

THE CREED

Pt 7: The Final Judgment

INTRO

- What was your favorite trip ever?
- What makes for a perfect vacation?

READ

Read Acts 10:42

REFLECT

The last thing the Creed has to say about Christ is about his return and the judgment he will bring upon humanity.

Qu: What comes to mind when you think of the final judgment? How does that make you feel?

Today we will focus on the following line of the Apostle's Creed: *He will come again to judge the living and the dead.* Let's see why it matters and what it means to us.

1. Justice and Mercy Matter

Read Romans 12:19, Romans 2:1

Seeing people getting away with hideous crimes disturbs us. That's because we all crave justice. The Creed reminds us that justice will not fail and that it belongs to God. But at the same time, we desire mercy for ourselves so that our past wrongs will be forgiven, and so the Creed also reminds us to reflect upon how we have been judging others.

Qu: Have you ever felt hopeless about justice being done? How does Romans 12:19 speak into that?

Qu: Are we to judge anyone at all? What does Romans 2:1 teach us about judgment?

2. The Cross Matters

Read Isaiah 53:5-6, Revelation 20:12, 1 John 4:14-19

But how can we receive both justice and mercy at the same time from God? Scripture tells us that

our sins were justly punished on Christ, who took our place so we could be reconciled with God. Now we are saved by trusting his sacrifice and having our names written in the Book of Life. Our fear of judgment is replaced by our love for him.

Qu: What difference does it make that we are saved by faith in Christ rather than by good works?

3. The Judge and King

Christ's return means the return of our judge and our king. It's important to always hold both in mind: that we will be judged by one who loves us and that his return is the final restoration of creation to its perfect state.

Qu: What is there to fear or to hope about Christ's return?

4. The Wait

Read Romans 8:18, Matthew 24:45-46.

Our wait is not meant to be passive or to be shoved to the back of our minds. Scripture tells us that we are to wait for Christ's return hoping, watching, and working!

Qu: Is Christ's return something that you often think about? Would you say that you hope, watch, and work as you wait? Why or why not?

RESPOND & PRAY

- What encouraged/challenged you the most from this discussion?
- Spend time praying for one another and those you know whose hope for Christ's return need to be strengthened.