



"Divine Judgment - Radical Forgiveness"

Sunday | December 14th, 2025

~ *A Slightly Unconventional Approach ...*

In most Christmas sermon series, it is common to hear about hope, peace, joy, and to celebrate the miracle of the virgin birth. The coming of our King is a pronouncement of many other things...particularly today, we all hear about judgment!

~ *This is Not a Christmas Passage:*

Matt. 3:1-12 is a record of the inauguration of Jesus' ministry on earth. *NOTE* - there is roughly a 20-30 year jump from the closing verses in Matthew 2 to the first verses of Matthew 3.

~ *What the World Needs Now!*

The world needs to hear and Christians need to remember that the first coming of King Jesus was a declaration for war! God has sent His son to remedy & rectify the war that rages on between sin & death and righteousness & eternal life.

~ *Christmas & Judgment! But Why?*

If Jesus has come to offer us forgiveness and salvation, then what are we being forgiven and saved from?

+ Judgment is one of those actions and concepts we don't really like. At its core, judgment seeks to use a standard for something and correct something or someone to become better.

+ cf. Romans 14:10 & 2 Corinthians 5:10

1. The Call to Repent is a _____ for Judgment.

(Matthew 3:2)

> Notice John's call to repent mirrors the very first words of Jesus' public preaching ministry over in Matthew 4:17.

> **Revelation 20:12-15:**

"And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."

2. The Call of Repentance _____ the Way for Forgiveness
(Matthew 3:7-12)

~ The exchange between John and the Pharisees show us that religious effort and family ties are two things that can not save you!

~ True saving faith is always accompanied with a change in heart and _____.

~ Vs. 12 has an analogy of winnowing - a process of refining grain ... getting rid of the chaff from the seed ... then burning the remains.

> **Why is Forgiveness so Radical?**

~ Forgiveness may be one of the hardest things we could ever do in our lifetime.

~ One of the reasons it is so hard is because we have to come to terms with dealing with the consequences and suffering of another person's sins and failures.

Marshall Segal said "Satan loathes forgiveness. Forgiveness offends everything he stands for and fights against...."

He adds "God disarmed Satan and all his armies with costly forgiveness - Your forgiveness."

This truth comes from Colossians 2:13-15