

Belgic Confession 37-Part 2- Judgment Day: End of the World

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: At the end of the world, on **Judgment Day**, **Jesus will appear in the clouds**, the **dead in Christ will rise**, living and dead **Christians will be given new glorious bodies**, they will be **taken to heaven** to be with the Lord forever, and **non-believers**, will be **face their condemning judgment in hell**. Today you'll hear the details of these events.

Our headings are:

All men will be judged

The Wicked will be judged and justly condemned

The Godly will be judged and justly cleared

Our goals are: **That you will have joy seeing the benefits of Christ's work for you, that you will be sad seeing the plight of those who reject Jesus, and you will be motivated to share the message of the Gospel to save the wicked from just condemnation.**

And therefore the consideration of this judgment is **justly terrible and dreadful** to the wicked and ungodly, **but most desirable and comfortable to the righteous and elect**; because then their full deliverance shall be perfected, and there they shall receive the fruits of their labor and trouble which they have borne. Their innocence shall be known to all, and **they shall see the terrible vengeance which God shall execute on the wicked**, who **most cruelly persecuted, oppressed, and tormented them in this world**, and who shall be convicted **by the testimony of their own consciences**, and shall become immortal, but only to be tormented in the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels.

But on the contrary, the faithful and elect shall be **crowned with glory and honor**; and the **Son of God will confess their names** before God His Father and His elect angels; all **tears shall be wiped from their eyes**; and **their cause which is now condemned** by many judges and magistrates as heretical and impious will then be known to be the cause of the Son of God. And for a gracious reward, the Lord will cause them to possess such a glory as never entered into the **heart of man to conceive**.

All men will be Judged

1. Final judgment on the godly and ungodly is certain and it will be seen by all who ever lived and by all angels.

Consider the **picture of judgment that Jesus painted- judgment** of all mankind.

Matthew 25:31 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. **32 "All the nations will be gathered before Him**, and He will **separate them one from another**, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. **33 "And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.** **34 "Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:**

Consider the **promise of judgment** to all mankind.

2Corinthians 5:10 For **we must all appear** before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, **according to what he has done**, whether good or bad.

2. No one will be exempted from final judgment; both the sheep and the goats will be judged.

The person may have been raised in the most **backward part of Africa** or the most **refined palace in England**, but he still will have to give an account to Jehovah.

He might have grown up in the **Dark Ages, during the Enlightenment, or way before in the Iron Age**, but he will still have to give an account to Jehovah.

He might have been raised as a **Hindu, a Muslim, or an Atheist**, but he will still have to give an account to Jehovah.

From the mighty **Pharaohs to Nebuchadnezzar**, from the **Roman army to a disabled child**, all will have to give account to Jehovah.

You will have to **give an account for everything** – for every murder you commit, for every idol you bow down to, for every “white lie” you told, for every unnecessary complaining, and for every hate in your heart. No sin will be exempted from scrutiny.

From the **ones who never heard the Gospel, to the ones who heard it from childhood**, all will have to give account.

You see, this certainty of judgment is premised on the nature of God – a God who cannot change.

So **God doesn't excuse you because of your hard life...or your ignorance...or because of the failure of your parents!**

Deuteronomy 7:10 "and **He repays those who hate Him to their face, to destroy them**. He will not be slack with him who hates Him; He will repay him to his face.

3. The judgment between the wicked and the righteous will be qualitatively different.

The wicked will be condemned to hell, and the righteous will be commended to heaven. Let us now see the different quality of the judgment the wicked and the godly will face.

The Wicked judged and justly condemned

1. Eternal judgment on the wicked will justifiably be terrible and dreadful.

“God is merciful, but he is also just.” He is obligated to fulfill his judgment! He couldn’t wish away sins.

Psalm 5:4 For **You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness**, Nor shall evil dwell with You. 5 The **boastful shall not stand in Your sight**; You **hate all workers of iniquity**. 6 You **shall destroy those who speak falsehood**; The LORD **abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man**.

Imagine the guilt and regret the wicked will feel for having rejected the only hope of salvation! They will face eternity in hell.

2. Why will the wicked be justly condemned for eternity?

They ignored Christ. This is God’s definition of wickedness. This is the greatest wickedness. It is important to know this because the tendency is to see the kind non-Christian person as okay! But good works don’t take away sin!

Matthew 25:44 "Then they also will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?’ 45 "Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, **inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.**’ 46 "And **these will go away into everlasting punishment**, but the righteous into eternal life."

Jesus was speaking about judgment and the end of the world. And he used this parable to teach if someone had no intimate saving knowledge of him – though they might have religious talk or deeds-they would still be lost. (Don’t think Jesus was saying that if you visit people in prison or you give the poor to eat that you will be saved. That is not the context.) **To ignore Christ meant that you really did not trust him.** Yes, ultimate wickedness is to ignore Christ. **Do you ever wince when you are a funeral and ministers promise people that the one who died is in heaven** when he never trusted in Jesus Christ? God has to condemn the wicked for eternity because God cannot contradict his nature by going easy on the wicked.

3. The wicked person’s punishment in hell for eternity will be intensified by the guilt on his conscience –pictured by the worm that keeps pricking the conscience.

Mark 9:43 "If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched — 44 "where **‘Their worm does not die,** And the fire is not quenched.’

Can you imagine how the wicked will feel ashamed for harassing Christians? Can you imagine how they would feel for eternity knowing **they laughed at Christians for serving the Lord?** The communists, the Hindus, the Buddhists, the Muslims?

4. Also, the wicked will feel shame and embarrassment for having rejected their only hope.

5. Lessons:

a. Even while knowing the eternal punishment of the wicked, don’t boast about being better, because you are not. You are saved by grace...not your good works.

b. Instead, hold fast to the truth of God’s Word. Know the Word. Jesus died for your sins. Jesus took God’s justice for you! Believe the Word. Live the Word. Without this, you too will be under judgment.

c. Spread that truth, even for those who are under the curse of God right now. This is the only means by which men can be saved from the terrors of hell. Tell it loudly...urgently!

The Righteous will be judged and justly cleared

1. Judgment on you, those justified in Jesus, will be desirable, comfortable, and full of eternal rewards.

You will be crowned with glory and honor for eternity. Now it is true you might think you will be ashamed of appearing before a holy God, knowing all your sins—including your sins of thought, but the Bible teaches that **instead of shame you will have great happiness.** All your guilt will be removed. Your record will be expunged– cleared - forever.

2. But why do you have to stand before God in judgment if God has already removed all your sins?

After all, Psalms 103 says that “he has removed your sins as far as the east is from the west.” Micah says that “he will cast your sins into the depths of the sea.” Isaiah wrote, “He will remember your sins no more.” Here are the answers.

a. God cannot forget your sins, but he will not hold your sins against you and he will treat your sins like he forgets them. God describes it that way **because all yours sins were paid for in Jesus Christ.**

b. Second, your standing before the judgment throne is not ultimately about your judgment; it is about the glorifying of Jesus, the one who cleared your record. Jesus will answer for you – as opposed to

the wicked who has to answer for himself. He will say you are clean and you will plead him! (*Father, Jesus took my sins, all of them!*) And all this will happen before all men, before the Father, and all the angels of heaven. And then you and all the angels will praise the work of the Savior – Jesus. Christ’s glory will be prominently displayed in fullness.

3. You also will be honored before men and angels.

Your glory will be so much you can’t even conceive how great it will be.

4. Lessons:

a. Don’t become preoccupied with building your own kingdom on this earth and accumulating stuff.

Yes, you must plan for your future on earth, but don’t avoid the main reason you are on this earth– working for Christ’s kingdom! This world is not your home, you are only passing through. Don’t get too attached to the things of this world. Don’t obsess over “stuff.” Everything on this earth will be burned up. You shouldn’t have to go on anti-depressants if your house burns down, or if your car is stolen, or if your health goes.

b. Long to be in heaven. This will make you work for Jesus like you should. Work for your home country!

Philippians 3:20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

Hebrews 11:16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

There will be no tears in heaven. Do you look forward to that? There’ll be no broken hearts there!

Look at the last part of Article 37.

Therefore we expect that great day with a most ardent desire, to the end that we may fully enjoy the promises of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. AMEN. Amen, come, Lord Jesus.

This is why you John longs for Christ’s return in Revelation 22:20, and said, “Come, Lord Jesus.”

c. Long for the honor you will get in heaven. If you do, you won’t become preoccupied with praise and honor in this life...not praise for your parenting skill...kindness...or sacrifice for others.

Conclusion:

Everyone will face judgment at the end of the world – the godly and the wicked. The wicked will justly be condemned to hell to pay the price of their sins. (God is just!) You will be sent to heaven where you will hear your sins were fully paid for by Jesus when he suffered on the cross...and his good works during his life will be yours. Through judgment of the wicked and through your salvation your Savior will be glorified.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. God gave you an eschatology of victory – that you will be saved by the blood of Jesus and the wicked will be sent to hell with the Devil. Celebrate your salvation; live your salvation. Live like you have been made free forever. Don’t live like a prisoner...or one burdened by sin.

2. God gave you an eschatology of glory – that Christ will be glorified for his salvation. Share that message of Jesus’s hard life and painful death on the cross for sinners so they can be saved and bring glory to him. Help save a soul from eternal damnation.

3. God gave you an eschatology of victory. Wait patiently – don’t become preoccupied with signs of his coming. Occupy till he comes. He will not come one day early, or one day too late.

Finally, will you be going to heaven or hell when you die? Do nothing about it and you will go to hell. But you can go to heaven when you die if you receive the offer of adoption to become a child of God. Christ gave his life on the cross to satisfy God’s justice so you can receive this offer.