

He Hath Appointed a Day

by Paris Reidhead

The sermon emphasizes the importance of living a life motivated by the glory of Jesus Christ, and warns against the dangers of wrong motive and hypocrisy.

Duration: 34:28

Scripture: John 5:22, Romans 14:12, Revelation 20:11

Topics: "Judgment Day"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the personal responsibility of both the speaker and the listener when it comes to the preaching of the word of God. The speaker acknowledges that they will be held accountable for what they say and their motives behind it when they stand before the judgment seat of Christ. The preacher also highlights the responsibility of the listeners to actively engage with the word of God and accept the spiritual nourishment provided by their church community. The sermon focuses on the concept of judgment, specifically the judgment of believers, and emphasizes the importance of performing good works with the right motives. The preacher references biblical passages such as John 5:22 and Acts 17 to support these teachings.

Transcript

You recognize that there is a great sense of personal responsibility. One is going to stand before the judgment seat of Christ and give an account of what has been said and the motives for its being said. One recognizes also that there is great responsibility on the part of the hearers for that which has been said, that which they have heard, that which they might have heard, had they accepted the responsibility of that the Lord gives to those whom he binds to a body for their spiritual development and nourishment.

Now, the end product of this spiritual inventory has been to approach you this Lord's Day morning with a sense of necessity laid upon me, I believe, by the Lord of reviewing again those truths that we have in the Word concerning judgment, that is, the judgment of the believer. We are aware that there will be the resurrection of the wicked dead, that they will stand before the great white throne and give an account of the deeds they have done. Their names will be found not written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

They will consent that God's judgment is just and that he could have under the when the light of their character and the light of their use of their opportunities have done nothing more than he did and that they fully deserve the condemnation that he brings. Now, this is a facet of truth long neglected, but I am convinced beyond any question that in that day when the final judgment is concluded that all that have

breath will praise the Lord and even those that are damned will recognize that God could have done nothing other than he did in the light of his character and theirs. We realize, therefore, it is appointed unto man to die and after death the judgment.

We recognize that this does definitely pertain to those who know not our Lord Jesus. And so should I be speaking to some now that have not the assurance of sins forgiven, then I would hasten to enforce upon your mind this truth that God has set in your path Jesus Christ. He is the inescapable Christ, the unavoidable Christ.

You must either meet him now and bend before him now and fall upon him as the stone cut out of the mountain without hands and in the fall be broken and live in the breaking or avoid him and detour this encounter with Christ now to go on in your sin and then to die and in that hour to have the inescapable meeting with him. For he has ordained that every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that he is Lord. This means those who will not do it of their own choice now must do it of divine imperative and necessity then.

Now remember, God does not allow anyone the choice of meeting Christ and of bowing before Christ. This he has committed to the Son. He has said they will.

He just allows men to choose when they will meet him, when they will bow. They bow of choice and live or they bow of duress and necessity and die, but meet him they must. This is a clear teaching of the word of God.

But our concern this morning is the judgment as it relates to us as the children of God and the servants of God. Our Lord Jesus speaking in John chapter 5 said, the Father judgeth no man but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. This is the basic principle of the word of God.

He that was judged by man shall in turn judge man. John chapter 5 and verse 22 joins itself to Acts chapter 16, excuse me, Acts chapter 17 where you have the testimony of the Apostle Paul concerning this matter of judgment. And the times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent 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.

And Paul writing to the church at Rome says that all men shall be judged by Jesus Christ according to his gospel. Remember that all of the attributes of the triune God are now resident in the person of Christ. Our Lord's prayer, glorify thou me with the glory I had with thee before the world began, includes the giving to him, the man Christ Jesus, the right to exercise all of the attributes of the eternal Godhead.

And so the miracle of the ascension of Christ is not that a body was taken to heaven, but that the man Christ Jesus in that body is exercising all of the infinite attributes of the eternal God. All wisdom, all justice, all holiness, all righteousness, all that God is, Jesus Christ is. He has been glorified with the glory that he had with his father before the world began.

That's a man, Christ Jesus, in his resurrection body. And when John saw that man, the glorified God-man, the one upon whose bosom he had leaned, the one to whom he came in familiarity that was allowed to him and James and Peter only of all men that walked, when he saw him fifty-five or sixty years after the resurrection, he saw all of the attributes of the eternal God resident in the man Christ Jesus. And this

revelation was so overwhelming that he fell at the feet of Christ as though he were dead.

Now it is this man, not the lowly Nazarene before whom men shall stand, not the one that was led meek as a little lamb or as a sheep to be shorn, the one that is to judge all men and has had all judgment committed unto him is the man Christ Jesus whom the Father has glorified with the glory that he had before the foundation of the world. And all of the attributes of the eternal God are now residing in and manifest through the man Christ Jesus. This is the truth that we must understand.

Lest we should become pallid with Jesus. How true it is that we view him as we wish to view him and usually seek to make God in our own image. How frequently we read the Gospels before the resurrection and from this get our present concept of the living Christ.

But you cannot rightly see him as he is today by reading the Gospels. You see him as he was, as he walked, accepting the limitations of his humanity, identifying himself with you, submitting to being tested and tempted and tried, and then having been found without sin, being made sin for you. You see him as he in your place went to the cross and despised the shame, endured the agony and was willing to pour out his soul, his life unto death that he might redeem you.

You see him thus in the Gospels, but you do not see him as he is in any of the Matthew or Mark or Luke or John or the Acts. You do not see him until the revelator gives to us in revelation, the first chapter, that unveiling that breaks the seal of the silent heavens, that allows us to view Christ as he has been glorified at the right hand of the Father. It is this one with whom we have to do, this one who lived and died and lives again and holds the keys of death and hell.

Now we understand well that when you meet Jesus Christ as he is, God who became flesh and dwelt among us, when you meet him as he is revealed in the Word, God's answer to the sin of a rebellious race, when you come to him and cast yourself at his feet, break before him, fall upon this rock that's cut out of the mountain without hands, and break your will in preference for his and abandon your sovereignty for a glad reception of his sovereignty, when you receive Jesus Christ as the Prince and Savior that God by his right hand has exalted him to be, you are forgiven of all your past sins and your transgressions. We know that this justifying grace of God has the effect of once and for all forever removing from our account all sins of the past. Those sins which we had committed before we met Christ will be remembered against us no more forever.

They will be gone as far as the east is from the west, never more to haunt us or taunt us. They are gone. They are under the blood.

They are removed. But what we sometimes fail to realize is this, that we do not lose our moral responsibility with the reception of Christ. But from the day that you are placed in Christ and are pardoned by him and forgiven of your past sins, from that day you're building upon the rock Christ Jesus, to whom you've come, upon whom you've fallen, and the cleft of which you've been anchored and placed, from that moment you are subject to the discipline of responsibility to the Son.

We speak so frequently of delight at the prospect of the Lord's coming. And he is coming. And with the advent of tomorrow's news we will realize that there's all the more reason for his coming.

For certainly the hearts of men fail them for fear, and it is time for us to look up knowing that the only place for real redemption is from above. But let us realize that on the occasion of his coming, the first event is to

stand in his presence and give an account of the deeds we have done in the body, whether they be good or whether they be bad. Everyone that names the name of Christ will be there.

You are in him, in truth, placed there by the husbandman, truly in Christ. Then the first event on the heavenly calendar is going to be your standing personally before Jesus Christ, to give an account of every deed you've done in the body, whether good or bad, since the day you came into Christ. Now this we must bear in our minds.

This we must see. You say, well, what of the sins that I have committed since I came to know Christ? What of these? Let us not for a moment suppose that this because forgiven shall not be recognized then. This isn't the case at all.

Allow that in your willfulness, in your disobedience or spiritual sloth or stupidity, you have allowed a period of time in which sin has been committed and has not been forsaken and not been confessed. You've named the name of Christ. Can you visualize now alone? The warp is strung over all the period of the years of your life.

There's a time of obedience, a time of faithfulness, a time of submission, and the shuttle of obedience and faithfulness and love and trust is loaded, and it shoots through the warp at every motion of the day, and it leaves there the pattern as it was intended to be. But then there comes that time of disobedience that breaks the thread in the shuttle, and the goes through and through and through and through and back and forth again and again, and always letting the passage of the days be noted in the weaving. What will it mean when your life is unrolled in that day of judgment, though the sin that broke the thread has been forgiven? The break in the pattern of his purpose will be apparent, and the emptiness and futility will be there to mock you and to shame him.

It's not a right thing for a child of God to allow sin in his life. It's not a right thing for a child of God to permit disobedience and unbelief, because in that day when the weaving of your life is released and it's unveiled, there will be the break in pattern and the empty warp. And sometimes that warp, those strands are broken so they can never be repaired to complete the pattern again.

And there's many a person who's gone on thinking that somehow things were the same. They haven't been the same because back there, warp was broken. And though somehow there's been forgiveness and pardon, the pattern of the cloth of the life is going to show it all through the years of eternity.

Sin is a terrible thing. For what are we going to be judged in that day? I think primarily and above all, we're going to be judged for motives. I am convinced that it is motive that gives character.

It's meaning, it is motive which gives conduct its significance. For instance, you're driving on a rainy day. A man steps from the curb in the front of your car.

You put the brakes on, but your tires will not grip the slippery street. And the man collides with your car and he's killed immediately. It is written up as manslaughter or a man has been slaughtered.

Then the evidence begins to come in and the detectives begin to work and they discover that you've been seen at that corner with your car idling day after day and week after week. You've been timing the one that stepped from the curb. You've been expecting that bus at that time and that man to get off that bus.

And then it is soon seen that it wasn't manslaughter at all, but to protect yourself from some disclosure that he might make or blackmail he might be in the position to offer. You had calculatedly timed it in such a way as to know where to put on your brakes and to skid across the intersection and what time. And the only thing you waited for was a rain at the time that the bus arrived.

Now, what has changed this from simply a case of an accidental death to that which is chargeable by murder and punishable by all the sanctions against murder? It is motive. Motive. And when we read in 1 Corinthians the third chapter that we shall have our works tried as by fire, I do not believe that this has reference to sin.

I believe sin is in another category. It has reference to the warp and the wolf as I've tried to describe it. I am now speaking of something else.

I am speaking about good works performed from a wrong motive. And I am saying that in the day that we stand before Jesus Christ, it's not going to be only what we've done, but why we did it. Why we did it.

The same service can be offered properly with the one goal which alone shall be the yardstick by which all conduct shall be measured in that day when we stand before the bima, the judgment seat of Christ. The same service offered from some other motive will be completely rejected. It isn't a question of what as much as it is of why.

Now may I subscribe to you the one motive that I believe alone will make it possible for works to endure the fire of that day. We said at the outset that our Lord Jesus Christ prayed, father, glorify thou me with the glory I had with thee before the world was. I believe that everything that the father and the spirit are doing today, they are doing to answer the prayer of the son.

Glorify thou me. There's only one heavenly motive at the present time, and that's the glory of Jesus Christ, not the salvation of souls. God would rather men be lost than be saved in any way that wouldn't glorify his son.

You say that is true? Yes. Though God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, he will not save them unless they repent. But it's only when they recognize the crimes committed against the son and cast themselves at his feet that they're in the grounds where he can save them.

He'd rather they'd be lost than save them in a way that did dishonor to the son. It's not the salvation of souls that's the primary motivation of heaven. It's the glory of Jesus Christ.

It's the honor of his son. It's the magnifying of his name. It's the exalting of him that is alone is worthy.

This all heaven is committed to, to glorify Jesus Christ. Now I submit to you that when you repent, you are in effect saying, I'm not any longer going to live for my own glory. I'm not going to live for my own praise.

I'm not going to live to please me. I'm going to live for the glory of God. And you only understand the glory of God in Jesus Christ.

So in true repentance, there is a renunciation of self-seeking, self-willing, self-choosing, and self-pleasing. And there's a committal of the will to the pleasing of God. And God can only be pleased in the pleasing of Christ.

Therefore, everything that in that day will endure the test of the scrutiny of God, the fire which penetrates, and not just the tape measure that measures, or the scale that weighs, the fire that penetrates and tests the nature, will be to decide whether or not this was done for that one supreme purpose of glorifying Jesus Christ. Now this has to do with every area of activity. It has to do with the home and the mother tending the baby and caring for the child in the most menial and difficult and unpleasant tasks.

It has to do with the husband working in the office, in the factory, in the shop, or the field. It has to do with the student in school. There has been set down by God one touchstone which shall measure all conduct and influence all activity.

There is one rule which is supremely and sublimely Christian and distinguishes between everything else that is merely religious. That which is religious seeks to please self by serving God. And that which is Christian seeks to glorify Christ by sacrificing self.

Now in that day in which you stand before Him at the judgment seat of Christ, every word, every thought, every action, every good service, every sermon preached, every visit made, every gift bestowed, everything that has been done is going to be tested by one motive. Was this purely for the glory of Jesus Christ? Or was there some reflective purpose in it, that I be seen, I be built up, I be exalted? If there is any of this thing we've called self, self-pleasing, self-gratifying, self-exalting in it, it is as contaminated as the ear of corn our brother Arnold described this morning that was brought to the representative of the State Department there in the Ivory Coast by the woman that had no fingers but was lecherous. I submit to you that my service before you as your pastor for these five years may have been judged by you, but blessed be God I shall stand before you.

Your response may have been judged by me, but you shall not stand before me. We together will stand before Jesus Christ. I will be judged as to whether or not the ministry that has been brought to you has been brought for one purpose and one only, the glory of Jesus Christ.

You will be judged as to whether or not your response and actions and words and deeds in all of the total melee of your life has been only for the glory of Jesus Christ. And in one day, the secrets of men's hearts are going to be made manifest, and then we're going to discover that the Christian life is not complicated, it's not difficult, it's not complex, it's not hard to understand. You say, oh I just wish I knew what to do here, I wish I knew how to behave here.

I refuse to submit to a legalism and say you can't go here, you can't do this, you can't do that, you can't do the other. God has given us one supreme law of love which is sufficient for every exigency of life. Our Lord stated it, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and mind and soul and strengths.

Thy neighbor is thyself. Translated into terms that we better understand it is this, the total purpose of your life in every area is that of pleasing God or of glorifying God. And you seek to glorify God in every relationship with your neighbor.

This forbids so many things. The moment that you seek to glorify God in relationship to him, then prayer is because you want to glorify him and he judges it. Every service, every ministry, all that's offered is for this purpose, in every relationship with people.

Oh, how frequently people sin in motive. How frequently they hear something and misunderstand it and judge the motives. We've spoken so frequently in the past about your absolute lack of right to judge

anyone's motives.

You have no right to do that. You don't know why people do what they do. Only God knows why.

You only know something of what. Dear heart, one day it won't be you judging another, but it'll be Jesus Christ, this one before whom John fell as though he were dead. Using those eyes as the flame of fire to pierce through the words you spoke last yesterday and Friday and last week and your thoughts of tomorrow and your deeds of the past and everything that's flowed out of your life since the day you met Jesus Christ is going to be penetrated by the fire of God's omniscience and it's going to be discovered first whether or not you are Christian at all.

For if you have been posing as a Christian but have not been living for the glory of Christ, then you are a hypocrite and you have absolutely no right to name the name of Christ. You've no right to. The only ones that have any right to be named the name of Christ are those who have fallen before Christ, not those that consent to the facts, the theology.

The devils do that, but they've never fallen. Christians are people that have fallen, that have broken, and they have come to the place where their purpose is to please him. And it's going to be revealed in that day whether you've been Christian in word or in truth.

Some may have to wait until then to be seen. And then every word we've spoken, oh don't you want the warp of your life to carry with it the weaving on the woof that's complete and whole from today on. It's possible, you know, it's possible that you can.

I know that we can't do anything about yesteryear. I know that some of you have had damages wrought by sin that no time, not even God, can change. We recognize that.

But we recognize that he has said that he will restore the years the locusts have eaten. And God in sweet grace will take your life from today on if you're willing to bow before him and bend before him. And he will weave that most beautiful of patterns possible to the praise of the glory of his grace if you'll let him from today on.

Well what do you mean let him? If from today you'll bring every thought and motive and will into the captivity of Christ and the one reason for your being from today on will be the glory of God in Jesus Christ. And you'll seek to glorify him in your home, in your business, with your family, with your friends, with your children. The evidence of sincerity and genuineness in this purpose is that right now, today, you bow and bend and break in any place that you know that sin has marred the pattern.

It's going to be unveiled. It's going to be uncovered. We can't hide.

Oh I plead with you today. Remember God has committed all judgment to the Son. And he's appointed a day in which we must stand before him.

He said we must appear before the judgment seat of Christ. When Tom Hare went back to Ireland a few years ago, Dr. Tozer said to him, Tom what are you going to do preach when you get back to Ireland? He said oh no I'm not going to preach. He said I've been talking too much.

I'm going to have a preview of the judgment seat of Christ. And I'm going to find out about the worst out about myself. And I'm going to deal with it while there's still time enough to do something about it.

And I believe that ought to be the attitude of every one of us this morning. I want to find out the worst about myself and deal with it while there's still time enough to do something about it. Will you? Will you? If you don't, if you carry in your heart unconfessed, unforgiving sin, it won't make any difference what is preached here by Dr. Brown next Lord's Day morning, what I preach in the months to come.

You will have set a ceiling over your own life and there will be no progress until there's brokenness. But if you're willing to meet him, God is willing to make your life count for the greatest possible glory of Christ from today on. Shall we pray? Father of our Lord Jesus, look thou upon us and see us as a company of people about to come before the table.

Thou has said in connection with the table, judge yourselves that you be not judged. For when you are judged, you're chastened of the Lord that you should not be condemned with the world. Oh God, this is the table of thy dear son.

It's not our table, it's his. We're coming to it and we've been speaking now of spiritual inventory and of the necessity of taking stock and evaluating, knowing Lord that the weaving of each day is done and fixed. And even though the sins forgiven, the scarring of the pattern remains.

We know Father that if any go to this table with unconfessed, unforgiven sin or bitterness or strife or anything that grieves thee, they're only drinking judgment and discipline to themselves, sickness to their body and distress to their homes and their families and their loved ones. Thou art a holy God. Oh, protect thy table, Lord.

We cannot. People in this metropolitan area come from all over. We can't protect it, Lord, as we would protect thy table.

Let the fear of men, fear of the risen Christ, a holy, godly confidence that Jesus Christ is all that thou has said he is come into our hearts until Lord, knowing that we must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, we're going to be afraid to have bitterness and strife and sarcasm and criticism and backbiting and lust and dishonesty and all the things that grieve the one whose name is holy come upon us until we shall fear sin and love righteousness, till there shall be a great turning to thee, a great breaking up of the fallow ground of our hearts, till thou canst bless. We ask thee, Lord, now just to let the sense of thy presence continue and settle upon us until as we pick up the bread and hold it, we see the body of thy son, in the cup we see the blood of thy son. He wasn't to save us in our sins, but to save us from our sins.

Grant, Lord, that there shall come a sense of awe, a wonder as we approach the table of the Lord. In his name and for his sake we ask it. Amen.

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