

Light and Life

Salvation thru Judgment

“What manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat” (II Pe. 3:11-12)?

It must seem crazy to the world that we should be eager for the world to be destroyed – but that’s just one more thing on a long list of peculiarities that make us different! How can we be excited for this promised future? Because “we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells” (II Pe. 3:13).

God’s salvation has always involved the judgment of evil. He saved Noah from wicked men by the flood (I Pe. 3:20). He delivered Israel from Egypt through the plagues (Ex. 7-14). In New Testament times, John wrote about the spirits of the martyrs calling for God to avenge them (Rev. 6:9-11). And He did (18:20, 24)!

As with all these physical judgments, the final judgment will mean our salvation – not just from sin, but from the enemies of Christ! Satan and death will be finally defeated (Rev. 20:10, 13-14). All whose allegiance is not to the Lamb will join them (Rev. 21:8, 27; 22:15). God’s people shall have true rest.

Paul wrote to the persecuted church of Thessalonica, “it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God” (II Th. 1:6-9).

Judgment is coming! It is a comfort to Christians, but a fearful thing to the enemies of God!

- Sam Bunyard

Another Perspective

Alcohol Harms the Body

Humans have been drinking alcohol for thousands of years – it’s part of our culture to raise a toast in celebration with friends or nurse a glass of wine or beer at the end of a long day.

But what is all that booze doing to our bodies? Scientists are increasingly finding that even moderate drinking may be more harmful than we thought.

Alcohol is a group-1 carcinogen, linked to cancers of the mouth, pharynx, larynx, esophagus, liver, colorectum, and breast. In 2023, the World Health Organization declared there is no safe amount of alcohol to consume – adding that there’s no evidence that the potential cardiovascular benefits of a glass of red wine outweigh its cancer risks.

Certain people are at greater risk too. Here’s just some of what National Geographic’s reporters have learned in recent years: **1)** “Even when consuming the same amount of alcohol as men, women are more susceptible to its negative effects,” wrote Meryl Davids Landau in an August 2023 story. **2)** “If you drink the same amount at 80 as you did at 30, your blood alcohol level will be much higher,” said Alison Moore in Stacey Colino’s July 2024 story on aging and alcohol intolerance. **3)** Researchers have found that our bodies age in two ‘bursts’ at 44 and 60, as Daryl Austin reported in September 2024. Those molecular changes can account for our worsening hangovers and affect our ability to metabolize alcohol. **4)** “Sleep is designed to give you sort of a cardiac holiday – your heart rate drops, your blood pressure drops, etc.,” said Ian Colrain, president and CEO of MRI Global, a research institute based in Kansas City, Missouri. But alcohol elevates your heart rate – and Colrain’s research has found that even a little bit of alcohol can keep your heart rate elevated for four hours of sleep.

- Amy McKeever, *National Geographic*,
Sept. 6, 2024 (edited for space)

ASSEMBLY TIMES

Sunday

Morning Bible Class 9:30
Morning Assembly 10:30
Evening Assembly 5:00

Wednesday

Evening Bible Class 6:30

DOWNTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST

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A tongue is like a knife – the sharper it is, the deeper it cuts.

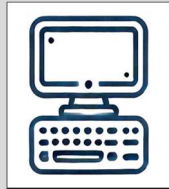
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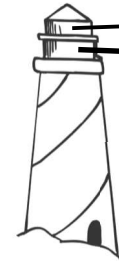
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DOWNTOWN GOSPEL BEACON

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Don't Stiff the Waiter

“In the same way, let your light shine before others, so they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven” (Mt 5:16). In such a few words Jesus emphasized the tremendous importance of our influence with others.

We may believe we are insignificant creatures, especially if we do not occupy positions of ‘authority’ or have a prominent role in our ecosphere. But you have had a profound influence on others since before you were born (just ask your mother). And you have continued to influence those around you ever since – for good or for bad. Jesus simply asks us to influence for good.

Of course, influence is not an end in itself. The Pharisees were **too much** concerned with how they looked to others. And so were the Christians at Sardis (Re 3:1). But reputation **can** go a longways in helping us lead others to Christ – or in driving them away. Something to think about next time you complain about the service and decide to stiff the waiter.

Letting our light shine is not a typical new year resolution – but maybe it should be. Of course, it ought to be a priority every day of the year. But since we **are** staring a new year in the face, take time to reflect on this: “Let your light shine!”

- *WKing*

FAMILY NEWS

PRAYER LIST –

Preachers we support: Japan, Philippines, Vietnam, Canada, Mexico, Peru, & U.S.

Sick: KFletcher, Swims, JMarshall, RStarr, MiBader, JTerrell, ACorder

Shut-ins: BPennington, SCole, SWiese, VCarter, KHeiligenthal, AHopper

Military: Kyler Sullins, Sean Potter

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS – It’s that time again! Sam and Warren will be answering questions this evening submitted earlier by our members!

SENTENCE SERMON – Christianity has been studied and practiced for ages; but it has been studied far more than it has been practiced.