

THE LAST JUDGEMENT

“We Believe” series

Judgement in the Creed

- A succinct formulation of the core elements of the gospel, based on the Scriptures
- Jesus returns to judge
- Creed does not refer to time/conditions of Jesus' return
- Creed places resurrection out of sequence
 - ▣ Concentration on the person and work of Jesus
 - ▣ Creed secondarily about us



Judgement in the Old Testament

- God is “judge of all the earth”
- Judgement tied to God’s character: mercy, righteousness, truth
- Experience of faithful influences theological thought
- Later parts of OT and in Jewish “intertestamental” writings focus on the “Day of the Lord”
- Intertestamental focus on judgement of God's enemies
 - ▣ Problem of theodicy / judgement not done
 - ▣ Judgement not limited to history but executed in the “last day”



Judgement in the New Testament

- Continues OT emphasis on God as judge as part of his nature
- God's judgement already at work
- Christ as judge; exercising the Father's judgement
- BUT... "judgement to come" is much more significant and a major feature of:
 - ▣ Jesus' preaching
 - ▣ the teaching of the early Church



Judgement of Jesus

- Judgement to come
- Christ will judge
- All will be judged: nations, believers, unbelievers, angels
- All aspects of life
 - ▣ secrets of men
 - ▣ the purposes of the heart
 - ▣ every careless word
- Judgement certain

Implications of the Judgement

- Triumph of God's will and display of his glory
- Declaration of God's justice
- Climax of Christ's ministry
- History moves toward God's purposes
- Completion of human accountability
- Incentive for mission

Challenges from within and without

- Claim there is no judgement
- Impact of humanistic thinking on Church's thinking
- Denials of...
 - ▣ Reality of sin
 - ▣ Human culpability and its consequences
 - ▣ God's nature
 - ▣ Jesus' own teaching and mission
 - ▣ Authority of Scripture in the Church

A lack of judgement...

- Skewed Christian teaching
 - ▣ preoccupation with Second Coming in some circles
 - ▣ uncritical adoption of secular models
 - ▣ incomplete or absent preaching on touchy subjects
 - ▣ failure to take sin and its consequences seriously
 - ▣ a truncated Gospel
 - ▣ reduced reason for joy, gratitude?
- Diminished impetus for mission
 - ▣ no judgement, no worries



And his kingdom will have no end

- The one who is Judge inherits an endless kingdom
- He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!"
- No more tears, death, mourning, crying or pain, "for the old order of things has passed away"
- "The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him."
- The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people. Amen.



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Eric Gill, 1917