

Declaring the Truth About Jesus, Part 3

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John 5:25-29

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So, I grew up in Southern California. Don't hold that against me, okay? In my early years of high school, in the summers I would go to the beach almost every single day, and it was common at the beach to enter the ocean in one spot on the shore and exit the ocean, maybe an hour later, 100 yards down from where you went in. The funny thing about it is, even though the current was constantly propelling you along rapidly, you didn't really notice it. You didn't notice it until it is you got out of the water. Once you exited the water, you were in a different place. You didn't even know how you got there.

When people say, 'I know your future,' it's right to be skeptical, but I know your future. Much like the ocean current that you don't notice, you probably don't notice it, but life is rapidly propelling you forward, and it is propelling you towards your Judgment Day. Before you know it, you will be there, and if you don't think about it now, you'll wonder how you got there. You exit this life into the next, and you will wonder, in that moment, standing there in front of Christ, you will wonder, am I prepared for what is about to happen? See, we study and we think about, we even worship about our position in Christ. We just sang a ton about it. Saved, forgiven, redeemed, reconciled, we think about that. I think we focus on that a lot, because it makes us feel really good. But we give fleeting thoughts to being prepared to meet Christ, and I think it's because it makes us feel uncomfortable.

Well, the most obvious teaching of our text today is that there is a Judgment Day for all human beings, and that the center of that Judgment Day is going to be Jesus. He is the Savior, He is the Forgiver, and He is also the Judge. You can see this, chapter 5:22, look at it. Jesus says, "The Father has given all judgment to the Son." Think about it. Abraham would never say that, right. Moses, David, Isaiah, Peter, Paul, even Michael, the archangel, like none of them would ever say anything like that, but Jesus did. This may have been the most startling thing that he said to the Jews that day, that, "He will judge all mankind," and notice, "at his voice, all people will rise out of their graves," and notice, especially if you have red letters, this isn't somebody else talking about Jesus. This isn't other people's words about Him. Notice, it's what? These are his words about himself. These are his own words, where he is declaring the truth about himself, and verse 28, again, notice, he claims to have resurrection power, and that's because as the section from verse 19 to verse 29 has been declaring, He is the son of God. He is divine. The second person of the Trinity. See, since verse 19, Jesus has declared that in the words of verse 18, He is equal with God. He's declared this by showing that He is equal with God in his activities. He's equal to God in His nature. In relationship with God, he is God's equal. He deserves equal honor to God

Himself, and he has shown that he is equal to God in both the power to give life as well as the authority to judge humanity. This is the real Jesus.

In verses 25 to 29, Jesus is repeating the greater works that he talked about in verse 20. Greater than giving a man complete and utter healing after being paralyzed for 38 years, he says, more great, greater than that. The Father's going to give me the power and authority to do, which he begins to describe in verse 25, as two works that happen at two hours during two time periods, those works being two resurrections. So, let's look at the first resurrection starting verse 25. It says, "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live." Before explaining the first resurrection, notice what Jesus does here. He front loads His words with, "Truly, truly, I say to you..." He is saying to them who do not want to hear what he says, who thinks everything he says is false and blasphemy. He says, what I'm saying to you is truly true. It's true truth. He emphasizes the sincerity of the truth and the serious importance of what he is about to say. Well, what does he say? Notice, "an hour is coming" and it's not just coming notice, it's, "now here." Meaning, whatever he is going to say next, it's something that both will happen in the future and what? Is something that's happening right then in their day. Also, don't miss the certainty in those words. Notice, he says, "The hour is coming, and that hour is now here."

There's no question in Jesus' mind that what he is about to say is absolute fact. It is reality. Well, what is it that's going to happen? Verse 25, "the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who here will live." This is something that is not only happening in the future, but is happening in their midst, which means they can't be talking about people who are physically dead, right? Whatever's going to happen, it's going to happen when? It's happening now in their midst. In that day. Well, dead people aren't coming back to life in John 5, so if these aren't physically dead people, these are what? These are spiritually dead people. So what Jesus is describing here is His ministry of spiritual resurrection that had already started, so think woman at the well. So this ministry had already started, but it's something that was supercharged at the day of Pentecost, and it is something that continues to this very day. In much of my thoughts about this sermon, this has been my prayer, Jesus, do your work of spiritual resurrection today. So while considering this truth about Jesus, is point #1) ***Understand Jesus Resurrects People Spiritually. Understand it, embrace it, realize it, Jesus resurrects people spiritually.*** Now why can he do that? Well, it says verse 26, He can do that because, "As the Father has life in Himself, so he is granted the Son to have life in himself."

I need to warn you right now we're about to enter a nerd moment. Some of you are like, yay, others of you are like, oh, no. Whichever one you are, just wanted to warn you of that. It's a nerd moment. Jesus is about to talk about His relationship with the Father and that's the Trinity, and that's always hard to understand, but here we go. Verse 26, the life-giving power that raises people from the dead spiritually, Jesus says, is in Him. He is the source of this spiritual life. But if that's the case, why did the Father need to give it to Him? You see that there? Father grants it to Him. John 1:4 says that the second person in the Trinity, it says, in Him was life. Life

belonged to Him. Life was at home in Him. It belonged to Him from all eternity. He's self-existent. He doesn't get life from anybody else. He is the source of all life. However, when He became a man, Philippians 2:7, He emptied himself. He didn't empty himself of being God, that's impossible. God can't stop being God, any more than you can just stop being human. I choose to not be human now. Great, you still are. Doesn't matter. God can't stop being God. So if Jesus doesn't empty himself of being God, what did He empty himself of? I think it's the use of his divine attributes. So Jesus remained God while he was here, but using the attributes that make him God, things like knowing everything or his divine power, Jesus left the use of those things in the Father's hands to be used when the Father wanted, not when he wanted. So the Father grants Him to have life in himself, that's verse 26 and verse 27, the Father gives Jesus the authority to judge. He gives Jesus these things, not because Jesus didn't have them already as God. Obviously, He did have them as God. Only God can give life. Only God has the authority to judge all humanity. But because Jesus is also human, God gives Him these things. Why? Because humans do not have life in themselves, and humans do not have the authority to judge mankind.

Well, that's one nerd moment, here's another one. You can handle this though. I want you to think about this. Verse 26, Father gives Jesus something. The Father gives Jesus life and if he gives Jesus the authority to judge humanity, verse 27, that would mean that the Father is not the Son, right? God is not the Father sometimes, and then he's Jesus some other times, and then God is the Holy Spirit some other times still. It's not one person with three different masks. No, for the Father to give anything to the Son, the Father can't be the Son, and the Son can't be the Father. I mean, if you're going to give someone something, that someone that you're giving it to, can't be yourself, right? Because if you're giving someone something and that someone is, you really didn't give it to yourself, right? Because you already had it. Hey, here's 20 bucks. Thanks. You didn't just give yourself 20 bucks, right? You already had that. So this verse only makes sense if the Father and the Son are distinct persons, and yet equally God, which is what Jesus has been saying since verse 18, but yet there's still one God. So separate persons, equally God, yet one God that's called the Trinity. That's why we teach the Trinity. That's why we defend the doctrine of the Trinity, because this verse and verses like it do not make sense, unless the doctrine of the Trinity is true. Okay, nerd moment over, for now. So Jesus doesn't stop being God. He stopped using his powers as God and gave the use of those powers to the Father's use to use at his discretion and to use by the power of the Spirit. That's why Jesus can do things only God can do, like still storms and raise the dead and all of that stuff. But at the same time, he gets hungry and gets thirsty and gets tired, and doesn't know when he is coming back, because he is the God-Man. Well, now that we know why Jesus can raise people spiritually, that's verse 26, He has life in himself, let's look closer to what he actually says here in verse 25.

There are four steps that Jesus outlines here to describe people's spiritual resurrection. Step number one, people are spiritually dead. People are dead spiritually. Jesus taught this. Matthew 8:22, he said, "Let the dead bury their own dead." Let the dead bury their own dead. He's not saying let the physically dead bury their own physically dead, because that's impossible. But he's

saying, let the spiritually dead bury the physically dead. Paul taught this idea, Colossians 2:13, "You were dead in your trespasses, dead in your sins." So what does it mean that people are spiritually dead? Have you ever asked that? Here, you see it here. So what does that mean? I'm going to give you four marks of spiritual death. Here's what it means.

First, spiritual death means there's no purity in people, no purity. Sin is infected everything about them, in other words, their bodies, their minds, their emotions, their desires, their soul and as a result of that infection of everything that they are, everything they do is now tainted by sin as well. Second, spiritual death means no understanding, no perception of God. Ephesians 4:18 describes it as being darkened in one's understanding. There's no light of the truth. Their understanding is darkened, and then Ephesians 4:18 says, as a result of that darkened understanding, they're alienated from the life that is in God. They're separated from the life that is in God, this spiritual life. Third, spiritual death means no desires for God. No desires for God. All desire in other words, it's not for God, it's for sin and self. It's for gratifying sin, that's what Romans 8 and Ephesians 2 says that all desire is set on following the course of this world, the rebellion of this world, which is dominated by its ruler, which is Satan himself. Bible really teaches that? Yeah, Ephesians 2:1-3, and four, spiritual death means no ability to respond to God. No ability to respond to God. You can yell, scream, and stab a corpse 1,000 times, but it cannot respond. 1 Corinthians 2:14 says, the spiritually dead do not accept the truth about Jesus, and it says, they don't accept the truth about Him because they're actually not able to understand the truth, and he says, they're not able to understand the truth, because the truth is spiritually discerned and they're spiritually dead. So this is what people are. Jesus and Paul uses the metaphor of death for a reason. It is to show that people have no spiritual life apart from Christ. They're unable to respond to God. They have no desires for God. They have no understanding of God, no light, no purity in them to overcome their spiritual death and respond. They are the walking spiritually dead.

But step number two, Jesus speaks. Jesus speaks. Look at verse 25 again, "An hour is coming and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God." He speaks to their souls. He speaks with a word only they can hear. This is Romans 10:17, faith comes from hearing and hearing through the word of Christ. That is the word that comes from Christ. Even today, it is Christ himself who speaks to the spiritually dead when the gospel is preached. When you share Christ with somebody. When you bring someone, and a pastor preaches the gospel, tells people about Jesus. What this is saying is that in the moment, he is the one speaking through the preacher. He is the one speaking through the Christian, who is sharing the gospel. The preacher, the Christian is simply the mouthpiece for the Son of God.

Step number three, people respond to Jesus' voice. They respond to Jesus' voice. Again, verse 25, "The dead will hear the voice of the Son of God." They will hear His voice. So if the spiritually dead are unable to respond to God, then where does the ability come from to hear Jesus' voice? The dead can't come to life on their own, right? They can't make themselves come alive. They're dead, and being dead, they have no life in them at all that allows them to respond. Religion can't

give them life, and ceremonies and rituals can't give them life. They can't give themselves life. Why? Because they're dead. So, what is it that gives them the ability to hear Jesus when they're dead? Well, the text says, "Jesus speaks and they respond." So for those Bible nerds out there, all two of you, whether the person is made alive first and then they can hear and respond, or the life comes with Jesus' voice, either way, they hear. Now which one is it? I don't know. Smarter people maybe can answer that question for you. I don't know the answer. But if you think about it, Genesis 1, "God said, let there be and it was so." Life came from His voice. So if someone was like, you got to choose one. Okay, I'm going to choose, life comes with the voice of Christ. So that the work of the Spirit to birth people, again, like John 3, combines with the voice of Christ himself and that life comes to a spiritually dead person and they come alive, and when they come alive, they respond. But either way, look back at the text, they hear Jesus after he speaks, in the words of verse 24, "They believe," but before he speaks, they are dead.

Step number four, they respond and then people receive eternal life. Verse 25, again, "The dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear," it's not going to be all of them, but "those who hear will live." Meaning it's not going to be all humanity, but those who hear will live. Using the language of Ephesians 2 and Colossians 2, those who are made alive, notice, they hear his voice. That the word doesn't mean that the membrane in their ears vibrate, because remember, this is spiritual. What this means is this word in the language means to listen. They take heed. They believe. They take his words and put it into action. They trust in him, and notice, for all who hear, who believe it says, they "will live." They receive eternal life. In the words of verse 24, "Those who hear my word and believe Him who sent me," same thing, hearing and believing same thing, "has eternal life. He does not commend a judgment," verse 24, "but has passed from death to life."

Jesus, put it this way, John 10:26, "You do not believe because you are not my sheep." If you're like, wait a minute, it's supposed to be the other way around. When you believe, you become his sheep." Look at John 10:26, you can turn there. Make sure I'm not misquoting it. Jesus says to the religious leaders who are coming after him again, just like they're coming after him in chapter 5, he says to these guys who want him dead, he says, "You do not believe," and then he gives the reason they don't believe, which is, "it's because you are not my sheep."

So in order to believe, what do you have to be first? It's hard to say that though, right? I'm supposed to become a sheep when I believe. Jesus says, no, the reason people believe is because they're already his sheep, and then He says, "My sheep hear my voice." See, we read that and go, oh, I read the Bible and I hear His voice and I'm one of his sheep, and so..." That's not what He's talking about. He's talking to people who are not saved, saying, the reason you don't believe is because you're not my sheep. But if you were my sheep, you would hear my voice and I know them and they follow me and I give them eternal life. Wait, I thought eternal life happened... No, no happens after, because they're sheep. They hear his voice, because they're his sheep. They hear him, they believe in him, they follow him, and he gives them eternal life. It's like Lazarus. John 11, remember him, Lazarus, Jesus' friend? He dies and Jesus raises him from the dead.

Question, did Lazarus have any life at all in him before Jesus told him to come out of the grave? The answer is no, he didn't. Of course not. His sister even emphasizes this, right? You remember the event, the sister says to Jesus, "He's been dead four days," and if you have the King James, it has this wonderful verse where she adds, "and he stinketh." He is dead. So if you're Lazarus, either you're given life, you're resurrected, and then you respond to Jesus' command to come out, or it was Jesus' voice that gave Lazarus the life that he needed to come out of the grave. Either way, the point is, Jesus raises people from spiritual death, and as a result of that resurrection, they respond, and when they respond, they believe, and when they believe, they receive eternal life.

So picture a world of corpses, and there's Jesus walking among them, even now, speaking to them, and then they believe and receive eternal life. So the Father, verse 26, grants that Jesus has eternal life in himself, and notice verse 21, with that life, it says that he, verse 21, gives that life to whoever he wants to give it to, and now verse 27, "The Father also gives Jesus the authority to judge the world," and he has given him authority to execute judgment, that's the Father giving the Son authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man. Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear His voice and come out." Sound familiar? I mean it should. We have an hour is coming is repeated. We have hearing Jesus' voice repeated. It's the same subject, resurrection, but there are some obvious differences here, right? Starting in verse 28, Jesus is talking about physical resurrection, which is why he doesn't repeat the phrase, "and is now here." This is talking about something that is completely future to this moment and there's no mention of tombs before, but there are mentions of tombs here, because this is physical resurrection, and don't miss the universal aspect of this resurrection emphasized by what word? You see it there? The word all. I want you to notice something, when you compare verse 25 to verse 28. I want you to notice that Jesus raises the spiritually dead to life, because he is, verse 25, "the Son of God." He's equal with God. But notice he calls the physically dead to life because he is what? What does the text say? Verse 27 says, "he is the Son of man."

What is the connection between Jesus being the Son of man and judging all humanity? Well, this is Jesus' favorite title for himself, and it comes from Daniel 7:13, which says, Daniel saw, "...one like a Son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days," that's God. He comes into God's presence, "...was presented before him, and to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him." So, here's this late 20s, early 30s, young man speaking to a group of religious elite that want him dead for his blasphemy, saying, guys, don't be surprised about what I'm saying here. I am the one that all people, nations, and languages should serve, and they should do that because God has given me the authority to judge them, to execute judgment on every single person. The point is that since all this will happen, since the truth about Jesus is that he is humanity's judge and raises the dead physically, since that's the truth, point #2) you and I should ***Prepare for Jesus to Resurrect You Physically. Prepare for Jesus to resurrect you physically.*** We take a step back and look at everything Jesus has said so far, verses 19 to 29, his overall message is that he is God. As God, he gives people eternal life. As God, he is humanity's judge and as God, he will resurrect people physically, all

people. Did you see that last month we crossed over eight billion people in the world's population. We are now over eight billion people. Every second, 4.5 people are born, and two people die, every second of every day. There are eight billion people on the planet right now. How many billions have lived and died before right now? Eight billion? 20 billion? I don't know, but Jesus says in verse 28, He's going to raise them all from the dead.

We cannot imagine the power that it will take to raise billions upon billions of people from the dead. But Jesus says that's what he's going to do. If you, I mean, you're churchy and this is always what people say in church, but if you just think about that for a second. You're standing there, in that moment, you have only two options. This guy is either insane or he is the Son of God. Verse 28, there's no possibility of it being true, unless he is God, and he tells them again, verse 28, this is so funny to me, I think it's humorous, stop being surprised. They would be shocked to their very core. They'd be tearing their clothes, you're a blasphemer. He says, don't be surprised. Stop being surprised that I'm going to be humanities judge. Why would he say this? He doesn't say, but I think it's his way of urging them to believe in him. I think he's saying, stop being surprised, calm down, put those rocks down. Get past your shock. Listen to what I'm saying. Trust in me. Don't be surprised. Like before, let's look closer at what he says here, and just like before, there are at least four steps that Jesus described. So what we've seen so far is that all are physically dead, and all will be physically resurrected. Well, what will that look like, and how does that happen? Step number one, Jesus speaks. You see that there? Jesus speaks, verse 28, "An hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear His voice." Jesus' voice summons all of the dead out of their graves. Like before there is certainty and inevitability to all of this. Notice, "An hour is coming..." and he's already been identified in chapter 1 as God's word. So now you have this hour, this moment, this period of time, let's say, when the word of God will speak into the entire creation, and all over the world, people will come to life physically.

He will speak with power and with authority, so that, step number two, all are resurrected. All are resurrected. Verse 28, again, "An hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out." The life they'll receive belongs to the one who speaks, and by speaking Jesus will resurrect dead people back to physical life. In case you're wondering, resurrection is not resuscitation, it's not reincarnation. It's not just coming back to life. It is coming back to life with a whole new life, a life that cannot die, a body that is a 2.0 version, a body that can't die, a body that can't run down, a body that is powerful and spiritual and glorious. I don't have time but read 1 Corinthians 15 later today. Now, when will this happen? Well, the Bible describes multiple resurrections, in general though, there are two resurrections, what we see here unto life and unto death, but those two have multiple fulfillments. So in the big picture, the first resurrection is going to happen at the rapture of the church, 1 Thessalonians 4:16. When Jesus returns for the church, at which time Christians, all Christians of all ages are resurrected, they're taken to heaven, they're judged at a place called the judgment seat of Christ. You can read about this, 1 Corinthians 3, 2 Corinthians 5. The second resurrection will happen according to Revelation 20:4, when Jesus returns. At that moment, after the seven-year tribulation period, all

the Jews of all time, all those who believed in God before Jesus came, they will be resurrected and all of the people that believed in Jesus during the tribulation period and died, at that time, they'll be resurrected as well and judged.

Those are the resurrections you want to be in. The third will happen according to Revelation 20:7 and Revelation 20:11 will happen after the 1,000-year reign of Christ on the Earth. After the final rebellion, when all the unsaved dead of all time will be raised and judged at the Great White Throne. They will all be found guilty and cast into the lake of fire. Now, you might be thinking, well, Jesus says this happens at an appointed hour. That's what the text says. So both resurrections have to be the same event. Well, not exactly. Think about the first hour in verse 25, Jesus raising people from spiritual death. How long has that hour been going? About 2,000 years, and when we read Revelation 20, in light of the verses here, or we just see on the face of it, is there's at least 1,000 years between the resurrection of the righteous, and the resurrection of the unrighteous. That's because the word hour here doesn't mean moment. It means period of time. It's easy to get lost in all the eschatology, end times, all that stuff. But I want to bring us back to the point here. Notice one more time. This event is not confined to just a handful of people or even a lot of people, but how many people? You see that there, verse 28, all people. All will rise again without exception, without exclusion, all means all. No one will be forgotten. No one will be overlooked. No one will escape. Everyone's soul will be reunited with the 2.0 version of their bodies, never to decay, never to die again, perfectly suited for the location that they will spend eternity in. So as sure as you are here now, as sure as you are breathing now, you will be at one of those two resurrections, before Jesus, your judge, and so will I.

Step number three, all are judged for their deeds. Step three, all are judged for their deeds. Look again at verse 28, "An hours coming when all who are in the tombs will hear His voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who've done evil to the resurrection of judgment." In case you're freaking out right now, this is not salvation by works, but there is a massive problem when we separate faith in Christ from good works. When we put a separation, that is a problem. That's because our faith in Jesus is proved by our works. Our lives test the genuineness of our trust in Christ. Belief can be superficial; it can be in word only. Lord, Lord, did we not do all these things? You're the Lord. You're the Lord. But people are not judged by what they say about Jesus. They are judged by how they live their lives in light of Jesus. Did they love and serve him? Did they ignore and reject him? Good works are always the result of salvation. They are never the reason for salvation. What is the reason for salvation? It's trust in Christ. John 3:16, whoever believes in Jesus will not perish but have everlasting life. But that faith in Christ, that believing in Him, faith that says produces actions that please the Lord. Good works are always the effect of salvation. They are never the cause of salvation and having said that, throughout the entire Bible, not just this text, throughout the entire Bible, judgment is always described on the basis of a person's deeds. Why? Because it's our deeds that give irrefutable proof as to what we really believe about God. It's our lives. It's how we live. It's the decisions that we make. It's our deeds that prove what we really believe about Jesus. What we really believe about God's word, the Bible. The truth about what someone really thinks, about

what they're really committed to is obvious in their lives. Can't fake that and I'll reiterate what I said last week if you weren't here, that for non-Christians, they will be judged by their deeds. And if we're honest, that is the last thing we want to be judged by, but that will be what's on the docket on that day. For Christians, we will also be judged by our deeds. But again, it is not a judgment for salvation. The judgment for all of your sins happened where? On the cross. All of your sins completely judged in Christ, your substitute. All of them completely judged, punished, and condemned.

So this is not the judgment of your salvation, but this is the judgment of your service. This is our character, our decisions, how we treated people, how we lived our lives. Did we live to please others? Did we live to please the Lord? Which one is it? Did we care about holiness and courage and love and wisdom? Did we care about any of that stuff? See, like I said last week, if you were here, God is not a communist. Heaven is not a socialist paradise where everybody gets in. It doesn't matter how you lived or how you didn't live for Christ, doesn't matter. You get in and then everybody gets their participation trophy. Here you go. Everybody's equal. No, if you're a Christian, you go to heaven. You're in. But once you're there, you're judged for how you lived your life. Did you live your life to please the Lord? Did you care about following Him and serving Him and doing the things that the Bible tells Christians to do? If you did, you will be treated differently than the one who's in heaven but didn't really care about that stuff. Did the minimum. Jesus talks about this, right? He says that there is a seed that is planted, and when that seed grows in a person's life, sometimes it grows and produces a 30-fold result from their lives, and for others a 60-fold, and for others a hundred-fold. That that seed is eternal life, but what that does in our lives is then seen in how we live our lives. But we don't think about this. I'm just going to be in heaven and that's fine. No, when you're there, you're going to go, what was I thinking? All these passages, Jesus says, "Store up for yourselves treasure in heaven." Passages like that'll come back to your mind and you'll go, why didn't I live my life for Him more? Why did I waste so much time? Why did I waste so much money? Why did I waste all of this stuff? We're saved and that's all that matters. Jesus is going, no, no, no, wait a minute. Yes, you're saved, but there are eternal rewards based on how you lived your life.

Step number four, all then enter an eternal location. All enter an eternal location. Look again at verse 29, "Those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who've done evil to the resurrection of judgment." Now that lives have been judged, people's eternal location is obvious, and it is now fixed. Jesus' voice initiates the words of Daniel 12:2, which says, "Those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt. You might hear people say, well, everlasting life, that's true. Eternal life, that's true. But for those who that reject Christ, they just disappear and are annihilated. The Bible disagrees. The same word for everlasting life, Daniel 12:2, is used for everlasting death. The division based on what people did with the life that they were given is now set and it is set forever. One is a resurrection characterized by life, where people live forever in a resurrected body, not some disembodied spirit floating around with a janky little halo and little butterfly wings. That's not how it's going to be. You're not going to be floating around on a harp, bored for

eternity. That's the last thing heaven is going to be. You will live in a city called the New Jerusalem. It will stretch east from Phoenix to Baton Rouge and north to Calgary. Only, it's not going to be here, 1500 miles square, it's going to be in Israel, and inside this massive city, all the saints of all time will live together with God in perfect harmony.

We'll live together in a new heaven and a new earth, where there's not only no sin, but there's no evidence that sin ever existed, and sin will never be able to enter that reality. You will have meaningful activities that you are constantly employed in. You will learn and you will grow, and you will serve the Lord in a place where there's not only no more sin, but there's no more sorrow and suffering and pain and shame and death at all. It's an eternal existence only marked by happiness and blessing and joy and perfection, where every moment is better than the next for all of eternity. But here's the thing, it is not your time to go there yet, because you still have work to do. Going back to point number two, you need to get prepared for that day. The other, sadly, is a resurrection, notice, verse 29, characterized by what? By judgment. Why? Because judgment and punishment for people's sins against God will never, ever end in a place Revelation 20:15 calls the lake of fire. You see people who reject Christ, they're already guilty for all of their crimes against God, the guilt is already there. The sentence of guilt is already plastered over their lives. It hangs there every second of every day. So when they stand before Jesus, it's not, well, we're not sure what the outcome is going to be, because you've done a lot of good things, and not on the bad things, we're going to weigh the scales.

That's not what's going on here. Guilt is already there. They're already condemned, according to John 3:18. So judgment is simply there to be passed, and then sentence them to eternal punishment. Which means, having a resurrected body in the lake of fire means people will exist, they will be conscious, but in a body 2.0 with senses that you and I can't even begin to imagine. Memories, you and I can't even imagine the ability to use their brains and use all of their functions at a heightened level, unlike anything you and I could ever imagine right now, which means the torment will be unbearable. No mercy, no hope of mercy or relief or escape forever. The time for repentance is over. This is their eternal location. But God is too merciful to send anybody there. No, God is so merciful that he gives criminals against Him, not with just one crime on the books, but thousands of crimes against Him. He gives criminals the opportunity to avoid going there. But only by the way that he made, not our own ways, only his. No one will escape this place if they neglect so great a salvation that God is still offering to all. A salvation that only comes through faith, through trust in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. That's some heavy stuff, huh? Well, after all of that, the only question is are you prepared? Are you prepared for that? Are you prepared to be resurrected? Are you prepared for Jesus to resurrect you physically? Well, in one sense, you are, if you've been resurrected spiritually, right? If you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, you've turned from your rebelling against him. If you have, then you've been resurrected spiritually, and there is no way you will spend even a fraction of a second in the lake of fire. But if you haven't, if you're not believing in Christ, and be like, I'm not sure. I'm kind of in the middle. Listen, this is no laughing matter. This isn't something you should take lightly.

This isn't something you should think, well, I know Jesus says that, but you know what about this. What about that? No, this is what he said.

You've got to deal with him and if this is true, then this is coming. So instead of pontificating about this and that and blah, blah, blah, you should just cry out to God, please forgive me for all of my sins. I've rebelled against you. I've pushed away all of your commands, and I don't want to do that anymore. I'm done. I come to you, Jesus. Forgive my sins. I give my life to you. That way all your sins will be separated from you as far as the East is from the West, never to come back, never to be brought up against you on your Judgment Day. Completely gone. Now, Christian, let me talk to you for a second. I'm sure like me, that you are grateful that you are saved and that you cannot lose your salvation. Now, having said that, that does not negate the fact that your life as a Christian matter. See, we tend to live like our actions are limited to this life and this life only. well, God forgives and, well, I know I did all that stuff, but God forgives, and I was a Christian at the time, but it's okay, because God forgives. This text is clear and others that we've looked at, your actions are not limited to this life. But who cares? Because I'm just going to heaven and that's all that matters. No, this is what we do. We apply all the texts about not losing our salvation to ourselves, and we just kind of give a fleeting thought to these texts about the Judgment Day that we are going to have. See all the books in the New Testament, remember, were written for Christians, meaning all the texts on Judgment Day were written to Christians. Why? So that you and I would live this day like that day's coming, so that we would live this day with that day in mind, that we would get prepared for our Judgment Day.

See, the careless way that Christians think about their actions as having no eternal consequences, that is a modern phenomenon. That is not how Christians have lived in the past. Up until fairly recently, Christians lived with their Judgment Day in mind, and it's because this life wasn't their focus. They weren't trying to build their own kingdoms. They weren't trying to build heaven on earth or trying to build their own private Eden, where all their needs and desires are met, where nothing is uncomfortable, where it's just joy and happiness 24/7. That was not their goal. CS Lewis said, put it this way, and it's true, "That Christians who did the most for this world were the same ones who thought the most about the next world." Let me say that again, in case we missed that. "The Christians who did the most for this world were the ones who thought the most about the next world." Why? Because they understood what we have amnesia about, that our character, our works, our decisions, our service to the Lord will all come back on that day. Which means what you do today, what I do today, will echo in eternity. Today does really count forever.

It is only a fool that reads these passages and goes, yes, I believe that's going to happen, but does not give any thought to it. Does not prepare. I went to a store the other day. I needed to get some soap, and so I'm looking for the soap aisle, and I turned the corner on the soap aisle and there is this TV above the aisle. You've seen this? TVs, and there I am on the TV, camera on me watching everything I'm doing. You'll be happy to know I wasn't there to do anything wrong. But as soon as I saw that camera, I was incredibly aware of everything I was doing and it even made

me aware of what other people are going to see me doing, if they look at the tape. To you and I, we are aware of cameras watching us, but are we aware of God watching us? Cameras make us aware of everything we're doing, but it is texts like this that should make us aware that everything we are doing will come back on our Judgment Day. You will be there in eternity and so will your deeds. All people will be raised from the dead. Every single one of us, everyone our eyes have seen, the billions of people that we have never seen, all of us will be there and all of us will either be resurrected unto life or unto judgment. So a text like this screams to us, far louder than I've been screaming, are you prepared for when it is your day to be judged? Will you have anything to show when it is your day to be judged? See, it's easy to read a text like this, be convicted, be scared, but we have to remember that just like Jesus' words to the men that day, these words are in the Bible, as an evidence of God's massive love and grace, to make sure that all of us are prepared. So you are you? Am I? Let's pray.

Jesus, when we were kids, we did not like pop quizzes, because we had no time to prepare. We didn't even know it was coming. It was just there, and we had to perform. We liked tests where we knew when they were coming, so that we could get ready. We don't often think about this, because we're just overcome by your grace and your mercy in forgiving our sins, and we sing about that and we think about that, we study that, but this is going to feel for many like a pop quiz. Where'd this come from? But you put texts like this in the Bible so that we would be prepared, every single one of us. For some that will mean ending our rebellion and trusting in you and for the rest, it will mean giving far more thought to the next life than we're currently doing. You said it yourself, "Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven." That may be one of the most neglected commands that you gave and please, help that not to be true in our lives. Please, show us how we can align our lives more and more with your words in John 5. For the glory of your name. Amen.