

Jesus as Judge
2016 Embracing the Truth Conference
(3 parts)

Why should we who are delivered from God's judgment study the topic of Jesus as Judge? This *is Christology*. Because we can only understand and appreciate the depth of His grace by understanding that He is perfectly willing to judge His enemies. And too much of modern evangelicalism has removed the judgment aspect of Christ's character and person.

If you do not understand God's propensity to judge, you don't yet understand the God of the Bible. Judgment is part of who He is. God defines Himself as a judge. His judgment flows from His character, which is holy and righteous. (Holy – primary characteristic. If love is primary attribute, then judgment cannot be the result.)

As a result: Two major themes of the Bible: Redemption and judgment. Both grace/redemption and judgment/wrath are characteristics of His personality.

When referring to the Bible, we speak of “redemptive history.” But, the Bible speaks as much, if not more, about God's judgment and wrath than it does about Heaven.

Define “judgment” — to differentiate. The dictionary says, “the ability to make considered decisions or come to sensible conclusions.” From a biblical perspective it means to hold people accountable. To differentiate between the godly and ungodly — and treat them accordingly.

Purpose of Judgment

It is God's purpose and determination to set up His Son as the King of the whole earth –

Psalm 2 -- Why are the nations in an uproar and the peoples devising a vain thing? The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers take counsel together against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, “Let us tear their fetters apart and cast away their cords from us!”

He who sits in the heavens laughs, the Lord scoffs at them. Then He will speak to them in His anger and terrify them in His fury, saying, “But as for Me, I have installed My King upon Zion, My holy mountain.”

I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, ‘You are My Son, today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron, you shall shatter them like earthenware.’”

(10) Now therefore, O kings, show discernment; take warning, O judges of the earth. Worship the LORD with reverence and rejoice with trembling. Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish in the way, for His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!

(verse 7 -- You are My Son, today I have begotten You -- is one of the most quoted Old Testament texts in the New Testament, used repeatedly to demonstrate that Jesus was the promised Messiah.)

Christ is the judge of the whole earth. His kingdom is coming and is unavoidable. The only rational response is to worship Him. The depth of human sin is demonstrated in their refusal to fall on their faces before Him. But, human rebellion is not sufficient to stop the King of Kings from ruling and judging.

“Thy kingdom come, they will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven.”

Similarly, in the NT, Paul explains his eschatology this way --

1Corinthians 15:20–28 -- But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ’s at His coming, then comes the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death. For HE HAS PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET. But when He says, “All things are put in subjection,” it is evident that He is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him. When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all.

So, the reason that God gives Christ all authority is that the Son will set the whole creation right again, restoring order and proper worship and reverence to His people and His creation.

Ethically, is judgment justifiable?

Is it right for God to judge? (many people object to the notion of God as judge -- universalism) Too much universalism in the church. (unitarians, Catholic universalism, etc.) Just as the subject of sin has been abdicated, so has the notion of God as a judge.

It is justifiable because of who He is. As the only genuinely Holy, Triune Being in the universe, His judgment is just.

Psalm 96:13 -- Let all creation rejoice before the LORD, for he comes, he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his faithfulness.

Judgment versus correction

Hebrews 12:4-11 -- You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin; and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons,

“MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD,
NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM;

⁶FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES,
AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES.”

⁷It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom *his* father does not discipline? ⁸But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. ⁹Furthermore, we had ^[e]earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of ^[f]spirits, and live? ¹⁰For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He *disciplines us* for *our* good, so that we may share His holiness. ¹¹All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

1Corinthians 11:27-34 -- Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the

Lord. But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment (*krima*: KJV-damnation) to himself if he does not judge (*diakrino* – discernment, separate thoroughly, discriminate) the body rightly. For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep. But if we judged (*diakrino*) ourselves rightly, we would not be judged (*krino* – decided against, punished). 32 But when we are judged (*krino*), we are disciplined (trained like a child, disciplined, chastened) by the Lord so that we will not be condemned (*katakrino* – intensifier “down”) along with the world. So then, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. 34 If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so that you will not come together for judgment (*krima*). The remaining matters I will arrange when I come.

And because He is eternally almighty, no one can argue with His judgment, nor His right to judge.

Judgment is, and always has been, part of His eternal plan: Humans were created in God's image, free from sin and in communion with their Maker. Adam's rebellion brought about the need for a Savior (just as God planned since before the foundation of the world). But it also brought about the necessity of judgment against the creatures who reveled in their rebellion against the Holy One.

From the earliest documents, God presents Himself as both Savior (Redeemer) and judge. The Bible is replete with obvious indications and examples of God's judgment. Earliest examples:

- The garden of Eden (Adam, Eve, and serpent all judged)
- The exile of Cain for slaying Abel
- The flood, when God killed everyone save 8 humans
- The curse of Ham
- Confusing human languages and scattering mankind in response to the Tower of Babel
- The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah

From the beginning of God's revelation of Himself to Abraham, the forefather of God's chosen people Israel, Abraham referred to God as the "Judge of all the earth."

Gen 18:25 -- "Far be it from You to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous and the wicked are treated alike. Far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?"

In Exodus, when Moses asked to see God, He defined Himself as a lawgiver and a judge who does whatever He wants, including mercy, compassion, and punishing the guilty --

Exodus 33:17-23 -- The LORD said to Moses, "I will also do this thing of which you have spoken; for you have found favor in My sight and I have known you by name." Then Moses said, "I pray You, show me Your glory!" And He said, "I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the LORD before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion." But He said, "You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!" Then the LORD said, "Behold, there is a place by Me, and you shall stand there on the rock; and it will come about, while My glory is passing by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by. Then I will take My hand away and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen."

Exodus 34:1-6 -- Now the LORD said to Moses, "Cut out for yourself two stone tablets like the former ones, and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the former tablets which you shattered. So be ready by morning, and come up in the morning to Mount Sinai, and present yourself there to Me on the top of the mountain. No man is to come up with you, nor let any man be seen anywhere on the mountain; even the flocks and the herds may not graze in front of that mountain." So he cut out two stone tablets like the former ones, and Moses rose up early in the morning and went up to Mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and he took two stone tablets in his hand. The LORD descended in the cloud and stood there with him as he called upon the name of the LORD. Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations."

That's God's description of Himself.

And, of course, the balance of the OT follows the pattern of God's judgment. The law imposed on Israel included a curse and the promise of judgment.

- Curses and plagues on Egypt
- Multiple judgments against Israel at the hands of their enemies
- 40 years in the wilderness due to Israel's unfaithfulness
- Korah and his band swallowed by the earth (Num. 16)
- Getting sick on quail after complaining about the lack of meat
- And promise of ultimate judgment -- using language such as "the day of the Lord," "time of trouble," "tribulation," and "the wrath of God."

Even a cursory review of the Scripture will turn up over 400 verses on the subject of judgment. It is a primary theme of the bible.

“So fine,” you say, “I am convinced that God is a judge. But how does that apply to Jesus as judge?”

Trinity

We believe in a Triune God -- Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Elohim: plural)

If God is a judge, it stands to reason that Jesus is a judge. The Father and Son would not be at odds with each other. People think of God as a mean judge in the OT, but Jesus as the tender, mild nice-guy in the NT. But, Jesus is every bit the judge as any OT example.

All three members of the Trinity are spoken of as judges:

The Father —

Ecclesiastes 12:14 — For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.

The Son —

Romans 2:16 — ... on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.

John 9:38-39 -- (the man born blind) He said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him. Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind."

And the Holy Spirit —

John 16:7-11 — Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me. and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

The evidence and information is overwhelming and is much more than we can cover in three hours. But this is one aspect of the character and being of Jesus that far too much of modern evangelicalism overlooks or dismisses. The Jesus of their imagination is universally benevolent and would never say or do anything that would make anyone even uncomfortable, any less eternally condemned.

Yet, it is prophesied of Him long before He arrived on planet Earth

The prophesied judge
The incarnate judge
The eschatological judge

The Prophesied Judge

Jesus Christ is a just judge (as we read)

Christ's authority to judge stems from His authority to rule. Listen to Isaiah's prophecies of the rule to come --

Isaiah 9:6-7 -- For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice

and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.

Isaiah continues --

Isaiah 11:1-5 — Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse,
And a branch from his roots will bear fruit.
The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him,
The spirit of wisdom and understanding,
The spirit of counsel and strength,
The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.
And He will delight in the fear of the Lord,
And He will not judge by what His eyes see,
Nor make a decision by what His ears hear;
But with righteousness He will judge the poor,
And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth;
And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth,
And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked.
Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins,
And faithfulness the belt about His waist.

Daniel strikes a similar tone when describing the kingdom to come --

Daniel 2:34-35 -- You [Nabuchadnezzar] continued looking until a stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and crushed them. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

Daniel 7:13-14 -- I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, and He came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him. And to Him was given dominion, glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations and men of every language might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed.

The conquering dominion of Christ is based on His ability and willingness to judge nations and destroy His enemies --

The Incarnate Judge

John 3:16 / 3:18

John the Baptist said --

Matthew 3:11-12 -- “As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

Acts 17:22-31 (NASB) *Paul’s Sermon on Mars Hill*

So Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, “Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious (superstitious - KJV) in all respects. For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, ‘TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.’ Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things; and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we also are His children.’ Being then the children of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man. Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.”

Paul preached facts. No emotion. No “God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life.” (Word “love” is not in Acts)

Here is a fact: Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension proved that He was who He said He was. As a result of His faithful execution of the Father's will, God turned all judgment over to Him.

Peter preaching to the household of Cornelius, did the same thing. He listed facts —

Acts 10:34-43 — Opening his mouth, Peter said: “I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality, but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him. The word which He sent to the sons of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all) — you yourselves know the thing which took place throughout all Judea, starting from Galilee, after the baptism which John proclaimed. You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. We are witnesses of all the things He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross. God raised Him up on the third day and granted that He become visible, not to all the people, but to witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God, that is, to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. And He ordered us to preach to the people, and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead. Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins.”

The office, the purpose, the service to God that Jesus will render is more than just salvation through the forgiveness of sins -- it is the dividing of people between the living and the dead.

The judgment is inevitable and inescapable

Hebrews 9:27-28 -- And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.

During His ministry and sojourn on Earth, Jesus declared that He was appointed judge by God the Father

John 5:19-30 — Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; and the Father will show Him greater works than these, so that you will marvel. For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes. For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

(24) “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.

(30) “I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

Matthew 28:18-20 -- And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Jesus Judged Men

And it is the office of judge that once again separates Him from all of mankind. I keep saying "You're not like God and God's not like you." Similarly, you're not like Christ. He is unique. And you're not like Him -- Jesus said, "Judge not." But He walked around judging constantly.

John 3:18 -- He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Matthew 10:32-33 (also **Luke 12:8-9**) -- “Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven.

Mark 8:38 -- For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.

Judgment in the parables

Jesus spoke repeatedly of His position as the One who would ultimately separate the righteous from the unrighteous. He often couched the language of judgment in parables, leaving those without the ability to understand to remain in their ignorance (*which is, in and of itself, a form of judgment*).

The parables in Matthew / the parable of the weeds

Matt. 13:36-42 -- Then He left the multitudes, and went into a house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.” And He answered and said, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man, and the field is the world; and as for the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil one; and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels. Therefore just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

The parable of the dragnet;

Matt. 13:47-50 -- “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet cast into the sea, and gathering fish of every kind; and when it was filled, they drew it up on the beach; and they sat down, and gathered the good fish into containers, but the bad they threw away. So it will be at the end of the age; the angels shall come forth, and take out the wicked from among the righteous, and will cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

The parable of the sheep and the goats

Matthew 21:33-44 -- “Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard and put a wall around it and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and rented it out to vine-growers and went on a journey. When the harvest time approached, he sent his slaves to the vine-growers to receive his produce. 35 The vine-growers took his slaves and beat one, and killed another, and stoned a third. Again he sent another group of slaves larger than the first; and they did the same thing to them. But afterward he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ But when the vine-growers saw the son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.’ They took him, and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. Therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine-growers?” They said to Him, “He will bring those wretches to a wretched end, and will rent out the vineyard to other vine-growers who will pay him the proceeds at the proper seasons.”

(42) Jesus said to them, “Did you never read in the Scriptures, ‘The stone which the builders rejected, this became the chief corner stone; This came about from the Lord, And it is marvelous in our eyes’? Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people, producing the fruit of it. (44) And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust.”

Fact: Jesus was not afraid to speak of Hell as a reality.

In response to the faith of the Centurion:

Matthew 8:11-12 -- I say to you that many will come from east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; but the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

At the end of the parable of the talents:

Matthew 25:29-30 -- “For to everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. Throw out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

To the Pharisees:

Matthew 23:33 - "You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?"

Jesus is the judge of the demonic realm -- and they know it.

Luke 8:26-33 -- Then they sailed to the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. And when He came out onto the land, He was met by a man from the city who was possessed with demons; and who had not put on any clothing for a long time, and was not living in a house, but in the tombs. Seeing Jesus, he cried out and fell before Him, and said in a loud voice, "What business do we have with each other, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me." For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had seized him many times; and he was bound with chains and shackles and kept under guard, and yet he would break his bonds and be driven by the demon into the desert. And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion"; for many demons had entered him. They were imploring Him not to command them to go away into the abyss.

(32) Now there was a herd of many swine feeding there on the mountain; and the demons implored Him to permit them to enter the swine. And He gave them permission. And the demons came out of the man and entered the swine; and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned.

Jesus Judged Satan

Jesus Christ executed judgment against the forces of evil through his death on the cross.

Jesus Christ's death brought judgment on Satan and evil world powers

John 12:31-33 — "Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came out of heaven: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." So the crowd of people who stood by and heard it were saying that it had thundered; others were saying, "An angel has spoken to Him." Jesus answered and said, "This voice has not come for My sake, but for your sakes. Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up

from the earth, will draw all men to Myself.” But He was saying this to indicate the kind of death by which He was to die.

Jesus was Judge over the creation and the natural order

Matt. 11:12-14 -- On the next day, when they had left Bethany, He became hungry. Seeing at a distance a fig tree in leaf, He went to see if perhaps He would find anything on it; and when He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. He said to it, “May no one ever eat fruit from you again!” And His disciples were listening.

We must pay attention to what Jesus said because we will be judged by His word

John 12:44-50 -- And Jesus cried out and said, “He who believes in Me, does not believe in Me but in Him who sent Me. He who sees Me sees the One who sent Me. I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness. If anyone hears My sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. 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. For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak. I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me.”

And His judgment is severe... and eternal. (The eternal One can mete out eternal punishment.)

The Eschatological Judge

Read **Psalm 98** -- Joy in judgment

Joy to the World - Isaac Watts - most published xmas song in north American publishing history)

*Joy to the world
The lord is come
Let earth receive her king
Let every heart prepare Him room
And heaven and nature sing*

*Joy to the world
The savior reigns
Let men their songs employ
While fields and floods
Rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy*

*He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness
The wonders of his love*

To the Christian, the return of Christ to gather His people and judge His enemies is a message of hope and anticipation for the righteousness to come. The Christian message is eschatological in nature – Jesus is coming again!

And His return includes judgment: distinguishing the good from the evil and rewarding people accordingly –

Rom. 14:10-12 — Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; for it is written, “As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.” So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

1 Corinthians 4:5 -- Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in

darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God.

2 Corinthians 5:10 -- For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

His judgment is right because He judges in accordance to His Father's will and knowledge of every person's hidden purposes. Men cannot judge justly because they are sinful and judge according to their own self-interest. But, Jesus judges righteously because He is sinless and His primary cause and purpose is the glory of His Father.

Individuals will be judged according to their response to Him. He is the judge AND the deciding factor in every man's life.

Acts 17:31 — God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.”

The return of Christ in judgment is fundamental Christian theology –

2Thessalonians 1:1-12 — Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

(3) We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brethren, as is only fitting, because your faith is greatly enlarged, and the love of each one of you toward one another grows ever greater; therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you endure. This is a plain indication of God's righteous judgment so that you will be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which indeed you are suffering. For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when 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. These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed—for our testimony to you was believed. To this end also we pray for you always,

that our God will count you worthy of your calling, and fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus will be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Day of the Lord

Isa 13:9 Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.

Joel 1:15 Alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come.

Joel 2:11 And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?

Amo 5:20 Shall not the day of the LORD be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?

Act 2:20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:

2Pet 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

Zeph.1:14-18 -- Near is the great day of the LORD, near and coming very quickly; Listen, the day of the LORD! In it the warrior cries out bitterly. A day of wrath is that day, a day of trouble and distress, a day of destruction and desolation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet and battle cry against the fortified cities and the high corner towers. I will bring distress on men so that they will walk like the blind, because they have sinned against the LORD; And their blood will be poured out like dust and their flesh like dung. Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to deliver them on the day of the LORD'S wrath; And all the earth will be devoured in the fire of His jealousy, for He will make a complete end, indeed a terrifying one, of all the inhabitants of the earth.

Isa 13:6-9 -- Wail, for the day of the LORD is near! It will come as destruction from the Almighty. Therefore all hands will fall limp, And every man's heart will melt. And they will be terrified, Pains and anguish will take hold of them; They will writhe like a woman in labor, They will look at one another in astonishment, Their faces aflame. Behold, the day of the LORD is Cruel, with fury and burning anger, To make the land a desolation; And He will exterminate its sinners from it.

But, who metes out this ultimate judgment? Christ, Himself!

Matt 24:36-44 -- "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be. Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one will be left.

(42) Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. For this reason you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will.

It was predicted in Isaiah.

Isaiah 63:1-6 -- Who is this who comes from Edom, with garments of glowing colors from Bozrah, this One who is majestic in His apparel, Marching in the greatness of His strength? "It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save."

(2) Why is Your apparel red, and Your garments like the one who treads in the wine press? "I have trodden the wine trough alone, and from the peoples there was no man with Me. I also trod them in My anger and trampled them in My wrath; And their lifeblood is sprinkled on My garments, and I stained all My raiment. (4) For the day of vengeance was in My heart, and My year of redemption has come. I looked, and there was no one to help, and I was astonished and there was no one to uphold; So My own arm brought salvation to Me, and My wrath upheld Me. I trod down the peoples in My anger and made them drunk in My wrath, and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth."

Rev 1:16 - In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength.

Rev 19:11-16 — Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. 13 He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. 16 On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.

The wrath of the Lamb

Revelation 6:12-17 -- I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood; and the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind. The sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

Sheep and goats

Matthew 25:31-33 — “But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left.

Matt. 25:41-46 -- “Then He will also say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry, and you gave Me *nothing* to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; I was a stranger, and you

did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.’ Then they themselves also will answer, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?’ Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

Jesus willingly and righteously doles out “eternal punishment.”

Wrapping up:

The study of Jesus as judge helps us to fear and revere Him.

The study of Jesus as judge helps us understand the Trinity because events and judgments that are assigned to the LORD in the Old Testament are performed by Jesus in the NT. (See Ezekiel 39, compare to Revelation)

My hope and prayer for you all –

2Timothy 4:1-5 — I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

6-8 -- For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.