

Understanding Christian Commitment 5

The Eternal Judgement

Commitment is for Judgement. We are committed to the Judgements of God. The Judgement says that God rules and commitment to Jesus Christ means that I place myself under the Judgement of God. I am committed to the rule of God. That is, I do not seek my own outcomes but God's outcomes. What does God want to happen? Judgement means that God will bring His creation to His conclusion. Jesus Christ indicates the Judgement of God. The Christian life only makes sense under the outcomes of God. If something else happens then God is not God and I am not prepared for that scenario (that is, for there being no God). I must be committed to the rule of God alone in my life so therefore, I am committed to His outcomes for my life. God inspires me with visions of His purpose for His creation and for me as I desire to be part of His sacred history. Am I part of Biblical (sacred) history or part of secular or personal history? The crossed Person (cross bearing believer) hungers for the purposes of God. God's history will make cross bearing meaningful and (hopefully) bearable.

The whole creation lives under Judgement NOW. 'For the whole creation was subjected to corruption, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope' (Rom 8:20). Also 'the Scripture has confined all under sin' (Gal 4:22) and 'For God committed all to disobedience that He might have mercy on all' (Rom 11:32). Disobedience elicits Judgement. Judgement is what God does to control disobedience. This is usually experienced as the consequences of our behaviour. 'Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, we reap what we sow' (Gal 6:7). This is bounty for the righteous and condemnation for the sinner.

We live in a moral universe. This is because God is moral and He has created a moral creation. 'You shall be holy for I am holy says the Lord your God' (Lev 19:2). Moral issues have always applied. God judges His creation as good (Gen 1:31). Adam and Eve are placed in a Garden where they are to be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over fish, birds and every living thing (Gen 1:28). This is a mandate to be obeyed. We would add today that this should be done in a sustainable way which is part of the responsibility of having dominion. Human beings most certainly have dominion which we can ruthlessly exploit even to our own detriment. Even the way we treat the environment has consequences. Human nature does not change (we are not evolving anywhere) and morality does not evolve either. Design-wise this is a static creation. God finished all His works and He rejoiced in them (Gen 2:1-2).

Sin is the result of disobedience. When Adam and Eve ate the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge and Good and Evil they disobeyed the direct command of God and received the judgement of God. God's judgement on sin is death (Gen 2:17) which is expressed as a corruption on the whole creation. The creation is not eternal for it was created (there was a time when it was not) and is subject to decay and change (which is a daily observation: 'change and decay in all I see'). So we are continually under the judgement of God. The Old Covenant was based on the Law and the sense of the holy. There were things you did and things you didn't do.

The Blessings and Cursings of the Covenant. This is an example in the OT concerning the direct response of God to human behaviour. In Deut 28 we find that if they diligently **obey** the voice of the Lord, God will place the Israelites high above the nations of the earth (28:1). This is a covenant relationship.

1. (:3) Blessed will you be in the city and the country.

2. (:4) Blessed will be the produce of your body and herds.
3. (:5) Blessed will be your basket and kneading bowl.
4. (:6) Blessed will be your coming and going.
5. (:7) Your enemies will flee before you seven ways.
6. (:8) The Lord will command the blessing on your storehouses.
7. (:9) The Lord will establish you as a holy people to Himself.
8. (:11) The Lord will grant you plenty in goods and produce.
9. (:12) The Lord will open the treasures of heaven to give rain and seasons. You shall lend and not borrow.
10. (:13) The Lord will make you the head and not the tail.

However, if they **disobey** the voice of the Lord then

1. (:16) Cursed will you be in the city and the country.
2. (:17) Cursed will be your basket and kneading bowl.
3. (:18) Cursed will be the fruit of your body and land.
4. (:19) Cursed will be your coming and going.
5. (:20) God will send cursing, confusion and rebuke in all you do.
6. (:21) God will make the plague cling to you and make consumption, fever, inflammation, mildew and the sword pursue you till you perish.
7. (:23) The heavens above you will be as bronze and the earth beneath you will be as iron. Rain will become powder and dust.
8. (:25) The Lord will cause you to be defeated before your enemies. You will be troublesome to all the kingdoms of the earth.
9. (:27) The Lord will strike you with the boils of Egypt.
10. (:28) The Lord will strike you with madness, blindness and confusion of heart.

The history of Israel is the history of God's judgements. In fact, the history of our own lives will be the history of God's judgments. Can you see the judgement of God, in covenant, on your life for blessing and cursing, plenty and barrenness, joy and sadness? OT history is the description of God's judgements on human sin. Consider Saul (1Sam 13:11-15), David (2Sam 12:7-23) and Solomon (Deut 17:16-18 and 1Kings 10:26-11:4).

God's Judgement on Human Behaviour

There are two passages that we will consider that concern the progress of God's judgement on human nature.

Rom 1:18-32. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness in men.

(:21) They do not glorify (recognise) God, they are not thankful, they become futile in their thinking and their foolish hearts are darkened.

(:22) Professing to be wise they become foolish.

(:23) They exchange the glory of God for animal images.

(:24) God gives them over to uncleanness and the mutual dishonouring of their bodies.

(:25) they exchange to truth for the lie and worship the creature as (instead of) the creator. [Evolution makes the creature the creator, the product the producer, what happens the cause of what happens.]

(:26) God gives them over to vile passions. The women go against their natural sexual expression.

(:27) The men give up the natural sexual relation with women and burn with lust for one another, receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error. [They suffer the consequences.]

(:28) By not retaining God in Knowledge, God gave them over to a debased (reprobate) mind which enables them to perform all kinds of evil which Paul proceeds to list (:29-:32, 25 immoralities).

Eph 4:17-19. This is what happens (God's judgement) in unbelief.

1. They commence with futility (emptiness) in thinking.

2. Their understanding is darkened. They cannot work out what is going on. They cannot see answers.
3. They are alienated from the life that is in God.
4. This is because of the (wilful) ignorance that is in them.
5. They are, in fact, blind in their heart. They are not seeing anything in their spirit. The heart seems to be the combination of spirit and soul. That is, with our heart we see (have revelation) and feel (which is spirit) and choose and reason (which is soul).
6. The result is that they are spirit hardened and numb to spirit activity (feeling). Nothing seems to be happening in them or to them that is not of their own imagining. They crave outside stimulation of their imagination and senses because they think that in stimulation (excitement) is life.
7. This means that they are increasingly given to the provocations and stimulations of lewdness whereby they work every kind of uncleanness (impurity) with ever increasing appetite.

We are judged for our actions.

John 5:22 The Father has committed all judgement to the Son.

John 5:27 The Father has given Him authority to execute judgement.

Acts 10:42 Christ is ordained by God to judge the living and the dead.

Acts 17:31 He will judge the earth by the Man whom He has ordained.

Rom 14:10-12 We shall all stand before the judgement seat of Christ. So each of us shall give account of himself to God.

2Cor 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for the things done in the body, according to what he has practised, whether good or bad.

1Pet 4:5 They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

Jude :14-15 Behold the Lord comes with 10,000 of His saints to execute judgement on all, to convict every soul for all their works of ungodliness which they have impiously done and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.

Rev 20:12 And I saw the dead small and great, standing before God and books were opened. And another book was opened which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things that were written in the books.

Rev 22:12 And behold I am coming quickly and My reward is with me, to give to everyone according to his work.

So judgement is in the very nature of the Christian life.

Everything depends upon God and His final summation of things.

Either we all disappear into eternal dust (Gen 3:19) OR we reappear before the Judgement seat of Jesus Christ. The Christian life is only finally meaningful and justifiable in the ultimate revelation (appearing) and judgement of our Lord Jesus Christ. Until then we live by faith and love His appearing (2Tim 4:8).

Jesus Christ and Judgement.

Jesus Christ has already brought judgement. In fact, as I invite Him into my life (Rev 3:20), I ask for His judgement of me NOW. I seek His opinion of me, not my opinion of me. I am tired of wandering around in my own opinions. I seek to know what Jesus is doing in history so that I can be a part of what He is doing. I seek to submit my agenda to His agenda. My commitment is fastened by coming under (penetrating) the Judgement. Jesus said:

Mtt 11:20-24 Woe to you Chorazin, woe to you Bethsaida ... and you Capernaum will be brought down to Hades.

Mtt 23:37-39 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem ... see your house is left to you desolate.

Mtt 23 Woe to the scribes and Pharisees ... hypocrites!

Mtt 24 This chapter includes the Signs of the Times (:3-14), the Great Tribulation (:15-28), The coming of the Son of Man (:29-31), the parable of the Fig Tree (:32-34) 'Heaven and earth will pass away but my words will by no means pass away' (24:35), [the words of Christ are more permanent than matter (Rev 20:11)], no one knows the Hour or the Time (:36-44), the Faithful and Wise Servant compared with the Evil Servant (:45-51).

Lk 6:24-26 Woe to you if you are rich, full, laughing and well-regarded. [Woe = warning of coming calamity or adversity.]

Lk 11:52 Woe to you lawyers [interpreters of the Mosaic law]! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter in yourself and those who were entering in you hindered. (Consider this also with regard to teachers.) See also Ezek 2:10.

From Personal judgement to Cosmic Judgement.

The Judgement of God is both personal and cosmic. All of history and matter are judged. Heaven and earth flee before the face of God in the Great White Throne Judgement (Rev 20:11). All of the powers on earth and above and below the earth are confronted and subjugated by the ascended cosmic Christ.

2Thess 2:1-12.

1. That Day will not come until the falling away occurs first.
2. The man of sin is revealed who is the son of perdition.
3. The man of sin exalts himself as God, sitting in the Temple of God, presenting himself as God. (This is deception.)
4. There is a restraining force controlling the revelation.
5. The mystery of lawlessness is already at work.
6. The restraining (hand) will release/reveal the lawless one whom the Lord will destroy with the breath of His mouth and the brightness of His coming.
7. The coming of the lawless one will be according to the working of Satan with power, signs and lying wonders.
8. This unrighteous deception is among those who perish because they did not receive the love of the truth. They believe the lie.