

165. His Return to Judge the Quick and the Dead.

God hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained. Acts 17, 31.

God has appointed a day of Judgment, a day of perdition of ungodly men, a day of destruction, in which all things shall pass away. The end of this world is as sure to come as the Word of God is true. Heaven and earth shall pass away. And that is the day on which our Savior will return visibly and in glory to judge the world in righteousness. "He is ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." At His ascension the angels said: "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." He will come in the clouds, with divine majesty and power, in the glory of His Father, and all holy angels with Him. And at His command all the dead will rise, and, together with all those still alive, they all will be brought before His throne of glory, and He will judge the quick and the dead. Then the unbelievers shall receive everlasting punishment, but the righteous eternal life. For we know even now what the verdict of the righteous judgment will be.

He will judge according to His Word, as He Himself said: "The Word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the Last Day." His Word is His Gospel of salvation through faith in Him. Christ said: "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son." This sentence will be executed on the Last Day. If you are a true believer, your deeds of love will bear witness to your faith, and you will not be condemned; for through faith in Him you have forgiveness of all your sins. But if you are an unbeliever, do not think that your so-called good works will save you; your unbelief condemns you. Your works were not done from love of Him, in true faith.

Prayer.

My Lord and my God, I confess before Thee that with my innumerable sins I have deserved not only Thy fatherly chastening, but also eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry that I have offended Thy majesty and have not kept Thy holy Law. But I know that Thou, O Father of mercies, hast no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked may turn from the error of his way and live. Therefore do I now turn to Thee with a contrite spirit and pray Thee to forgive all my sins. Cast me not off according to my deserts. Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, for whom Thy Son hath made atonement. Amen.

O grant us ever on the road
To trace the footsteps of our God,
That, when Thou shalt appear, arrayed
In light to judge the quick and dead,
We may to life immortal soar
Through Thee, who livest evermore.

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