

Mastering the Basics
Lesson 15

The Doctrine of Christ: Eternal Judgment

The word “judgment” is “krima” in the Greek and simply means “a decision either for or against, the sentence pronounced, a verdict.” Both the Old Testament and New Testament state that at the end of this age Jesus the Messiah King will return, a resurrection of all people will take place and a judgment will take place resulting in everlasting life for some and everlasting punishment for others (Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29; Matthew 25:34, 46; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10). The phrase “Day of the Lord” is synonymous with these events (1 Thessalonians 5:2-10; 2 Peter 3:10-13; Matthew 3:7).

There are two views as to the final judgment and destination of the wicked, while the righteous [those that have repented] go into everlasting life (Matthew 25:46).

The first view and the most popular is that of *everlasting punishing* of the wicked. Theologians refer to this view as the “traditionalist” view. This view signifies the understanding that hell will involve the unending conscious torment of the wicked who are immortal, and will suffer the torments of hell forever. Some scriptures that may support this position are: Luke 16:19-31; Matthew 5:22; 13:41-43; 18:8-9; 25:41; Mark 3:29; 9:43-48; Jude 7.

The second view is the view of *everlasting punishment*, also known as the “conditionalist” view. In this view “the wicked will suffer conscious punishment precisely measured by divine justice but that they finally will perish in hell so as to become totally extinct forever” [also referred to as the “second death”] (Rev. 20:14). Let it not be supposed that the “conditionalist” deny the “torment” of the wicked (Revelation 14:11; 18:7, 10, 15), far from it, they say there will be conscious suffering, mental and physical, of a very terrible kind, but it will END in “the second death.” As one “conditionalist” states, “*There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth’ (Mat. 25:30). ‘Many stripes’ or ‘few stripes’ will be proportioned to degrees of wickedness. As to Judas, Christ said, ‘It had been good for that man if he had not been born’ (Matt. 26:24). Many will realize the dreadfulness of ‘everlasting punishment’ when Christ says to them, ‘Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity’ (Luke 13:27). And he added, when speaking of this day of judgment, ‘There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth when ye shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and ye yourselves thrust out.’” [Hell and the Destiny of the Wicked, pgs. 2-3]. Some scriptures that may support this position are: Romans 6:23; Psalm 145:20; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9; Matthew 10:28; 1 Timothy 6:15-16).*

“Traditionalists and conditionalists may strike hands in agreement concerning the Word of God, but they immediately draw swords when they begin to apply it to hell. The wicked go into *eternal punishment*. Does that refer to the *act of retribution* or to its *effect*? Which is eternal, the *punishing* or the *punishment*?” [The Fire that Consumes, Edward William Fudge, pgs. 43-44]. Selah!

Questions

1. Read Matthew 3:7. In John the Baptist preaching, he warned others of: a. a bad economy to come. b. a famine to come. c. the wrath to come.
2. Read Acts 24:24-25. When the Apostle Paul was witnessing to Felix and his wife Drusilla concerning the Christian faith, he warned them of: a. bad food at the next town. b. devalue of the American dollar. c. a judgment to come.
3. Read Acts 17:30-31. God has commanded all people every where to repent, because: a. it's a good idea. b. it's the right thing to do. c. He has set a day when the entire human race will be judged.
4. Read Romans 5:9. The only thing that can save us from the wrath to come is: a. prayer & fasting. b. attending church. c. paying tithes. d. Jesus & His shed blood.
5. Read Matthew 25:34. On the "Day of the LORD," when Jesus returns, the true believers will inherit: a. the land of Palestine. b. a lot of money. c. the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world.
6. Read Matthew 25:41,46; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9. On the "Day of the LORD," when Jesus returns, the wicked unbelievers will receive: a. free beers for all their friends. b. asbestos suits tailored just for them. c. everlasting fire, that is, everlasting punishment from God's presence.
7. Read Matthew 25:31-33; 46. When Christ returns with all His holy angels, His judgment will result in: a. good times & bad times. b. the national debt being paid. c. who will be the next president. d. everlasting life for some & everlasting punishment for others.
8. Read Luke 16:19-31. According to the "traditionalist" view, the everlasting punishment of the wicked will be: a. having to live eternally with all their old friends. b. living forever with their ex-wife. c. being tormented in a flame.
9. Read 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10. According to the "conditionalist" view, the everlasting punishment of the wicked will be: a. torment in fire. b. losing all their earthly possessions. c. everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord.
10. Read 1 Timothy 6:14-16; 1:16-17. The following questions are not to persuade you to believe a certain way, but only for your consideration to think through the issues in question. Who only has "immortality?" a. all of mankind. b. Judas Iscariot. c. God & our Lord Jesus Christ. Read 2 Timothy 1:10-11. What is offered through the gospel? a. more money than you could ever use. b. no problems in this present life. c. life & immortality.

Scriptures to use with Questions

1. **Read Matthew 3:7.** [7] But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?
2. **Read Acts 24:24-25.** [24] And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. [25] And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.
3. **Read Acts 17:30-31.** [30] And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: [31] Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.
4. **Read Romans 5:9.** [9] Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.
5. **Read Matthew 25:34.** [34] Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:
6. **Read Matthew 25:41,46; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9. Matthew 25:** [41] Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: [46] And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal. **2 Thessalonians 1:** [8] In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: [9] Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;
7. **Read Matthew 25:31-33; 46.** [31] When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: [32] And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: [33] And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. [46] And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.
8. **Read Luke 16:19-31.** [19] There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: [20] And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, [21] And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. [22] And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; [23] And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his

bosom. [24] And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. [25] But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. [26] And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. [27] Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: [28] For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. [29] Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. [30] And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. [31] And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

9. **Read 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10.** [7] And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, [8] In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: [9] Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; [10] When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

10. **Read 1 Timothy 6:14-16; 1:16-17. Read 2 Timothy 1:10-11. 1 Timothy 6:** [14] That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: [15] Which in his times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; [16] Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen. **1 Timothy 1:** [16] Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. [17] Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen. **2 Timothy 1:** [10] But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: [11] Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

Answer Key – Lesson 15 The Doctrine of Christ: Eternal Judgment

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Note: The Greek words for "immortality" means "deathlessness and unending existence" [Strong's Concordance, numbers 110 & 861 in its' Greek Lexicon]. The difference between the "traditionalist" and the "conditionalist" views, is that the "traditionalists" believe that the soul is immortal, that is, it can never cease to exist. The "conditionalist" believe that only God is immortal and immortality is offered only through the gospel and put on through the resurrection of the just (John 5:28-29; 1 Corinthians 15:53).