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3

DEATH IN CHRIST

- The light of faith especially the paschal mystery of Christ illuminates for us the mystery of death
- Death has a new and positive meaning in Jesus Christ
 - Jesus transformed the curse of death into a great blessing
 - Death can now be the door to eternal life and resurrection
- Christian death = is a death in Christ meaning that we die in a state of grace or friendship with God, meaning that one is without any mortal sin
 - When we die in Christ, we can lovingly offer the experience of our own death to the Father
 - A believer in Christ, following His example, is thus able to transform his own death into an act of obedience and love for the Father
 - “This saying is sure: if we have died with him, we will also live with him” (2 Tim 2:11)



4

JUDGMENT

- There are two Judgments
 - The Particular Judgment
 - The Final Judgment
- Christ is the Judge of the living and the dead
- These two Judgments are closely bound together
 - The way we are judged at the Particular Judgment will be confirmed and completed at the Final Judgment



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PARTICULAR JUDGMENT

- At the moment of death, the soul will go before the Divine Judge
- The soul will be rewarded or punished based upon the way one lived during their life on earth
 - “So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive good or evil, according to what he has done in the body.” (2 Cor 5:9-10)
- We will be judged by our faith and works
- “At the evening of life, we shall be judged on our love.”
-St. John of the Cross



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FINAL JUDGMENT

- The Final Judgment will occur at the end of the world
 - “But of that day or that hour no one knows...” (Mk 13:32)
 - “The day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night” (1 Thess 5:2)
- Christ will return in glory and raise all the dead
 - The body will then share in the eternal reward or punishment of the soul
- We will understand God’s eternal plan and come to know the consequence of every good and evil action the human race has performed
 - The meaning of all of human history and the ultimate purpose of creation will be revealed



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HELL

- After the particular judgment those who die in mortal sin are eternally lost in hell
- "... it is better for you to enter life than ... to go to Gehenna, to the unquenchable fire where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched." (Mk 9:43-44)
 - Gehenna is a place in Israel where the Canaanites sacrificed children to their gods (The Valley of Ben Hinnom)
 - When the Israelites took over this territory they made it into a landfill where trash was continually burned



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HELL

- 2 Pains in hell
 - -The world is the *pain of separation* from God who alone can give the happiness for which man longs
 - -Second is the *pain of sense* corresponding to one's sins
- God, while desiring "all to come to repentance" (2 Pet 3:9), nevertheless has created the human person to be free and responsible; and he respects our decisions; thus, a person chooses hell by mortal sin
 - Church desires the salvation of all and hopes for this



9

PURGATORY

- After the particular judgment, a soul can be sent to purgatory which is the state of those who die in friendship with God but still need to be purified of venial sins or the remains of mortal sin
- Purgatory is only for temporal punishment which is totally different from eternal punishment
 - It is both painful and joyful
 - Painful because the soul is undergoing purification and has not yet reached its goal and joyful because the soul knows with certainty that it will reach ultimate good
- Once the soul is purified it will enjoy the vision of God for all eternity
- Our prayers and sacrifices, especially the sacrifice of the Mass, assists the purification of the souls in purgatory



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PURGATORY IN THE BIBLE

- 2 Maccabees 12:38-46; Lk 12:39-48
- Mt 12:32 "And whoever says a word against the Son of man will be forgiven; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come."
 - This indicates that forgiveness is possible in the age to come
- Mt 18:21-35 "Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you besought me; and should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord delivered him to the jailers, till he should pay all his debt. Also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."
 - This parable is about the Kingdom of Heaven
 - The servant who did not show mercy is not cast into the outer darkness but is in jail until he pays everything back
 - Thus, we see there is a place where we pay back our debts



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PURGATORY IN THE BIBLE

1 Cor 3:11-15: "According to the grace of God given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it. But each one must be careful how he builds upon it, for no one can lay a foundation other than the one that is there, namely, Jesus Christ. If anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw, the work of each will come to light, for the Day will disclose it. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire [itself] will test the quality of each one's work. If the work stands that someone built upon the foundation, that person will receive a wage. But if someone's work is burned up, that one will suffer loss; the person will be saved, but only as through fire."



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PURGATORY IN TRADITION

- Prayers for the dead
 - the custom of praying for the dead goes back to the 100s
 - Tertullian (160-220) says that this custom of prayer for the dead was received from tradition
 - The catacombs contain references to the need for prayers for the deceased
 - No one ever challenged prayer for the dead until Arius in the 4th century
- State of Purification
 - St. Cyprian (200-258) said that the debt of punishment remains if one's penance is not complete
 - St. Augustine (354-430) speaks of a "corrective fire" and "purgative fire"
 - The Church defined the doctrine of purgatory at the councils of Lyon (1274), Florence (1438-1445), and Trent (1545-63)



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PRAYING FOR THE DEAD

Of course, I pray for the dead. The action is so spontaneous, so all but inevitable, that only the most compulsive theological case against it would deter me. And I hardly know how the rest of my prayers would survive if those for the dead were forbidden. At our age the majority of those we love best are dead. What sort of intercourse with God could I have if what I love best were unmentionable to Him?

On the traditional Protestant view, all the dead are damned or saved. If they are damned, prayer for them is useless. If they are saved, it is equally useless. God has already done all for them. What more should we ask?

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But don't we believe that God has already done and is already doing all that He can for the living? What more should we ask? Yet we are told to ask.

'Yes', it will be answered, 'but the living are still on the road. Further trials, developments, possibilities of error, await them. But the saved have been made perfect. They have finished the course. To pray for them presupposes that progress and difficulty are still possible. In fact, you are beginning in something like Dismasism.'

and difficulty are still possible. In fact, you are bringing in something like Purgatory.

Well, I suppose I am. Though even in Heaven some perpetual increase of beatitude, reached by a continually more ecstatic self-surrender, without the possibility of failure but not perhaps without its own arduous and exertions, for delight also has its severities and steep ascents, as lovers know— might be



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HEAVEN

- After the particular judgment, if a soul is in the grace of God and in need of no further purification it goes to the eternal happiness and joy of heaven which cannot be lost
- Heaven is the perfect communion of life and love with the Trinity and all the saints
 - In Heaven we will see God as he is, “face to face” (1 Cor 13:12) and come to know ourselves perfectly
 - This vision of the Trinity is called the Beatific Vision
- There are degrees of Heaven based on:
 - The graces God has given us
 - How well we cooperated with those graces
- But all will be perfectly filled with happiness in Heaven



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HEAVEN



16

RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

- “The hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment.”
 - (Jn 5:28-29)
- All bodies will be raised from the dead and will share in the punishment or reward of the soul
- Then there will be a new heaven and a new earth
 - -In the resurrection to life, the new creation will share in the glory of God
 - -Both the new universe and all people in Heaven will experience what perfect happiness and fulfillment is



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