

GRACE GREATER THAN ALL OUR SIN!

There will be a Day of Permanent Pardon

Has anyone ever purchased your ticket to an entertainment place such as a Bass Hall Production, a restaurant, or favorite sport game? You were expecting to have to pay, but you did not have to...because someone covered your bill.

Did you deserve it? Did you expect it?

One of those times I can remember recently is when my brother paid for Sherry and my meal at Quartz Mountain Lodge, Oklahoma. We were expecting to pay our way...we ate, we drank (iced tea), and we even had a dessert. Having my billfold out, the waitress said, "Someone else paid for your meal!"

I did not deserve it! I did not expect it...but I received it graciously and thankfully!

I walked out of the restaurant not owing a dime!

Our Savior did that for us...

We did not deserve being saved. We were and are sinners. We did nothing to deserve anything but punishment for our sins.

God's grace and Jesus' covering...covered my bill for being a sinner! In turn, I wanted to pay my brother back for his generosity. He said, "Gerald, you and Sherry are wonderful and we wanted to do that because we love you."

I looked at Tony and said, "Tony, I will pay for your meal tomorrow."

Tony stated to me, "Then it would not mean anything to me if I felt I needed to be paid back."

I realized, "He means that...he did that out of love and a giving heart."

Jesus states that the forgiveness that He has offered us must be accepted gratefully and gracefully. We are to receive it because it has been bought and paid for..."Once and for all."

In the book, "When Christ Comes," Max Lucado gives a true example of earthly pardon.* A restaurant owner invited the Lucado family and others on their children's volleyball team to dinner after a game. The Lucado family accepted the invitation and ate a lavish meal. When the check for the dinner was presented at the cashier's stand, the owner was there...pardoning the bill for the "friends" who she knew. All others had to pay.

Every time a debt was pardoned, the restaurant owner's generosity was revealed. Those who knew the hostess were rewarded. All that Max's family had to do was accept her invitation to eat. The day of God's judgment will be like this:

- 1. God's judgment will be universal...but different for those who know Him and those who don't.**
- 2. God's grace will be revealed...The host will receive all the credit and attention.**
- 3. Rewards for God's servants will be unveiled. Those who accepted the invitation will be uniquely honored.**
- 4. Those who don't know Him will pay a price! A severe, terrible price.**

"In those days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving their children to be married, until the day Noah entered the boat. They knew nothing about what was happening until the flood came and destroyed them. It will be the same when the Son of Man comes" (Matthew 24:38-39).

People didn't listen then...they still don't today!

Note:

Remember:

- o Noah was sent to save the faithful. Christ was sent to do the same.
- o A flood of water came then. A flood of fire will come next.
- o Noah built a safe place out of wood. Jesus made a safe place with the cross.
- o Those who believed hid in the ark. Those who believe are hidden in Christ.

Judgment will come...When Christ Comes!

Judgment Day stirs most hearts to the point of some fear...and anxiety.

For the unprepared...it will be a day of panic!

For the prepared...it will be a day that we can anticipate...and not dread!

Who will be judged?

Everyone who has ever lived.

Matthew 25:32, "Before him [the Son of Man] will be gathered all the nations."

2 Corinthians 5:10, "for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ."

Nature is God's first missionary!

Even those who never heard of Christ are given a message about the character of God. "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night, they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard" (Psalms 19:1-3).

Although God might judge one more harshly than another...we know that His judgment will be fair!

Revelation 16:7, "Yes, Lord God all-Powerful, your judgments are honest and fair."

What will be judged?

Simply put...All things that we have done...and haven't done in this present life!

2 Corinthians 5:10, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad" (NIV).

DEEDS...WORDS...THOUGHTS.

Note: Similar statements...whether referring to the unsaved or saved!

- Revelation 20:12, "The dead were judged by what they had done, which was written in the books."
- Ecclesiastes 12:14, "God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil."
- Matthew 12:36, "On the day of judgment, men will render account for every careless word they utter."
- Hebrews 10:30, "The Lord will judge his people."
- Paul states..."For we will all stand before God's judgment seat...So, then, each of us will give an account of himself to God" (Romans 14:10, 12).
- Jesus summarizes..."Everything that is hidden will be shown, and everything that is secret will be made known" (Luke 12:2).

Are your eyebrows arching...and your heart pounding?

Why will Christians be judged?

Let's review... We will have a new wardrobe!

We are clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

Our sins have been cast as far as the east is from the west.

And..."Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1).

We are supposed to have no fear on the day God judges us.

If all this...then...Why do we need a judgment at all?

Two Answers:

1. **So our Rewards Can Be Unveiled,**
2. **So that God's Grace Can Be Revealed.**

Rewards Unveiled...Openly Revealed.

Salvation is the result of Grace.

No person has ever done one work to enhance the finished work of the cross.

Our service does impact our rewards...but, not our salvation.

"We are accepted into heaven on the basis of faith alone, but we are adorned in heaven on the basis of the fruits of our faith."

Read 1 Corinthians 3:10-15

**The sins of the saved will be revealed as forgiven
sins...pardoned transgressions.**

God's Grace Can Be Revealed.

List of sins...forgiven.

Remember the primary purpose of judgment: to reveal the grace of the Father.

Oh...the love that drew salvation's plan.

Oh...the grace that brought it down to

man!

*Max Lucado's Book, When Christ Comes, was the main source of this devotion.