**A Roman Governor Trembles at Judgment**

In our last two articles we observed in Acts 24 that the apostle Paul had the opportunity to talk with Felix the governor about faith in Christ. In that discussion, Paul focused on righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come. Felix sensed the truthfulness of what he heard, but in his heart, he knew that he would be unwilling to make the personal sacrifices necessary to submit to the righteousness defined by Jehovah God and, as a result, was terrified at the prospect of displeasing his Creator. In this study we will consider the teaching of Scripture on the judgment to come. What should we expect when we leave this life?

Paul may have described for Felix a scene similar to that presented in Revelation 20:11-12. John wrote, “Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.” John concludes his description in verse 15: “And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.” Notice four important lessons from this passage.

**We all will be there.** The great and the small, the self-important and the humble. “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad” (2 Corinthians 5:10).

**The righteousness defined by God will be the standard.** Social norms and political correctness will be irrelevant in the day of judgment. 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” (John 12:48). The will of God the Father and the Son are the same and the apostles and prophets of Jesus conveyed that will in the writings of the New Testament by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (John 16:13-15).

**Our recorded deeds will be the basis of our judgment.** It is sobering to think that there is a running record of everything I have ever said or done. In fact, every accountable person has failed to live up to the righteousness of God (Romans 3:23). But if sin separates man from God (Isaiah 59:1-2), how can an individual ever hope to stand justified before Him in judgment? Peter gave the answer in Acts 3:19: “Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away.” Your book can contain nothing but good things because Jesus’ death on the cross paid the price for your sins and allowed God to wipe them away and still remain a just God (Romans 3:25-26).

**The consequences of rejecting God’s grace are catastrophic.** One day “the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus” (2 Thessalonians 1:7-8). No wonder Felix was trembling. The loving sacrifice of Jesus will justify you only if you are obedient to the gospel. If consideration of righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come is of concern to you, contact me at westmurraychurch@gmail.com., I am here to help.