**“GOOD NEWS IN THE JUDGMENT!”**

**LAST DAY SERIES #4, LA SIERRA SPANISH CHURCH, 4/14/20**

**INTRO.** A. **CEMETERY—**Old story, two old homeless guys were in an old cemetery, picking up acorns, Dividing them up—“One for you, one for me.” In the dark, a boy was riding his bike by, heard voices, “One for you, one for me”—grabbed an old man going by, “Jesus and Satan are dividing up the souls!” Both listened—“One for you, one for me.” Then heard one say—**“OK, that’s all of them, now let’s get those two nuts by the fence and we’re done!”** They say the old man beat the boy riding his bike into town! Most of us have grown up, scared to death of the FINAL JUDGMENT. God calls out your name, you have to stand up in front of this so-called OT God—some angel reads out loud everything bad you’ve ever done—and God decides—in or out. B. **LADY—**Told you last night, about the lady, choir director, standing in front of the whole school, Dress stuck into her underwear! That’s how most of us have grown up with this Final Judgment—standing naked before the universe.

 C. And almost every **WORLD RELIGION** has some version of this—standing before the gods, Egyptians weighed the heart, Muslims have to cross over hell walking on this very thin bridge. Buddhism, Karma, Reincarnation, Try to get merit, so can come back better off than you are now. My old joke, **5** guys get to heaven, Peter says, Can I help you, yes, we’re from Brooklyn NY, we died together, want to come in together. I don’t think we have ever had anybody from Brooklyn come before, have to ask God. But before he can come back, the gates are gone! There’s 100 more jokes about St. Peter and the gates—a **JUDGMENT. SURVIVOR, CHOPPED, DANCING, DIVING, GYMNASTICS—you have to stand in front of somebody, judges you. Decide if you’re good enough.**

**I. THE TRADITIONAL VIEW:** A. Here’s what I grew up with. A man named **WILLIAM MILLER,** a farmer in NY, studying the Bible verse by verse, got to Daniel 8, **DANIEL 8:13 “ ‘Unto two thousand three hundred days, then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.’”** He got excited, the only thing he could think of that needed to be cleansed was this messed-up world. Did the math, came up with **1844, figured out Jesus was coming in 19 years!** **October 22,** 1844—people sat on the rocks, waiting, sure, in heaven that night. Didn’t come. Says, Wept and wept until the day dawned.

 B. **Old Joke—**Young lady went to go ice fishing. Cut a hole in the ice, heard a voice, “There are no fish under the ice.” Moves over a little, cuts another hole, “There are no fish under the ice. Finally she looked up and said, “Is that you, Lord?” “**No, this is the ice rink manager!”** Have to feel pretty stupid. How that small group must have felt. Nothing happened. Not in heaven. No fish under the ice.

 C. Most of the people left. A small group kept studying, finally figured out—Maybe it wasn’t this earth, maybe it was the **heavenly sanctuary.** In the OT, you sinned, you brought a lamb, you confessed your sins on the head of the Lamb, you killed the lamb, the priest carried the blood into the Holy Place, then once a year they cleansed the whole sanctuary on the Day of Atonement—so we confess our sins, transfer them to Christ, Christ took our sins with His blood into heaven, angels write our sins down in these big books, now our sins are defiling the Most Holy Place in heaven. So at the end of the world God has to have a Day of Atonement cleanse the sanctuary in heaven.

 D. They read the verse that says, **DANIEL 7:13 “Behold, the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days.”** So in 1844 Christ moved from one room to the Most Holy Place, where God the Father has His throne, the books were opened, started the **Investigative Judgment**, deciding who would be saved or lost. I grew up—Your name could up at any time, and if your record wasn’t perfect that minute—lost—God erase your name out of the Lamb’s Book of Life. Scared to death. Tried to plan, if feel off a building, remember to ask God to forgive all my sins before hit the ground!

**II. IS THE JUDGMENT SUPPOSED TO CREATE FEAR?** A. I grew up with this: **1 CORINTHIANS 5:10 “We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.” 1 CORINTHIANS 4:5 “He will bring to light everything hidden in darkness.” Maybe it’s going to be like DANIEL 5, Belshazzar** sitting there in a banquet, drinking from the cups stolen from the Temple, all of a sudden there is a hand writing on the wall, they’re all scared to death, somebody says, “Call for Daniel,” Daniel comes walking in, Reads the handwriting on the wall—**Tonight you have been judged and found wanting.” That very night they’re all killed.** Maybe each of us going to have our own “handwriting on the wall,” angel read your sins, stuff you hoped nobody would ever know, if not perfect, going to hell. Town down on the beach, put up cameras on the **MAIN STREET, Adventist guy is the mayor. Everybody started acting good—somebody’s watching! CHINA now everybody has an APP,** you want to go anywhere, they get to watch you, check your temperature, know who you’ve been with, everything. Is that what this is?

 B. But the Bible also says, “**LUKE 2:10-12 “’Be not afraid. No Fear. For we have good news of great joy for ALL the people. Today a Savior is born.’” JOHN 14:1 “’Let not your hearts be troubled.’” JOHN 8:10-11 “’Neither do I condemn you.’” ROMANS 8:1 “There is therefore no more condemnation.” 1 JOHN 4:18 “Perfect love casts out fear.”**

 1. **MIRACLE ON ICE—**In 1980, our US hockey team had to play the Russians. Our team was only college kids back then, Russians had professionals. As we watched the game, you sit on the edge of your seats, hands are sweating—could our kids actually do it?! They win, Al Michaels, “**Do you believe in miracles?”** That night—they play it again. Nobody sits on the edge of their seats any more. Grab some popcorn, sit back. You know this is going to be good! With the Judgment, there is no more fear.

Jesus shouted, “It is finished.” It’s over.

 2. You look through the book of **DANIEL—DANIEL 1,** They don’t eat the king’s food, they’re 10x smarter. No fear. **DANIEL 2,** they’re all going to be killed, like Gary said, Daniel goes to sleep, walks into the king, tells him, no fear. **DANIEL 3**, fiery furnace, our God is able to deliver us from your fire—but even if he does not, we want you to know, we will NEVER bow down to your image. No fear. **DANIEL 4,** Daniel’s not afraid to tell the king, going to eat grass for 7 years. **DANIEL 5,** Daniels not afraid to walk and read the handwriting on the wall. **DANIEL 6,** Daniel’s not afraid of the lions’ den. **THE WHOLE POINT OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL IS NO FEAR!** But somehow when we got to Daniel 7, we came up with a doctrine that scared us all to death. How did we do that?

 **C. REVELATION 14:6 “I saw an angel, having the everlasting gospel…for the hour of His judgment is come.”** Gospel stands for Good news. So whatever we believe about the Judgment—has to be **GOOD NEWS**. 1**jOHN 4:17 “So that we will have confidence on the day of Judgment.”**

**III. ANCHORPOINTS: A. #1—It has to be GOOD NEWS. B. #2—It cannot destroy our assurance in Christ.**  I first learned about assurance, 18 years old, **1 JOHN 5:13 “That you may KNOW** you have eternal life.” Have not worried about that for 44 years. That’s in a lockbox, not giving that up. **MICHAEL DOUGLAS—**told a story, in Las Vegas, in the back room, where the rich gamblers were, big man, playing blackjack, $100,000 a hand! Asked a waitress to get him a Diet Coke. Asked her—Have a mortgage? Yes. How much do you still owe? $40,000. Here, hands her a chip, $40,000! Pays off her house! Goes home that night—crawls into bed, whispers—The House is ours! Hasn’t gone to the bank yet. But she has the chip! We’re not there yet, but we have the Chip. **“You may KNOW you have eternal life.”**

 C. #3—**Salvation is by grace, and not by works.** God does not start with grace, and then in the Final Judgment switch to works. The only question is always, are you **WITH JESUS?** D. #4—**The Judgment is not for God to learn who to save.** I grew up, Judgment was for God, figure out who was on the List. No, **2 TIMOTHY 2:19 “The Lord knows who are His.”** **E. #5—The Judgment does not take time.** I grew up, that’s what we’re waiting for, for God to finish the Judgment. No, God is not sitting up in heaven listening to angels reading records all day and night, trying to get them to read faster. It’s metaphor! F. #6—**The idea of the Judgment of the Living,** your name can come up at any time, just cannot be right. No one can be judged all of a sudden while still living, might change their mind later. No one will EVER be lost if there is any chance they might change their mind later. God does not close the Door until everybody has made their final, irreversible decision.

 G. **#7—The idea that Jesus was apart from the Father for 1800 years is just wrong.** They are one, **JOHN 10:30 “’I and the Father are One.’” H. #8—Sins are forgiven in one stage, not two.** I grew up, when you ask God to forgive you, He marked “pardon” by your sins, but they weren’t really gone until this Final Judgment, and if you don’t pass the judgment, you could burn longer for all those sins that you thought were forgiven. No, the moment you ask for forgiveness, they are gone, as far as the East is from the west, bottom of the ocean,  **HEBREWS 9:28 “Sacrificed once and for all to take sins away.”**

 **I. #9—After the Cross, there is nothing more that has to be done to let you go back to God.** Don’t have to wait for 1844 or for anything else to happen. **HEBREWS 4:16 “Let us approach the throne of grace with confidence so that we may receive mercy and find grace.” HEBREWS 10:18-22 “We have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus…with full assurance.”**

**IV. JUDGMENT. A. So what can we say for sure?** A. **Judgment is first of all not about us—but About God.** You hate it when somebody says something wrong, something terrible about you. So does God! Remember, most of us grew up, seeing God inside, we are outside banging on the door, trying to convince Him we are good enough for Him to let us in. No–**REVELATION 3:20 “’Behold, I stand at the door and knock—if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in.’”** We are inside, **God** is outside, knocking on the door, trying to convince us **HE** is good enough for us to let **Him** in. **REVELATION 14:7 “For the hour of His judgment has come.”**  **ROMANS 3:4 “You must win your case when you are being tried” (TEV)**

 **B.** **Judgment Is Against Satan, Little Horn.** The Judgment in Daniel 7 is not about you and me—it’s a Judgment against the Little Horn. If Little Horn is speaking against God **DANIEL 7:25 “He will speak great words against the Most High.**”–then, if the Judgment is in favor of God, then it is against the Little Horn The good news of the Judgment is that you will not always be under the power of the demons, Satan, **VIRUSES,** Little Horns, Babylons, Saddam Husseins, cancer, death, divorce, miserable bosses, IRS, whoever. Someday there will be a Judgment, God will make everything right.

 C. **Judgment is Always For You.** Why for the Jews–Judgment was always good news. Why the whole crowd cheered on the Day of Atonement—sins were gone! Never had to worry about them ever again. **DANIEL 7:22 “The Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment in favor of the saints of the Most High,”** To go back to the **ESTHER** story from Friday night, Esther had to wonder, whether the king would extend the scepter to her. We don’t have to worry. Jesus has already settled it once and for all. He says, **REVELATION 3:8 “’Behold, I have set before you an open door that no one can close.”**

 **1.** Judge was not supposed to be neutral–for you, for the poor. David, Psalms--always begging for judgment. 2. Only one question in the Judgment you have to worry about. Are you with Jesus? **1 JOHN 5:12 “He who has the Son has life—who does not have the Son does not have life.”**

**Two STORIES: HYBELS—**San Diego, sailing race—Aircraft carrier came in. Race was over—half the boats went left, half went right. Aircraft carrier didn’t decide who went where—people decided. Carrier was they had to decide about. Jesus doesn’t decide who goes where—you decide if you want to be with Jesus or not! **TYNER—WWII,** German boy got captured, in US camp, friends with tall black American soldier, one day they put everybody in 2 lines, friend told him to get in the other line, the first line got sent to Russia, all died, his line went to America, when war was over stayed here, became an Adventist, worked for the church. Whole life depended—getting into right line, friends with the right person.

 **D. WORKS–**what about verses–“bring every work into judgment”? They are never the basis for salvation in the Judgment--“Not of works.” Our works are to bring honor to God--**MATTHEW 5:16 “Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”**

 E. **Summary of Judgment–Dr. Moskala,** Dean of the Seminary. **7 steps of Judgment—**

**#1—OT,** God used disasters—like the flood—to warn people about what would happen in the Last Days. So helpful. Warn you ahead of time. For God, or for you? For you #2—**CROSS—**That’s what happens with sin—sin will kill you. **SIN IS LETHAL**. For God, or for you? **#3**—**CONVERSION**—Second you accept Christ, God judges you, puts you on the LIST, AS IF you’re sitting at the right hand of God. **JOHN 5:24 “Whoever believes in Me has transferred from death to life.” #4—PRE-ADVENT JUDGMENT.** God shows the world—he has a right to save these people. He said, if you eat of the Tree you shall surely die, Satan says, I got them to eat, they’re mine—But God forgives—God has to show the universe-- **ROMANS 3:25-26 “God did this to demonstrate His justice, just and the justifier.” For God to learn something, or for us? Us. #5 Second Coming,** comes to get us. For God or for us? For us! **#6**—**Millennium, 1000 years—**answering every question. **Man who killed my father’s there—why is he here, God? Look at books. Changed. Amazing person. OK. For God to judge us, or for us to judge God? #7—Great White Throne** Judgment in heaven, every being who has ever lived, God shows video, Cross, **PHILIPPIANS 2:9-11 “Every knee will bow, every tongue confess, Jesus is Lord.”** For God to judge us, or for us to judge God? **HUGE POINT**—Every single one of the Judgments **not us trying to convince God about us—they are all God trying to convince us about HIM**! **God doesn’t need a Judgment to know who to save. He knows. He already said YES to all of you thousands of years ago. Has a judgment to get us to say YES about Him.**

**APPEAL:** **GOAT--**When they had their Day of Atonement, all the people would stand there. You could never skip it. Kill one goat, go into the MHP, priest comes out, takes another goat, puts all the sins on that last goat, lead it out into the wilderness—as soon as they couldn’t see that goat anymore—whole crowd stand and cheer! The goat has left the building! Sins are gone. God got rid of them. Never had to worry about those sins any more.