

The Bible speaks of a "Judgment Day" which will follow this life. Hebrews 9:27 says, "... it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment." The Apostle Paul gave fair warning in II Corinthians 5:10. He wrote, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." In the mind of God, that day has already been scheduled and appointed, for Paul said, "... He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness ..." (Acts 17:31).

It is usually a frightening thing to be brought under careful scrutiny. Whether it is a test in school, a driving test, or a job interview, most people are nervous about being examined. Certainly, standing before God in the last day should be no exception. The best way to keep from being frightened by examinations is to be prepared for them. If we only knew what God was looking for in our lives, we could prepare ourselves for His judgment. Thankfully, Jesus has revealed to us the standard of judgment to which we shall be measured. In John 12:48 Jesus said, "He who rejects Me, and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day." If we want to be prepared for the judgment of God, we **MUST** become a disciple of Jesus. This means we will follow His example for life (and no one else's); we will obey the doctrine He taught (and none other).

Jesus said, "... the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day." We can have only **ONE** source of guidance for our spiritual lives. We will be judged by only one criterion: The Word of Christ. We will **not** be judged by **our own feelings**. Can you imagine standing before God and saying, "Well, Lord, I know that Jesus taught this ... but I felt that it would be O.K. to do something else"? How do you think this reasoning will be received by the Father? We will **not** be judged by **our own personal preferences**. I may prefer to do something other than what Jesus taught, but my preferences will not be the standard of judgment. Can you imagine saying to God, "Yes, I know that Jesus taught that things should be done this way, by **in my opinion**, it was all right to do it another way"? You see, our own feelings, preferences, and opinions will make no difference in the day of judgment, for we shall be judged solely by the Word of Christ.

It does not make one bit of difference what we may have learned from some **pastor**, or **preacher**, or **teacher**. They will not judge us in the last day. We must carefully examine the things that are taught by religious leaders and make sure they are teaching what Jesus taught. Only Jesus has been designated as God's spokesman for these last days; only Jesus is the head of the church; we are to listen to Jesus alone. It does not matter what **friends** may say or what **church conferences** may dictate, for we will not be judged by them. Teachings sent out from **church headquarters** and rulings handed down from **church councils** are not the standard for God's judgment. We will be judged only by the word of Christ, **not** by **creed books**, not by **catechisms**, not by **church manuals**. We will be judged by Christ alone; **not** by **parents**, **not** by **family**, **not** by **friends**.

Whatever we hear from any of these other sources **MUST** be compared to the Word of Christ. Jesus has all authority in things pertaining to God. And His Word will be the only standard for judgment. You cannot stand behind the error of someone else's teaching and plead ignorance. Paul said, "... having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent" (Acts 17:30). Jesus said, "... if a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit" (Matthew 15:14). You alone are responsible for searching out the truth and obeying the Word of the Lord.

1. "... it is appointed for men to _____ once and after this comes _____." (Heb 9:27)
 "For we must all appear before the _____ of Christ" (II Cor 5:10)
 "... He has fixed a day in which He will _____ the _____" (Acts 17:31)
2. Agree/Disagree: The best way to keep from being frightened by examinations is to be prepared for them.
3. According to John 12:48, what standard of authority will judge us at the last day?
4. Why are "feelings" and "opinions" not a safe guide for conduct?
5. On the day you stand before Christ in judgment, which will give you greater assurance:
 - a. I worshipped and behaved in the way that I preferred.
 - b. I worshipped and behaved in the way that Christ commanded.
6. From the following list of forces which influence your life, place a check beside the ones whose word will judge you at the last day (John 12:48):

<input type="checkbox"/> pastor	<input type="checkbox"/> preacher	<input type="checkbox"/> teacher
<input type="checkbox"/> church conference	<input type="checkbox"/> church council	<input type="checkbox"/> church headquarters
<input type="checkbox"/> catechism book	<input type="checkbox"/> creed book	<input type="checkbox"/> church manual
<input type="checkbox"/> family	<input type="checkbox"/> Christ	<input type="checkbox"/> friends
7. If we are taught religious error, then practice religious error, will we be excused by God? (Acts 17:30; Matt 15:14)
8. True or False: Whatever we learn about the Word of God should be verified from the Word of God.
9. Who will God hold responsible for searching out the truth & obeying the Word of the Lord?