

## 46. The Gospel of John—5:29b

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### *“Jesus Declares His Divinity” Pt.8*

(10/21/18)

We are currently in chapter 5 in our study of John’s gospel—in a series we’ve entitled, *“Jesus Declares His Divinity.”*

In John’s gospel chapter 5 verses 17 thru 30—Jesus makes 5 claims to His own divinity, 5 claims of equality with the God the Father—

**I. Jesus Claims Equality with God in His Person—v.17-18**

**II. Jesus Claims Equality with God in His Work—v.19**

**III. Jesus Claims Equality with God in His Power Over Life and Death—v.20-21**

**IV. Jesus Claims Equality with God in His Authority to Judge—v.22, 24-30**

**V. Jesus Claims Equality with God in Honor—v.23**

We have been looking at the fourth main point in our outline—

**IV. Jesus Claims Equality with God in His Authority to Judge—v.22, 24-30**

**John 5:21-22 (NKJV)**

<sup>21</sup> For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to *them*, even so the Son gives life to whom He will. <sup>22</sup> For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son,

As we have said repeatedly in this series, in verses 21-22, first Jesus claimed equality with the Father in His power to raise the dead—and then He coupled it with a claim of equality with the Father in His authority to judge the world.

And then starting with verse 24 and running thru verse 29—the Lord amplifies this truth by focusing His remarks on the resurrection of the dead and the coming judgment.

As we have already stated, Jesus is qualified to sit in judgment over the people of this world for two very important reasons—both of which are rooted in His divinity:

### **1. He is the Creator**

The only Person in the universe who has the right to sit in judgement of the people of this world is the One who created those people and gave them life in the first place—God Almighty and more specifically, Jesus Christ (John 1:3).

### **2. He is sinless**

The only Person who could righteously sit in judgment of mankind was a Man (a descendant of Adam) who Himself was morally perfect and sinless—and that Man of course was Jesus Christ, God in human form—the God-Man!

And so, when Jesus said the Father has given Him the responsibility of judging the people of this world—it was another declaration of divinity because only God has the right to sit in judgment of sinful mankind.

But once again, resurrection and ultimately judgment are the subjects that are being dealt with by Jesus in John 5:24-29.

In these verses (as we have pointed out) there are three different resurrections in view—one spiritual and the other two physical.

#### **John 5:24-25, 28-29 (NKJV)**

<sup>24</sup> "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.

<sup>25</sup> Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live...<sup>28</sup> Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice <sup>29</sup> and come forth--

those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

**A. The Spiritual Resurrection of the Lost—v.24-27**

**B. The Physical Resurrection of Believers—v.28-29a**

**C. The Physical Resurrection of Unbelievers—v.29b**

The final resurrection of all unbelievers is what Jesus called—“**the resurrection of condemnation**” in verse 29.

This judgment of unbelievers is described in Revelation 20:11–15 and takes place *after* the Millennial Kingdom (the thousand-year reign of Christ).

We are living at a time when most people believe there won’t ever be a day of reckoning coming when they will have to stand before God and give an account for the lives they lived upon the earth—this passage, more than any other, gives us a look at that coming day.

**Revelation 20:11-12 (NKJV)**

<sup>11</sup> Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. <sup>12</sup> And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God [having been resurrected from Hades], and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book of Life*. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

Once again, this is what Jesus called, “**the resurrection of condemnation**” (John 5:29b).

The word ‘**condemnation**’ is a Greek word that means ‘*judgment*’—as in a punitive judgment rendered in a court of law.

Someday all unbelievers will be resurrected bodily from the dead and will stand before Almighty God at what the Bible calls—“*The Great White Throne Judgment.*”

Let’s break this passage down and see what God says about that.

## 1. The Supreme Court of the Universe

**Revelation 20:11 (NKJV)**

<sup>11</sup> Then I saw a great white throne...

Here we are given a glimpse of the ‘Supreme Court’—not of America or even of the world but of the whole universe!

As we have said, the Great White Throne is where all unbelievers will be resurrected to stand before someday—those who died on the earth without receiving Jesus as their Savior.

It is ‘**Great**’ because there is no higher court—it is supreme.

It is ‘**White**’ because of the perfection, purity and righteousness of the decisions handed down.

## 2. The Supreme Judge of the Universe

**Revelation 20:11 (NKJV)**

<sup>11</sup> Then I saw a great white throne **and Him who sat on it...**

Who is this Judge? → He is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ—

**John 5:22 (NKJV)**

<sup>22</sup> For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to **the Son,**

**John 5:27 (NKJV)**

<sup>27</sup> and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the **Son of Man**.

**Revelation 20:11 (NKJV)**

<sup>11</sup> Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, **from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.**

Here John describes here an awesome scene—heaven and earth will flee away, and no place will be left for sinners to hide! All must face the Judge!

So far, we have seen that court has been convened and the Judge is seated on the *throne*—not the *bench* because this Judge is also the King!

Next, we see—

**3. The Summons**

**Revelation 20:12 (NKJV)**

<sup>12</sup> **And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God...**

Notice that we see a Judge but no jury, we see defendants but no defense attorneys.

That's because this is not a trial—the case for man's guilt was already decided in the Garden of Eden at which time God pronounced mankind guilty with a curse (Gen. 3:14-19; also, John 3:18).

In Rev.20:11-15, this is what our system of juris prudence calls—**the sentencing stage**.  
(Explain)

**Rev. 20:12a (NKJV)**

**And I saw the dead, small and great, standing (bodily resurrection) before God...**

The ‘**small and great**’ doesn’t refer to their physical ‘stature’—but to their supposed *importance* upon the earth in life.

So here we see a picture of Judgment Day and the “**small**” (the slave, the poor, the insignificant and the unimportant) standing next to the “**great**” (the kings and presidents; senators and CEO’s; the rich and the famous).

This group would include the atheists and so-called “intellectuals” who mocked the existence of God—those who were too *cool* for God and made fun out of those who were “stupid” enough to believe in Him.

All the rebels who ever lived on the earth that refused to bow the knee to Jesus as their King—the ‘Henley’s’ who shook their fist in the face of a holy God and cried, “*I am the master of my fate. I am the captain of my soul*” and all those whose “life song” was “*I did it my way*” in defiance of God.

We see here all of the so-called “somebody’s” and the lowly nobodies—the irreligious and the very religious all standing before God on equal ground and all bound together by their common, willful unbelief.

These are those who rejected the love of the truth, the gospel, which would have saved them from this terrifying Day.

And now they stand before the One who loved them and gave Himself for them—Whom they rejected as their loving Savior—now He becomes their righteous Judge!

And remember that God is no respecter of persons—He isn’t ‘impressed’ by fame and wealth, by kings and presidents—all will be judged fairly, impartially and righteously!

From where do these “dead” come?—

**Revelation 20:13a (NKJV)**

**<sup>13</sup> The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them...**

**Death** (the grave) will give up their *bodies* (physical resurrection), and **Hades** (the realm of the souls of the dead) will give up their souls.

There will even be a resurrection of bodies from the sea—no sinner will escape this judgment.

J.Vernon McGee—

*“And the sea gave up the dead that were in it.” Multitudes who have gone to a watery grave in which the chemicals of their bodies have been dissolved in the waters of the sea will be raised. God will have no problem with this. After all, they are only atoms. He just has to put them together again. He did it once; He can do it again. The graves on earth will give up their bodies; and hades, the place where the spirits of the lost go, will disgorge for this judgment.”*

**1. The Supreme Court of the Universe**

**2. The Supreme Judge of the Universe**

**3. The Summons**

**4. The Judgment**

**Revelation 20:12-13 (NKJV)**

**<sup>12</sup> And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book of Life*. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. <sup>13</sup>...And they were judged, each one according to his works.**

Jesus Christ will judge these unsaved people on the basis of what is written in “**the books**”—what books?

We’re not told specifically—but it isn’t hard to figure it out from other passages in the N.T.

## a. The Word of God

### **John 12:48 (NKJV)**

<sup>48</sup> He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him--the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.

Every sinner will be held accountable for the truth he or she has heard in this life.

Many of these will think that God has made a terrible mistake because they went to church and heard the Bible taught and the gospel preached—but that was the problem, they *heard* the Word but never really *lived* any of it—

### **James 1:22 (NLT2)**

<sup>22</sup> But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves.

### **Matthew 7:21-23 (NLT2)**

<sup>21</sup> "Not everyone who calls out to me, 'Lord! Lord!' will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter. <sup>22</sup> On judgment day many will say to me, 'Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.' <sup>23</sup> But I will reply, 'I never knew you. Get away from me, you who break God's laws.'

## b. The Ledger of God

What is this ledger? It's what Paul called—"*...the record that contained the charges against us.*" Col. 2:14 (NLT)

The Bible says that every sin that a person commits against God's Law (of which the Ten Commandments are part of) is a debt that he or she owes Him—a debt that has to be paid.

Just like when a criminal finishes his time in prison we say, "*He has paid his debt to society.*"



These sinners owe God a tremendous debt—a debt they accumulated over the course of their lives and God kept meticulous records of every word, thought and action that violated His Law.

Every sin is a crime against a Holy God and is written in His book—His ledger and they must be paid for—*“For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil.” Ecclesiastes 12:14 (NKJV)*

Jesus came to earth to pay our debt—

**Isaiah 53:5-6 (NLT2)**

<sup>5</sup> But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed. <sup>6</sup> All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God’s paths to follow our own. Yet the LORD laid on him the sins of us all.

**Colossians 2:14 (NASB)**

<sup>14</sup> having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

Jesus as He hung on the cross said, *“It is finished (paid in full)”* (John 19:30).

If a person refuses to receive what Jesus Christ did on Calvary’s cross (His death which paid for all of their sins)—then they will have to stand before God someday and be sentenced to pay for their own crimes against God.

*“That’s OK, I know I’m a good person and when I stand before God I’ll plead my case and show Him all the ‘good things’ I’ve done—I believe He’ll be fair and let me into Heaven.”*

J. Vernon McGee—

*“Yes, my friend, you will be able to get a fair trial there. Your life is on tape, and Jesus Christ, the Judge happens to have the tape. I think He will have it on a television screen so that you can watch it, too (“This Was Your Life”). Do you think your life can stand the test? Are you willing to stand before God and have Him play the tape of your life? I do not know about you, but I could not make it. Thank God for His grace—“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God” (Eph. 2:8).”*

This is why we don't see any legal representation for these people—there is no defense attorney because, the only One who could have defended them against the judgment of God—they rejected.

**1 John 2:1-2 (NLT2)**

<sup>1</sup> My dear children, I am writing this to you so that you will not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate [attorney for the defense] who pleads our case before the Father. He is Jesus Christ, the one who is truly righteous. <sup>2</sup> He himself is the sacrifice that atones for our sins—and not only our sins but the sins of all the world.

*“So if these people have already been found guilty then what purpose does the Great White Throne Judgment serve?”*

As we've already said, the purpose of the Great White Throne Judgment will not be to *determine* a person's guilt before God (this is not going to be their 'day in court'), no the purpose of the Great White Throne Judgment will be to determine—the degree of punishment each guilty person will endure in hell (Matt.11:20-24; Luke 12:47-48).

God doesn't send people to hell for the wicked things they have done any more than He brings people to heaven for the good things they have done.

Whether a person winds up spending eternity in heaven or in hell depends on whether or not they received or rejected Jesus Christ as their Savior while on the earth.

These people are going to hell not for the wicked things they have done—but for rejecting Christ as their Savior.

But notice they are judged *according to their works* (v.13b)—this is because their works (evil deeds) will be used by God to determine their *degree of punishment* in hell.

Just as a Christian's good works done for the Lord will determine their *degree of reward* in heaven.

Most sinners think they're "good people", not perfect mind you, but certainly good enough to get them into heaven when they die.

They are harboring under a grave misconception—they're confident that their good deeds outweigh their bad deeds and so they believe on the Day of Judgment God will certainly let them into heaven.

So, God gives them what they want—they will stand before Him clothed in the filthy rags of self-righteousness (Isa.64:6) and He will judge them according to their works (Rev.20:13).

There is a third book mentioned in Revelation 20—

### **c. The Book of Life**

#### **Revelation 20:12 (NKJV)**

<sup>12</sup> And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book of Life*...

#### **Revelation 20:15 (NKJV)**

<sup>15</sup> And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

The Book of Life is the official registry of heaven—which corresponds to the registry of citizens kept by ancient cities.

You see back then whenever a child was born their name was written in the official registry of that city which meant they were recognized as an official citizen of that town.

That was important because it guaranteed them all the rights and privileges of citizenship.

Now that's different from those who God, in His foreknowledge, knew from eternity past, all those who would receive Jesus as Lord and Savior during their life and as such—their names were written in His Book of Life from the foundation of the world! (Eph. 1:4; Rev.13:8)

And so, after the Righteous Judge of the universe, Jesus Christ, assigns to each unbeliever who stands before Him at the Great White Throne Judgment their personal sentence for crimes committed against God Almighty, then and finally we see—

## 5. The Sentence is Carried Out

### **Revelation 20:14-15 (NKJV)**

<sup>14</sup> Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. <sup>15</sup> And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire [hell].

Scientist and devout Christian Henry Morris—

*“All of these specifications seem to point to the likelihood (though we cannot be certain at this time) that “Hell” (Greek—gehenna) also called the “Lake of Fire” will be located on some far distant star. A star, after all, is precisely that—“a lake of fire”. There are indeed, stars and galaxies that, although “burning”, do not give off light in the visible part of the spectrum, so that they consist of both “fire” and “cloudy darkness.” One might even suggest a “black hole”, if and when such objects are actually proven to exist, would fit the description.”*

When it comes to the judgment of God upon guilty sinners understand that—there will be no plea bargaining and no appeals will be allowed for this is the Supreme Court of the Universe and—all verdicts are final and forever!

What will you choose today?—**The Great White Stone** or **The Great White Throne?**

### **Revelation 2:17 (NLT2)**

<sup>17</sup> “Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what he is saying to the churches. To everyone who is victorious I will give some of the manna that has been hidden away in heaven. And I will give to each one a **white stone**, and on the stone will be engraved a new name that no one understands except the one who receives it. (Comment)

The writer to the Hebrews elaborates on the Great White Throne Judgment for all those who reject Jesus as their Savior—

**Hebrews 10:26-27, 31 (NLT2)**

<sup>26</sup> Dear friends, if we deliberately continue sinning after we have received knowledge of the truth, there is no longer any sacrifice that will cover these sins. <sup>27</sup> There is only the terrible expectation of God's judgment and the raging fire that will consume his enemies...<sup>31</sup> It is a terrible [terrifying] thing to fall into the hands of the living God [a part from Jesus Christ].

*“Today is the day of salvation, if you hear His voice do not harden your hearts...”*

Don't put off making a decision to receive Jesus as your Lord and Savior to another day—that day may never come—*“Our life is like a vapor—here today and gone tomorrow...”*