humanity who are not going to heaven, this is good news. You have a place back on earth!



Right from the start we can see that God's plan is wiser, more comprehensive and more just than most of us ever realized.

If God's plan of salvation includes everyone, how does the day of judgment fit into the picture?

God's judgment has many parts to it. God judges and tears down the systems of this world in the final time of trouble to prepare for His kingdom. He then judges the people on the day of judgment.



There is a difference between God's anger that pulls down this world's governments and systems and the judgment of God on the people of this world. These are different but part of the same overall plan.

Who does the day of judgment affect? Jesus tells us it affects everyone who has not been truly faithful to God:

John 5:28-29: (ASV) ²⁸Marvel not at this: for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, ²⁹and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment.

There are two different statements here: some are raised *unto the resurrection of life* and some *unto the resurrection of judgment*. ALL people are raised, but to two different results.

RESURRECTION OF LIFE	RESURRECTION OF JUDGMENT
"They that have done good" the faithful followers of Jesus	"They that have done evil" the "everybody else"

What role does Jesus play in each of the two categories represented above? He plays a specific but different role in both.



Jesus advocates for those faithful followers, as we see in our theme text:

Matthew 7:13-14: (NASB) ¹³Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. ¹⁴For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

"They that have done good"
the faithful followers of Jesus

1 John 2:1-2: (ASV) ¹My little children, these things write I unto you that ye may not sin. And if any man sin, we have an **advocate** <3875> with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

Jesus is their ADVOCATE

Advocate: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #3875 *parakletos*; an intercessor, consoler: one who pleads another's cause before a judge, a pleader, counsel for defense, legal assistant, an advocate

An advocate here means one who pleads before God on our behalf. Jesus does this for us in this present life when we make mistakes and sincerely repent.

²and he is the **propitiation** <2434> for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world.

Propitiation: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #2434 *ilamov hilasmos*; 1) an appeasing, propitiating 2) the means of appeasing, a propitiation



The propitiation - the “right amount” to appease or make right our sins. Jesus paid the exact price required *for our sins*, a perfect human life (Jesus) for a perfect human life (Adam).

For our sins - the true body of Christ comprised of his faithful followers. Not only did Jesus pay the right amount for our sins, *but also for the whole world*. Everybody is included!

But there is a different function of Jesus for the two groups.



These true followers of Christ are not judged at this point because they have already been tested and found to be faithful. During this life, they laid their lives down in sacrifice to do God’s will instead of their own. They had Jesus by their side, advocating and covering them. Jesus is our advocate.



What if I'm not good enough for heaven?

The “everybody else” includes those who are not seeking to follow Christ at this time, those who have never heard of Jesus, or who died before he did. To this class of people, Jesus is not their advocate; rather, he is their mediator.

“They that have done evil”
the “everybody else”

Jesus is their MEDIATOR



Jesus mediates for *they that have done evil*, the rest of humanity who are not heaven-bound:

1 Timothy 2:3-6: (NASB) ³*This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴who desires <2309> all men to be saved (desire here means “resolved.” God our Savior is resolved that all men be saved) and to come to the knowledge <1922> of the truth (everyone will have full discernment of the truth).* ⁵*For there is one God, and one mediator <3316> also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶who gave himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time.*

Desire: Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance #2309 *thelō*

Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon: 1) to will, have in mind, intend; 1a) to be resolved or determined, to purpose; 1b) to desire, to wish; 1c) to love

Knowledge: Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance #1922; recognition, i.e. (by implication) full discernment

Mediator: Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance #3316 *mesitēs*, a go-between, i.e. (simply) an internunciator, or (by implication) a reconciler (intercessor):—mediator

Outline of Biblical Usage: 1) one who intervenes between two, either in order to make or restore peace and friendship, or form a compact, or for ratifying a covenant; 2) a medium of communication, arbitrator

Jesus is the mediator for the “everybody else.” He intervenes between two parties who are at odds - God and sinful mankind.



Why is God at odds with humanity? Because we are sinful. Under the Jewish Law, in order to be represented before God, they had to offer sacrifices and follow the Law. Those sacrifices were a picture of Jesus. Jesus gave humanity the ability to be recognized by God.

A mediator sits between two opposing parties. This only happens when both parties have grounds for mediation. Sinful humanity - the "everybody else" - is invited to this "mediation table" because Jesus paid the ransom price for Adam, resulting in their resurrection.

This mediation will be different from our present-day courts in that there will be no negotiation of terms. God's righteous ways are the only ways. Resurrected mankind will learn this through the process of walking up the *highway of holiness* of Isaiah 35:8.

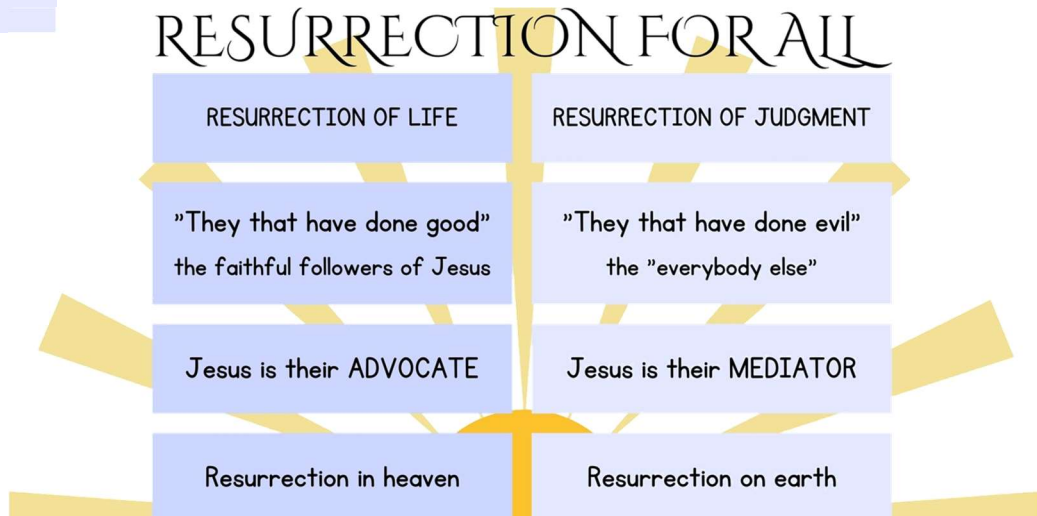
TWO DIFFERENT ROLES OF JESUS	
To the GODLY	To the UNGODLY
True followers of Christ	"Everybody else"
Jesus as an "advocate" sits side-by-side, next to you, speaking to God on your behalf	Jesus as a "mediator" sits between two parties in order to bring God and the ungodly together
When? During your lifetime, being judged in advance of the world	When? During the world's Judgment Day
The result? A reward of "glory, honor and immortality"	The result? "Tribulation and distress," then the opportunity to make a choice to glorify God with full knowledge of sin and personal accountability

RESURRECTION OF JUDGMENT

They that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment.

"They that have done evil"
the "everybody else"

The *resurrection of judgment* implies that those raised are out of harmony with God. The unbelievers of the world have Jesus mediate for them in their disunity with God.





Judgment: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #2920 *krisis*; decision; by extension, a tribunal; by implication, justice (especially, divine law)

Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon: 1) a separating, sundering, separation
1a) a trial, contest 2) selection 3) judgment

This word has different meanings. It can mean a:

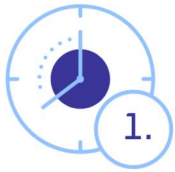
- process
- trial
- decision

It can convey going through something, or it can mean the final result of something.

The Greek word is *krisis*, where our English word “crisis” comes from. When someone is in a crisis in the hospital, it means the outcome - life or death - can go either way. They are in a difficult stage.

The Bible shows Judgment Day to be a “crisis time” process rather than just a stamp of approval or disapproval in a 24-hour day. These next scriptures clearly reveal the process and objective of Judgment Day.

Let's examine these three points:



God is a keeper of promises, and His will is that all will come to repentance:

2 Peter 3:7-9: (NIV2011) ⁷By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly. ⁸But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the LORD a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. ⁹The LORD is not slow in keeping His promise, as some understand slowness. Instead He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

What promise? The Abrahamic promise:

Genesis 22:16-18: (NASB) ¹⁶By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. ¹⁸In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.

The stars of heaven - the faithful followers of Jesus, they that have done good.

The sand which is on the seashore - the “everybody else,” they that have done evil.

God is not slow to keep His promise, but He is patient with us. Why?

Because, as it says in **2 Peter 3:9**, *not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.* This implies that people have an opportunity and a decision in the matter. God made a promise to Abraham that *all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.* This is how He keeps this promise.



God has a process in place and wants everyone to come to the stage of repentance.



God's judgments will not break people; they are designed to produce a learning environment for them:

Isaiah 26:8-9: (NASB) *⁸Indeed, while following the way of Your judgments, O LORD, we have waited for You eagerly; Your name, even Your memory, is the desire of our souls. ⁹At night my soul longs for You, indeed, my spirit within me seeks You diligently; for when the earth experiences Your judgments the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.*

When the earth experiences Your judgments the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness - the day of judgment is a *krisis* in that it shows the process and development of learning righteousness.

People will not suddenly get zapped as they wake up in the resurrection and all is automatically righteous in their lives and thinking. Humans are not robots. God wants us to use our free will to choose His way of righteousness 100 percent of the time.

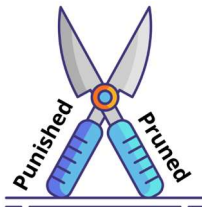


Judgment Day is a day of learning and change:

2 Peter 2:9: (KJV) *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of **judgment** <2920> to be **punished** <2849>.*

Judgment: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #2920 *krisis*; a separating, sundering, separation

Punished: Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #2849 *kolazo*; 1) to lop or prune, as trees and wings 2) to curb, check, restrain



Pruning a tree does not mean we are destroying it or cutting it down. We cut it back so that it produces better fruit or grows into a more pleasing or healthier shape. We take out the unhealthy or unfruitful branches channeling all the energy into proper growth. This is the learning process - *krisis* - not a final judgment.

Jesus' mediation will be enacted by walking the world through accountability so that they can stand before God forever on their own chosen merits of learned and accepted righteousness. This is a growth process.

GOD'S GRACIOUS PLAN FOR THOSE NOT GOING TO HEAVEN:

God's plan for those who are **NOT THE CALLED-OUT DISCIPLES OF JESUS** has a **RECONCILIATORY PROCESS** involved. Their resurrection to judgment is actually an **opportunity to become right with God** and includes being able to be brought back to God's favor through the mediation of Jesus.

The purpose of Jesus mediating is to give the world of mankind an opportunity to become right with God. It is a process.



What if I'm not good enough for heaven? The answer is, you have a mediator! Not only do you have a place, but you also now have a method through which you can learn the righteousness of God. This is comforting for those who are not going to heaven!

Judgment Day is a GOOD day in that it is a long period of time set aside to bring God's human creation to full knowledge, repentance and forgiveness.

What does the reconciliation process look like for those who are not good enough for heaven?

Understanding that God is just, loving, wise and powerful helps put this day of judgment reconciliation process in order. The comprehensiveness of God's character and plans tell us that the work of Judgment Day is the work of systematically bringing a race of humans lost to sin into complete harmony with their God. What does this reconciliation look like?

To be reconciled to God means we are to be reconciled in our thoughts, our words and our deeds:



There is power in this simple statement. This covers all that we are. We are going to look at how this reconciliation process touches our thoughts, words and deeds. We will compare what Jesus taught his disciples and followers to do in this present life with what will be expected in the future Judgment Day for the "everybody else":



THE THOUGHTS AND REACTIONS OF HUMANITY:

Jesus taught his disciples to, here and now, be responsible for their thoughts and reactions:

Matthew 5:23-24: (NASB) ²³Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.

The thoughts and reactions of those who are called to follow Christ now should be pretty simple. We are to do things the right way. We know better because we have been taught better by the Scriptures and by God's spirit. We need to rise above our human thoughts and reactions and approach each other with a godly reaction instead. This may be hard, but it is our responsibility.



Jesus warned the “everybody else” that their thoughts and reactions now will have an effect on them later:

Matthew 11:20-24: (NASB) ²⁰Then he began to denounce the cities in which most of his miracles were done, because they did not repent. ²¹Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. ²²Nevertheless I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you.

Tyre and Sidon were known for being seats of great evil. A righteous person would have avoided going to Tyre and Sidon.



Woe to you Chorazin... Bethsaida - Jesus preached and evidently performed miracles in Chorazin and Bethsaida, but never ministered directly to the evil cities of Tyre or Sidon. And yet we are told it will be easier for those inhabitants in the day of judgment than the cities who rejected Jesus when his righteousness was among them and made manifest through his miracles.

(Source: A Commentary on the Holy Bible, Matthew Poole) Tyre and Sidon were habitations of heathens, their country joined to Galilee. They were places of great traffic, inhabited with Canaanitish idolaters, and exceedingly wicked; threatened by the prophet Isaiah, Isaiah 23:1-18, and by the prophet Ezekiel, Ezekiel 26:1-28:26, and by Amos, Amos 1:9,10; a people odious to the Jews upon many accounts.

²³And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will descend to hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day. ²⁴Nevertheless I say to you that it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for you.

Sodom was specifically destroyed because of its inherent evil.

The cities who saw the miracles of Jesus and rejected him as Messiah will have a harder time than the sin-filled evil cities like Sodom, in the day of judgment.

We make observations and form conclusions in our minds, whether we say them out loud or not. Here Jesus says to those not going to heaven - average, everyday people who may not even know much about Jesus - you will be accountable for your thoughts from this life in the future. Each of us should strive to be the best human being we can be right now. He is not asking the “everybody else” to be sacrificial in giving up even decent pursuits that take time away from doing godly things. He is not stating they must read their Bibles every day. He IS saying their thoughts will follow them and will have to be dealt with, repented of and made right in the future day of judgment.



THE INTENTIONS AND WORDS OF HUMANITY:

Jesus taught his disciples that their **words** and **intentions** should be sure in their godly purpose:

Matthew 5:37: (NASB) *But let your statement be, Yes, yes or No, no; anything beyond these is of evil.*

In talking to the true follower of Christ now, Jesus is saying: *Be clear in what you stand for. Be clear, stand for truth, do not waffle or vacillate, be clear.* Jesus is not expecting the world to act the same way in this present day.

He warned everyone else that their careless words spoken now will bring responsibility later. He advises them to be mature human beings:

Matthew 12:33-37: (NASB) ³³*Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit.* ³⁴*You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart.* ³⁵*The good man brings out of his good treasure what is good; and the evil man brings out of his evil treasure what is evil.*



The intentions of the heart come first, and the words of the mouth follow. It does not matter who we are; we all create patterns in our humanity.

Often, we could choose a higher road but just do not. Jesus is saying: these patterns - these practices - are something we will carry with us into the judgment.

For those listening to this episode or reading this Rewind who are not interested in being a true follower of Christ, perhaps they think they can continue as they have always been, still have a resurrection and everything will be fine and easy. Be aware that our thoughts, intentions and words carry weight later - we will be responsible for making them right. We must be careful what we say and think.

³⁶*But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment.* ³⁷*For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.*

Think about the Pharisees who stirred up the people. They all shouted, *crucify him!* How humbling it will be for them to seek forgiveness after being an enemy of Jesus.

the bottom line

We should be very careful what we say or it WILL come back to bite us. The words we speak are not just what comes out of our mouths, but also what we type on social media. They count just as much as those we speak out loud. We are not anonymous to God on our screens. At some point, all will be accountable. If we speak foolishly or harmfully - yes, we will have to be accountable and rectify those actions.



THE DEEDS OF HUMANITY:

Jesus taught his disciples that the works of their lives must be in line with godliness:

Matthew 5:16: (NASB) *Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.*

Notice Jesus does not talk about what we say; he says *let your light shine* so that others will see what you do. They will be able to say: *There is someone who has a mission of goodness, godliness and righteousness.*





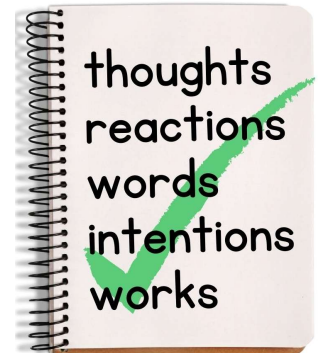
Jesus tells us that as Christians, we should be shining examples of him. This is a hard thing to do, and we may not always succeed. Sometimes we get tired and choose the wrong way to act, but it is still our responsibility to get up and try to do it right the next time.

While this is for true Christians, what about the “everybody else”?

Jesus warned everyone else that their present deeds will bring responsibility later. There is a theme here:

Matthew 16:27: (NASB) *For the son of man is going to come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and will then repay every man according to his deeds.*

This is a powerful statement. Jesus is quoting Psalm 62:12. He says God sees all we do in this life, and we will need to rectify the intentional and unintentional sins in a future life. Even though all will receive a resurrection no matter how badly they act in this life, they will pay for their thoughts, reactions, words, intentions and works. By carelessly establishing bad habits, we may be buying decades of trouble later in having to reconcile our actions with righteousness.



The Apostle Paul also quotes and builds on this Psalm:

Romans 2:5-10: (NASB) *⁵But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, ⁶who will render to each person according to his deeds: ⁷to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; ⁸but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation.*

Storing up wrath for ourselves is not a good thing! We might want to start with repentance now because everyone will be accountable.

⁹There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, ¹⁰but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

To the Jew first and also to the Greek means everyone. We are being prepared for the reconciliation process coming in the future. Jesus mediates between the world and God so that the world can be reconciled back to Him. It is like rehabilitation which can be painful and difficult.



Let's get practical. Nobody likes rehab. Rehabilitation takes work and is painful. My wife has been going to physical therapy for muscle injury rehab, and some days when she comes home, she's so sore she can barely move. It hurts, but after the rehab is over and the healing takes place, we are relieved and thankful the pain and work for a short time was worth it.

Going through rehabilitation is hard work. We might wonder why we are even doing this - is it worth all this effort and pain? We have to realize there is something worthwhile on the other end.

We do not want anyone's rehabilitation in the future life to be any harder than it needs to be.

Whether we are Christians or not, we will have an easier time if we take care of our thoughts, words and deeds now - with an eye towards righteousness - to give us a better place to start our rehabilitation work in the day of judgment!

GOD'S GRACIOUS PLAN FOR THOSE NOT GOING TO HEAVEN:

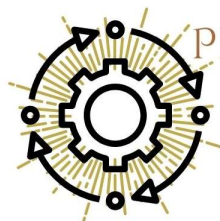
TRUE CHRISTIANITY is accountable for their thoughts, words and deeds **in this present age**. In the same way, **ALL HUMANITY** will be **ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEIR THOUGHTS, WORDS AND DEEDS AFTER THEIR RESURRECTION**. For those who will not go to heaven, the lesson is that they are still accountable for what they **THINK, SAY AND DO HERE AND NOW**.

To the person asking, "What if I'm not good enough for heaven," we answer that no one will "get away with" anything. They will be accountable in the future day of judgment in the same way that Christians are accountable now. You can run, but nobody hides from God Almighty.

It is reassuring to see how God's plan leaves no stone unturned regarding each and every human being's experience.

Not going to heaven does not get anyone off the hook, but what is the end result of their reconciliation?

Bible prophecies are filled with answers to this question if we would just take the time to read them. They show us process, development, testing and results. These prophecies reveal how God's plan for every single human being will play out. It is a righteous, glorious, loving, life-filled plan!



PROPHECY REVEALED

The PROCESS for those NOT going to heaven

- destruction
- rebuilding
- personal accountability
- promise
- peace

This prophecy is spoken to the Jewish nation, but its principles extend THROUGH Israel TO the world of mankind in the day of judgment.

The time of trouble means destruction:

Jeremiah 31:28-31,33-34: (NASB) ²⁸As I have watched over them to pluck up, to break down, to overthrow, to destroy and to bring disaster, so I will watch over them to build and to plant, declares the LORD.

To break down, to overthrow, to destroy and to bring disaster are not good things but are part of God's plan to set the table for something greater. They clear out the old order to replace it with God's order.

Next comes personal accountability:

²⁹In those days they will not say again, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge. ³⁰But everyone will die for his own iniquity; each man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge.



Curses in family bloodlines and the bigger context of Old Testament curses

Eating sour grapes does not feel good on our teeth and is a simple illustration for how we often inherit the consequences of others' sins. In the Old Testament, God would allow punishments to extend to the third and fourth generations. We might think this was not fair - if only we could stand on our own, our lives would be entirely different. This prophecy tells us that in the day of judgment, it WILL be entirely different; we will stand on our own.

No one will be able to blame anyone else for an outcome. Each person will be held individually accountable. There is great justice, and ultimately mercy, in this arrangement.

Then comes God's promise:

³¹Behold, days are coming, declares the LORD, When I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah... ³³I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

What a powerful promise! The prophecy is about those who work through their accountability with their mediator, Christ Jesus, in order to be righteous, in line with God.

**I will put My law within them
and on their heart I will write it**
*Having God's law written on the heart
means it is permanent*

This describes a beautiful transformation of the majority of mankind who were not followers of Jesus during their lifetime. They will have a place (resurrected on earth), a mediator (Jesus Christ) to reconcile them back to God and the opportunity to have life.

Finally, what everybody wants, peace:

³⁴They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, Know the LORD, for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, declares the LORD, For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.

Here is the conclusion: No one will need to ask, "Do you know the LORD?" Of course they do! The knowledge of the Lord will be everywhere. Because of that reconciliation, accountability, of having a mediator in place, and the time period of the day of judgment, mankind will be in a place where God forgives their iniquity.



This is what is in store for those not bound for heaven but who accept the opportunity of reconciliation after resurrection, and accept the accountability of rectifying their sins from this life in thoughts, words and deeds.

With personal accountability firmly in place in the Day of Judgment, what is next?



Those who do not go to heaven will be thoroughly engaged in the process of making their reconciliation permanent:

Isaiah 35:5-10: (NASB) ⁵Then the eyes of the blind will be opened and the ears of the deaf will be unstopped. ⁶Then the lame will leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute will shout for joy. For waters will break forth in the wilderness and streams in the Arabah. ⁷The scorched land will become a pool and the thirsty ground springs of water...

This shows a beautiful picture of physical earthly harmony. This is a Bible prophecy. God does not put Bible prophecy in place just to be poetic; it is here so we can have understanding and hope for the future.



⁸A highway will be there, a roadway, and it will be called the Highway of holiness. The unclean will not travel on it, but it will be for him who walks that way, and fools will not wander on it. ⁹No lion will be there, nor will any vicious beast go up on it; these will not be found there. But the redeemed will walk there, ¹⁰and the ransomed of the LORD will return and come with joyful shouting to Zion, with everlasting joy upon their heads. They will find gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

We are promised the healing of the earth and the healing of the people. This *highway of holiness* is a place where man will be encouraged to move forward because righteousness reigns on the earth. Just like we cannot get away from misery now - it is all around us - there will be a time when we will not be able to get away from righteousness. That will be the new context in which this accountability, growth and development will take place.

The environment for this development will be firmly under the control of the glorified Jesus:

Isaiah 42:1-4: (ASV) ¹Behold, My servant, whom I uphold; My chosen, in whom My soul delighteth: I have put My spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the Gentiles. ²He will not cry, nor lift up his voice, nor cause it to be heard in the street. ³A bruised reed will he not break, and a dimly burning wick will he not quench: he will bring forth justice in truth.

A bruised reed will he not break, and a dimly burning wick will he not quench - As the great ruler, Jesus will encourage even the smallest efforts. Even a small spark of love towards God will be fanned into a blaze. People will be encouraged towards righteousness.



He will bring forth justice in truth - true justice and compassion, working with the resurrected people to bring forth a lasting rehabilitation of all humanity.

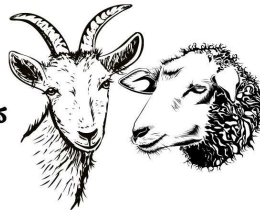
This is what the day of judgment will be like. How merciful! Right now the world is set up for failure (see CQ Episodes 931, 1052 and 1207), but at that time the world will be set up for success so that everyone has the opportunity to succeed.

⁴He will not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set justice in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law.

Everyone wants justice on the earth. But this will be TRUE justice, PURE justice, GODLY justice. It will not be our subjective opinion of justice.

Once the process of initial testing and reconciliation is complete, the Bible tells us there will be a final judgment. Jesus reveals this in the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats, describing a final test for eternal life.

Parable of the Sheep and the Goats



Matthew 25:31-32: (NASB) ³¹But when the son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. ³²All the nations will be gathered before him; and he will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

This comes at the end of the process when Jesus will do a separation work. The parable explains how those who have been reconciled and thoroughly dedicated themselves to living righteously will be blessed with eternal life. They are represented by the sheep in the parable. The parable then explains how there will be others who will just “go along for the ride.” They will play along, acting righteously, but it will only be an outward show. While they enjoy the blessings of resurrection, peace and harmony, they do not thoroughly dedicate themselves to personally living those blessings.



**Episode 760:
Are You a Sheep
or a Goat?**

Sheep, goats and the final judgment



COMING SOON



**Will I Survive God's
Final Judgment?**

The Parable of the Sheep and the Goats

Matthew 25:42-46: (NASB) ⁴²For I was hungry, and you gave me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me nothing to drink; ⁴³I was a stranger, and you did not invite me in; naked, and you did not clothe me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit me. ⁴⁴Then they themselves also will answer, Lord, when did we see you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of you? ⁴⁵Then he will answer them, Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me. ⁴⁶These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.

Those walking up the highway of holiness have been tested along the way, but here is the “final exam” to make sure their hearts are truly bent towards godly righteousness. *Eternal punishment* here means death, not hellfire.



The Scriptures are adamant about this. But the point here is they did not respond to the needs of others in the smallest of ways. *To the extent you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me - they do not take righteous living to heart; instead, they simply went through the motions.*

This is reminiscent of Adam living in the Garden of Eden. The bottom line was: Be dedicated to God’s clear guidelines and live! Disobedience only brings death. This parable shows the ultimate removal (not eternal torture) of those who are not fully dedicated to righteousness.

Once this great work of reconciliation is fully completed, God and His plan are given all glory:

1 Corinthians 15:24-28: (NASB) ²⁴*Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when he has abolished all rule and all authority and power.* ²⁵*For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.* ²⁶*The last enemy that will be abolished is death.*

This describes the final death of those who refuse to be compliant, including Satan and his minions. They will be destroyed, just as death itself is destroyed.

²⁷*For he has put all things in subjection under his feet...* ²⁸*When all things are subjected to him, then the son himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to him, so that God may be all in all.*

Jesus does his work, finishing the reconciliation process. He dots every “i” and crosses every “t.” Then he hands over all of that perfected work to the Father, and all glory goes to the Father. What a spectacular, motivating “happily ever after” we see developing in these scriptures!

Resurrection Timeline



WHAT IF?

What if I'm not good enough for heaven? You are blessed. The most significant part of this is that God's blessings are not limited to those who are called to follow Jesus now in this present life, who go to heaven. God's blessings are expanded to all of humanity, but that humanity must step forward and play their part.

The accountability will be strong because the reward is eternal life. In order to earn this, mankind must be eternally dedicated to God and His righteousness. It should not be that hard, because evil will be suppressed and God's righteousness is the greatest thing the world has ever seen.

The peace, harmony, love, justice and caring will be beyond what any human being has ever witnessed or experienced. This is what happens to those who are not good enough to go to heaven - they are blessed!

*So, what if I'm not good enough for heaven?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*

All quoted scriptures are from the 1995 version of NASB unless otherwise indicated



Join us next week for our podcast on June 6, 2022
Ep. 1232: Is the Gospel Obsolete?

Bonus Material and Study Questions



A few areas we did not cover in this episode:

Will there be levels of authority in the resurrection? Who will be “on top” and how will it work?

1 Corinthians 15:20-23: (NASB) ²⁰*But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. ²¹For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead.*

Jesus began the process and is the first to be raised of those who sleep in death.

²²*For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.*

Because he is the first, it shows that he paid the price for Adam. He would have not been raised if the price were not paid.

²³*But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at his coming.*

This is not repeating that Jesus is the first fruit and therefore the catalyst for the resurrection, it is now showing the order of how the resurrection actually works.

Christ, the first fruits - who and what are first fruits referring to?

Romans 6:4-5,8: (NASB) ⁴*Therefore we have been buried with him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. ⁵For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection. ⁸Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.*

The followers of Jesus hold this honored position to be next in line after Jesus.

James verifies this position:

James 1:17-18: (NASB) ¹⁷*Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow. ¹⁸In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.*

Romans continues by showing Jesus again is first, and those who are faithful to him are joined with him:

Romans 8:28-29: (NASB) ²⁸*And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. ²⁹For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His son, so that he would be the firstborn among many brethren.*

This resurrection is as a result of personal accountability already being complete:

Romans 12:2: (NASB) *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*



The ancient faithful ones of the Old Testament were NOT called to heaven, but were NOT part of the “unjust” either:

Hebrews 11:35-36, 39-40: (NASB) ³⁵Women received back their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, so that they might obtain a better resurrection; ³⁶and others experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment. ³⁹And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised, ⁴⁰because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they would not be made perfect.

Resurrection Principle: 

God always recognizes and rewards those who are faithful to Him.

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Study QUESTIONS

Ep.1231: What if I'm Not Good Enough for Heaven?

<https://christianquestions.com/doctrine/1231-heaven/>

See:  CQRewind
SHOW NOTES

1. What do you think is necessary to get into heaven? Do you know good people who are not religious? Where will they go after they die?
2. Who are the “we” mentioned in Romans 5:1? What do verses 8-10 tell us about the blessed position the “we” have with God?
3. Who inherited sin and death from Adam? Did sin and death exist before the Law was given to Israel? What did the Law do to help the Israelites with sin? (See Romans 5:12-14)
4. Who are “the many” in Romans 5:15-16? Why do “the many” die? What is the free gift the many will receive from God and Jesus? Explain the balance in God’s plan given here. Describe the legal aspect of Jesus’ sacrifice in verse 18, and the moral aspect in verse 19. The salvation Jesus brings opens what door? Who is covered legally and morally by Jesus’ ransom? (See Romans 5:8-21)
5. In John 5:28-29, who comes forth from the tombs? Why do they come forth? Explain the difference for those raised.
6. What is an advocate? For which group does Jesus advocate? Who is being judged during the day of judgment? For which group does Jesus mediate? How does he mediate and for what reason? What reward does each group receive? (See Matthew 7:13-14, 1 John 2:1-2, 1 Timothy 2:3-6)
7. How does the Greek word *krisis* describe what happens during the day of judgment? What three points reveal the process and objectives of that period of time? What does pruning accomplish? What do these objectives lead to? (See John 5:28-29, 2 Peter 2:9,3:7-9, Genesis 22:16-18, Isaiah 26:8-9)
8. What does Jesus tell his followers about their *thoughts* and *reactions* in the present? What about the “everybody else”? How does Jesus tell his followers to state their *words* and *intentions*? How does he warn the “everybody else”? What about deeds of the true Christians now? The rest of mankind? What is the theme? (See Matthew 5:23-24,33-37, 11:20-24, 12:33-37, 16:27, Psalm 62:12, Romans 2:5-10)
9. What is the purpose of the time of trouble in God’s plan? How does personal accountability come into play? See Jeremiah 31:28-34: What is the beautiful promise in verse 33? The final result in verse 34?
10. How does Isaiah 35:5-10 describe the healing of the earth and of the people? Who will be in control? How does the final test for eternal life play out? (See Isaiah 42:1-4, Matthew 25:31-32,42-46)
11. Where do you see yourself in God’s plan? What does His provision for every human being mean to you?