

“You Only Live....TWICE!”

(Part 12 of a Series, “Foundational Truths!”)

Mt. 25:31-46, 1 Cor. 15:12-19, 50-58, 2 Cor. 5:6-10, Rev. 20:11-15

We continue in a series of sermons concerning the foundational truths upon which we live our lives and operate the church. We are working our way through our church’s “Statement of Faith”. Thus far we have looked at the verbal and plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, the Trinity, the Virgin birth of Jesus, the Image of God, justification by faith alone in Christ alone, the resurrection and High Priestly work of Jesus, the rapture of the church, being born again, the gifts of the Spirit, and the eternal security of the believer in Jesus.

STATEMENT #11: “We believe in the bodily resurrection of the saved and the lost; that the saved shall appear in Heaven at the Judgment Seat of Christ to receive rewards and to dwell with Him for eternity; that the lost shall be judged at the Great White Throne and be cast into eternal hell.”

1. Hope and Motivation

- We *all* only live *twice*... once on Earth, once in eternity – either Heaven or Hell. Hebrews 9:27
- Our **hope** of resurrection, of being in Heaven with the Lord and with others who have gone to Heaven before us, is based on the resurrection of Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. 15:16-19
- Our **comfort**, when we lose loved ones who have trusted in Christ, is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. 1 Thess. 4:13-18
- Our **motivation** for preaching the Gospel is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. 15:14. We serve a RISEN Saviour!!
- Our **motivation** for living for the Lord is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. One day we will be resurrected and will be with Him forever! 1 Cor. 15:58

2. The Judgment Seat of Christ

- 2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10 Also known as the “Bema Seat” (from the Greek, meaning, “Tribunal”). During the ancient Olympics, the judge sat (on the “bema seat”) at the finish line to see who came in first, second, third, etc. The judge then handed out the rewards. In Corinth, the Emperor sat on a large, ornately decorated platform called the “Bema”. Here the Emperor gave out rewards to the victorious athletes for their years of dedicated and disciplined training and their perseverance and endurance in the heat of competition and battle. This is the imagery here in these verses.

- The Judgment Seat of Christ is for *believers in Jesus* only.
- The purpose is for Jesus, the Judge of the Living and the Dead (2 Tim.4:1), to give us rewards for what we have done as believers. Mt. 25:14-30
- The Judgment Seat of Christ is NOT for punishment, as Jesus already took our punishment on the Cross when He bled and died (and rose again).
- Are you ready to stand before the “Bema Seat”? Out of love and appreciation for the gift of salvation, are you serving the Lord faithfully? Are you striving by the power of the Holy Spirit to live a holy life? Are you sharing the Gospel? Are you loving others?

3. The Great White Throne Judgment

- This judgment is for unbelievers only. It is the final judgment prior to the lost (unbelievers) being cast into the Lake of Fire (Hell).
- Jesus will be the Judge here too.
- According to Rev. 20:12, 13, the unsaved will be punished (degree of punishment) in accordance with their deeds. Having said that... NO place in Hell will be a nice place to be for all eternity!
- Once a person is at the Great White Throne Judgment, there is no “second chance”. That person’s name will NOT be in the “Book of Life” (Rev. 20:15), and they will be cast into Hell for all eternity... no possibility of escape.
- Knowing all of this:
 - a. should motivate ALL of us to make *sure* we are trusting Jesus Christ *alone* for forgiveness of sins, eternal life. 2 Cor. 13:5
 - b. Should motivate us believers in Jesus to share the Gospel. We should not want *anyone* to go to Hell!