

“The Return of Christ”  
Hebrews 9:27-28  
(Preached at Trinity, August 18, 2024)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. God made a covenant of works with Adam with the promise of life for continued obedience and the promise of death if he failed to obey.  
**Genesis 2:16-17 NAU** - "The LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; <sup>17</sup> but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die."
2. Adam sinned and brought the curse of death upon himself and upon all mankind.  
**Genesis 3:19 NAU** - "By the sweat of your face You will eat bread, Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return."
3. By the time we get to Genesis 5 death is confirmed to be the lot of all men. The expression, "And he died" is repeated eight times.  
**Genesis 5:5 NAU** - "So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years, and he died."
4. As we come to the end of **Chapter 9** the author reminds us of our appointment with death. The word is elsewhere translated "laid up." Death has been laid up for us. It awaits us. The death penalty is upon us all. Death is the great equalizer. All will die whether rich or poor, no matter what your race or your gender or nationality—all will die.  
"It is appointed for men to die"
5. What happens when we die? This is of great interest to everyone. We will all die. What happens then? Who isn't interested in this? Is there life after death? Do we just slip into the realm of nothingness? Or is there more? Is there a heaven? Is there a hell?  
**Verse 27** gives us the solemn answer.
  - I. There is life after death. All human being possess immortality. All exist for eternity.
    - A. The author reminds us that upon death we will all stand before an infinite God to give account.  
**Hebrews 9:27 NAU** - "And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment"
      1. Eternity begins at the judgment seat of Christ.  
**2 Corinthians 5:9-10 NAU** - "Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. <sup>10</sup> 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. We will stand before a Judge who knows all. No witnesses will be called. He knows every thought you have ever had and every deed you have ever done. The secret things of men will be revealed.

3. It is indeed a solemn thought. It is terrifying for most to consider.  
**Hebrews 10:31 NAU** - "It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God."
- B. But there is more in this verse. It is appointed that we die once.
1. The author contrasts the word "once" in **Verses 27-28**. Jesus has been sacrificed once just as God has ordained that we die once.
  2. With the exception of the few like Lazarus who were raised from the dead, men die once. The few times the Bible records the miracle of someone being raised from the dead it is to affirm and validate one of God's prophets.  
Jesus raised Lazarus.  
**Acts 2:22 NAU** - "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know--"  
Elijah raised the son of the widow of Zarephath  
**1 Kings 17:24 NAU** - "Then the woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is truth.""  
Elisha raised the son of the Shunammite woman.
  3. Much is sensationalism surrounds out of body experiences. Many share their experience of dying and then coming back. They shared their stories and we listen with great interest.
  4. The Bible doesn't give much evidence that such occurs. Rather, we are told that it is appointed that we die once, and then comes the judgment. Most of these stories describe bright light and paradise.  
**Verse 27** describes judgment.
- C. Death reminds us of our universal guilt
1. All will die and all will stand before the Judgment seat of Christ. The Bible teaches the universal truth – all have sinned. All are guilty.  
**Romans 3:23 NAU** - "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,"  
**Romans 3:10-18 NAU** - "as it is written, "There is none righteous, not even one; <sup>11</sup> There is none who understands, There is none who seeks for God; <sup>12</sup> All have turned aside, together they have become useless; There is none who does good, There is not even one." <sup>13</sup> "Their throat is an open grave, With their tongues they keep deceiving," "The poison of asps is under their lips"; <sup>14</sup> "Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness"; <sup>15</sup> "Their feet are swift to shed blood, <sup>16</sup> Destruction and misery are in their paths, <sup>17</sup> And the path of peace have they not known." <sup>18</sup> "There is no fear of God before their eyes."
  2. Death testifies to our guilt.  
**Romans 6:23 NAU** - "For the wages of sin is death"

- II. In the context of sin and judgment the author holds before us Jesus the Savior  
**Hebrews 9:28 NAU** - "so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many"
- A. The Judgment Seat of Christ has only one of two outcomes.
1. All of humanity will spend eternity in either heaven or hell.  
 1689 LBC – Chapter 31:1 *Of the State of Man After Death and of the Resurrection of the Dead*”  
 “The bodies of men after death return to dust, and see corruption;<sup>1</sup> but their souls, which neither die nor sleep, having an immortal subsistence, immediately return to God who gave them.<sup>2</sup> The souls of the righteous being then made perfect in holiness, are received into paradise, where they are with Christ, and behold the face of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies;<sup>3</sup> and the souls of the wicked are cast into hell; where they remain in torment and utter darkness, reserved to the judgment of the great day;<sup>4</sup> besides these two places, for souls separated from their bodies, the Scripture acknowledgeth none.”
  2. Hell is a place of endless torment prepared for Satan and the demons and all who would not have Christ as their Savior.  
**Matthew 13:41-42 NAU** - "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, <sup>42</sup> and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."
  3. Jesus is the our only hope in death.  
**Romans 6:23 NAU** - "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."  
**Hebrews 9:28 NAU** - "so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many"
  4. God sent forth Christ to die for sinners.
    - a. The perfect, holy, righteous Son of God took upon Himself the flesh of humanity. As a perfect sinless man He then gave Himself to be nailed to the cross to shed His perfect blood as the final sacrifice.
    - b. As Jesus suffered God the Father laid upon Him the fullness of His wrath. The skies darkened, the ground shook – all of creation trembled at this spectacle as Jesus suffered the full punishment for the sins of His people.
    - c. Jesus became a substitute for His people.  
 Their sins became His sins as He became the Sin bearer  
 Their guilt became His guilt so that they could be redeemed from the curse of sin. Jesus Christ purchased their pardon with His own life.
    - d. There will be a great number on that day of judgment who will be declared NOT GUILTY not because of their goodness but because of the perfect atonement of Christ.

- B. Jesus in His one-time death has accomplished redemption for His people.
1. Having accomplished our salvation He will return to receive us.  
**John 14:2-3 NAU** - "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup> "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, *there* you may be also."
  2. As our Redeemer Jesus has planned all good things for us.  
 Salvation is brought to those who are eagerly waiting for Christ.  
**Hebrews 9:28 NAU** - "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."
  3. This was Paul's testimony.  
**2 Timothy 4:7-8 NAU** - "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; <sup>8</sup> 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."
  4. There is a vivid and solemn contrast between the "judgment" in **Verse 27** and "salvation" in **Verse 28**.
- C. When Jesus returns He will come as a great conquering King to bring judgment and justice to all humanity.
1. The wicked will suffer under His terrible wrath.  
 We can consider again the wrath of God upon unrepentant Egypt.  
**Exodus 12:12 NAU** - "For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments-- I am the LORD."  
**Exodus 12:29-30 NAU** - "Now it came about at midnight that the LORD struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of cattle. <sup>30</sup> Pharaoh arose in the night, he and all his servants and all the Egyptians, and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was no home where there was not someone dead."  
**Revelation 6:15-17 NAU** - "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; <sup>16</sup> 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; <sup>17</sup> for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"
  2. The righteous await their eternal reward.  
**1 Corinthians 2:9 NAU** - "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, And *which* have not entered the heart of man, All that God has prepared for those who love Him."

3. Eternal reward is reserved for those who are eagerly waiting in expectation. Only the righteous can bear this testimony. The wicked tremble at the thought of Christ's return. The righteous rejoice as they eagerly await His arrival.
4. The crown is prepared for those who love His appearing.
  - a. It is given to those who love His first advent –  
We love the life of Christ, we love His work, we love our relationship with Him.
  - b. It is given to those who love His second advent.  
"to those who eagerly await Him."  
**Philippians 3:20 NAU** - "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;"  
**1 Thessalonians 4:16-5:1 NAU** - "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. <sup>18</sup> Therefore comfort one another with these words. "

#### Conclusion:

1. The Book of Hebrews holds high the superiority of Jesus Christ. He is our Great High Priest and the Mediator of the New Covenant. He is the Redeemer sent from the foundation of the World to save His people from their sins. But there is a glorious culmination.
2. Jesus is going to return suddenly, in the clouds of glory, with His holy angels. He will come as a mighty conquering King. All of His enemies will be forever cast from His presence as His perfect judgment of justice is carried out.
3. Then the resurrected saints will enter the new earth of perfection.  
**2 Peter 3:10-13 NAU** - "But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. <sup>11</sup> Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, <sup>12</sup> looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! <sup>13</sup> But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells."
4. Since we await the return of our Savior and the culmination of all things, may we live above this world keeping our eyes upon Him.  
**Hebrews 12:1-2 NAU** - "let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup> fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."  
**Colossians 3:1-2 NAU** - "Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup> Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth."