

Sunday, May 9, 2010—Clear and Present Danger: The Great White Throne and the Second Death

Review/Introduction

- In last week's message we studied the issue of *Eternal Punishment and the Justice of God*. In doing so we answered six common objections to the doctrine of eternal judgment. In addition we considered four theological reasons why eternal punishment is necessary.
- Mark 9:45—over the past couple of weeks many of you have asked me what the Bible means when it speaks about “their worm dieth not?”
- In this morning's message titled, *The Great White Throne and the Second Death* we are going to seek to answer your questions.
- In our attempt to do so we are going to be considering three main points:
 - What is the Great White Throne and who will be present there?
 - Establish that there are degrees of Eternal Punishment.
 - Answer the question what is the Second Death.

What is the Great White Throne?

- Revelation 20:4-5—speaks of two groups of dead people.
 - Verse 4—those that are resurrected to live and reign with Christ 1,000 years.
 - Verse 5—those who are not going to be resurrected until after the 1,000 year reign of Christ is finished.
- Revelation 20:6—those in verse 4 take part in what is called the First Resurrection.
 - The Second Death has no power over those who are resurrected here.
 - Exodus 19:6—this is when Israel's prophetic hope of being a kingdom of priests and holy nation is finally realized.
 - Matthew 19:27-28—Peter and rest of the apostles along with the rest of believing Israel will be resurrected to rule with Christ in the kingdom.
- Revelation 20:7-10—these verses occur after Christ's 1,000 year reign is over.
 - Verse 3—said that Satan would be bound for 1,000 years.
 - Verse 10—Satan is taken and immediately thrown into the Lake of Fire
- Revelation 20:11-12—the rest of the death referred to in verse 5 will be resurrected here to stand before God at the Great White Throne.
 - The Book = Book of Life

- The Books = written account of their entire life. Based upon the works recorded in the books the lost will be finally judged and eternal sentences meted out.

Levels of Suffering in Eternity

- Matthew 10:15—“more tolerable” for Sodom and Gomorrha
- Genesis 19:24-28—destroyed the city instantly with fire and brimstone
- Matthew 11:20-24, Luke 10:10-15—“more tolerable” for Tyre and Zidon
 - Isaiah 23:1-18—Tyre is laid waste
 - Amos 1:9-10—will not turn away punishment from Tyrus, Fire on the wall of Tyrus which shall devour the places thereof.
- Matthew 23:14, Mark 12:40, Luke 20:47—greater damnation
 - Greater—over and above, more than is necessary, supersede
 - Something further, much more
 - Ephesians 3:20—exceeding abundantly
 - I Corinthians 12:23—more abundant
- It is clear when the lost are judged a great damnation or punishment is reserved for some. So how does it work?
- Revelation 20:11-15—the dead are judged out the books according to their works.
 - Book of Life—if your name is not written in the Book of Life a second set of books is consulted that contains a record their works and life.
 - From this second set of books eternal sentences are meted out based upon their works.
- While God’s justice can not allow sin to go unpunished, he is also just in how punishments are handed out. The nice lady down the street who has never stole, or killed anyone will not be given the same eternal sentence as Hitler, Stalin, or the like.
- People will be judged based upon the amount of light they were given. Even the native in the middle of the jungle has been given enough so that they are without excuse.
- People with greater light or authority will be judged accordingly.
- Consequently, there must be degrees of eternal punishment.
- Revelation 20:13-15—all the inhabitants of Hell will be cast into the Lake of Fire at the Great White Throne judgment.

What is the Second Death?

- The phrase Second Death is mentioned 4 times in the Bible all of which are found in the book of Revelation.
 - Revelation 2:11
 - Revelation 20:6, 14
 - Revelation 21:8—clearly the Lake of Fire is the second death (eternal separation from God).
- There is a strong indication in Scripture that the second death is more than just eternal separation from God.
- Romans 1:23—sin has a degenerative quality to it.
- Revelation 9—these angels have degenerated as a result of their suffering.
- Job 25:6—man is a worm according to this verse.
- Isaiah 66:24—second coming passage about Hell during the millennium.
- Mark 9:45—there is a degenerative process in the second death which burns its recipients down to their bases most fundamental level.
- Psalm 22:1, 7-18—what is this passage a prophetic description of? Christ on the cross.
- Psalm 22:6—what does the person on this cross call himself as he hangs upon it? A worm.
- The indication from the verses is that Jesus Christ suffered the second death in his soul as he hung upon the cross.
- John 3:14
- Galatians 3:13
- II Corinthians 5:21—upon the cross Jesus Christ was made sin for us and suffered the wrath of almighty God against sin for us up to and including suffering our second death in his soul.
- This is why God the father turned his back on him.
- In the second death people are totally abandoned by God to the degenerative effects of sin. So much so that they are ultimately reduced to the most basic of form of complex life. While there is not a loss of consciousness or personal identity there is a loss personal identification in a physical sense.