

Distinguishing Final and Temporal Judgment

Acts 17²² Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, “Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; ²³ for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: ‘To the unknown god.’ Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: ²⁴ God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. ²⁵ Nor is He worshiped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. ²⁶ And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, ²⁷ so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; ²⁸ for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, ‘For we are also His offspring.’ ²⁹ Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man’s devising. ³⁰ Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, ³¹ because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.”

► Final judgment is an essential part of the _____.

► How does Paul talk about final judgment here?

– He uses no _____.

– He indicates no _____.

– How does Paul make final judgment relevant and a motivator to repentance for all men in all times?

Rom 2.4 [D]o you despise the riches of [God’s] goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? 5 But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, 6 who “will render to each one according to his deeds”: 7 eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; 8 but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath ... 16 in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

► Does Paul use apocalyptic language or suggest that final judgment is imminent?

► Are there indications of a long timeframe, and if so, what?

► What additional details does Paul give us about final judgment?

► How does Paul give a sense of urgency?

1Cor 15.21 For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. 23 But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ’s at His coming. 24 Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. 25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. 26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.

► How do we know this passage is dealing with events surrounding final judgment?

▶ Does Paul use apocalyptic language?

▶ Does he give a tight timeframe or a sense of imminence?

▶ Does he suggest a long timeframe?

Contrast the Olivet Discourse (Mat 24.16, 29, 34, 42, 44) with Acts 1.9-11.

Acts 1.9 [W]hile they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. 10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, 11 who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."

3)

Heb 10.12 But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, 13 from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool.

▶ What is our motivation to live in light of "the end"?

Mat 11.21 "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. 22 But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you.

▶ What about the judgment seat of Christ for believers (Rm 14.10-12; 1Cor 3.11-15; 2Cor 5.10)?

▶ Examining all of these passages, we get an entirely different _____ on the Christian life than we typically do in the modern evangelical church.

▶ Does Scripture give us any clues to suggest when a passage is talking about temporal judgment as opposed to final judgment?

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