



THE END

Being Ready for the Day of Judgement

"Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour."

- Matthew 25:13

Jump Start # 1542

Matthew 25:13 "Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour."

This week we have been looking at the final judgment. We shall all stand before God and give an account of ourselves. That thought is scary. It's one thing to give an account of someone else. It's one thing to give an account for our schools or church. But before God we must give an account of ourselves. The Lord has given us talents & opportunities and reasons to believe. He knows what we have done. But at the judgment we must face God.

Our verse today comes from the parable of the wise and foolish virgins. The Lord used a series of three parables to describe His return and our responsibilities toward Him. In the first parable, where our verse comes from, five of the virgins were called foolish because while they slept their lamps used up all the oil that they had. They had not anticipated having to wait as long as they did. With the shout that the groom was coming, they hurried off to purchase more oil. They came to the place of the wedding and the door was shut and they were not admitted. They missed it. They were not ready. Our verse sums up the principle taught here, "be on the alert."

Be on the alert or be ready, carries over to the judgment. Can a person ever be ready to be judged by God? How can a person feel good about the coming judgment, knowing that our thoughts, our words, our actions, even the way we have treated others, will have an impact upon how we are judged. How can we make it? We know what we have done. We know that we shouldn't have said those things under our breath, but we did. We know that we could have done better in worship, but we didn't. We know that we've complained. We know that we let a bit of gossip fly. There have been thoughts that have been anything but holy. There have been times when we have not prayed.

We've let anger take hold of us. We know we're not been the sweet darlings that others may think we are. Not only do we know these things, but God does. That's what really bothers us. He knows. There's no excuse to hide behind. There are no fingers that we can point to blame others. We know & He knows.

How can we be ready for the coming judgment? How can we face God knowing we've broken His heart so many times? How can we feel good about walking into the church when we've disappointed & disobeyed Him? Will He throw the book at us? Will He declare, "I never knew you"? Will He explode, "Depart from Me"? We're in trouble.



Some just put it out of their minds & hope for the best, whatever that might be. Others, get busy engaging in good things hoping that will tip the scales in their favor. Many have a concept of "balance theology." They see the judgment as the good & the bad placed in the balance. They know that there are wrong & bad things there, but as long as there are more good things than bad things, then the balance leans in their favor. So, come Sunday, we got to get to church. Why? It's the balance thing. We must put some things in the good column. It's amazing how many think this way. It's the only way that they know how to deal with the wrongs in their lives. Make sure the good outweighs the bad.

The problem with balance theology is that it makes salvation based upon works and not faith. Doing more good than bad leads to the thought that God has to give us Heaven because of all the things we have done. Balance theology also winks at wrong. It's ok to have wrong in your life as long as there is more good. That's not Biblical. God doesn't look at things that way. Wrongs are never to be tolerated. They are to be repented of.

Balance theology isn't it. You won't find that taught in Scriptures. That being true, we still have this great dilemma of how can we face God when we have not done what we should have? How can we be ready to face God? How can we have any hope and any confidence of Heaven?

The answer to all of this is the grace of God. We are saved by the grace of God. It is not our perfection, our works, our goodness or more good than wrong that opens Heaven's door to us. It's the grace of God. Salvation is a gift. Paul thanked God for this indescribable gift. Our faith and trust in the Lord Jesus is what catches the eye of God. He saves us because of His choice. It is His gift. So we will stand before the throne of God, a bit battered & banged, forgiven & believing & having confidence because of the promises of God. Are there conditions to God's grace? Certainly. If not, then everyone would be saved, including those who didn't want to be saved & those who did not believe. The conditions include faith. That faith is active & leads to doing whatever God says.

God wants us to walk with Him. That implies effort on our part. But the hope remains in the grace of God. It is because of God's grace that you and I, not always good, can have Heaven. God was patient and forgiving to bumbling Peter. Peter who lacked faith. Peter who said things he shouldn't have said.

Peter who got scared and denied the Lord. Peter who looked the Jewish leaders in the eye and declared that we cannot stop speaking what we have seen and heard.



Peter, who was called on the carpet by the apostle Paul for being a hypocrite. That Peter. That Peter was saved by the grace of God. It wasn't having more good than bad. It wasn't having the perfect alibi for his mistakes. It was Peter who believed. It was Peter who always came back to the Lord. It was Peter, who, by the grace of God, was forgiven and saved. Peter is a lot like us. We have some great moments spiritually. We have had some not so great moments spiritually. Our hope is not in ourselves, but in God.

Paul could say that his future included a crown of righteousness. Why? Perfect Christian? Hall of fame material? No. He kept the faith. He finished the course. He fought the good fight. He stayed with it and God's grace is what saved him.

Paul wrote to Titus: "But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior."

We are saved by grace through faith. This is how we can be ready to face God. It is the only way. Keep holding to God's unchanging hand.

-Roger Shouse

JOIN US FOR *Worship!*

Times of Service

Sunday Worship: 10 am
Sunday Bible Study: 5 pm
Wednesday Bible Study: 7 pm

Our Elders

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