

# Who Is Jesus?

## Judge of All

Physical death is something that awaits all of us. The statistics are staggering: 10 of out of every 10 people will die. Since dead people don't usually tell us about their post-life experiences, many of us will leave this life having no idea what to expect beyond. Fortunately, the Bible gives us all the information we need to know to be completely prepared. It tells us that some day Jesus will come to Earth a second time, and after He takes His place as the king of Heaven and Earth, all who are living and all who have ever lived will be gathered together for His just and final judgment.

### How Everyone Will Be Judged

All people will individually stand before God and testify to Him about their lives. We will all see that we fall short of the objective of our lives: to love God and to live a life that matches His character, thanking Him and giving Him praise in our actions. God's judgment is great because it is completely just; He knows all and cannot misjudge as we can. His judgment is also great because the standard is fair: if we want to live with Him, we must be perfect like Him. His judgment is also terrible: no human being, with the exception of Jesus, has any hope of meeting the mark. Without his sacrifice, even our greatest good deeds are insufficient to make us worthy to be in God's presence. In fact, God sees all our good deeds done apart from Him as filthy rags—literally translated “menstrual rags” (Isaiah 64:6). We did wrong, and deserve to face the due punishment.

### How Nonbelievers Will Be Judged

Whether or not you follow Jesus, you will probably find the most sobering news to be what awaits those who do receive their just punishment. The people who lived their lives not following Christ will probably feel like they have just woken up from a dream that felt so real that it must be reality, it must be all there is. They *will* live forever, but unfortunately their unending lives will be exactly what they want: life without God. Many think of hell as a fairytale pit where a hoofed man with a pitchfork will torment people, people who eagerly wish to escape but are oppressed by a malevolent god. The Bible provides a few corrections to this picture. Firstly, Satan will not rule, but rather will suffer there as well, beyond what any human being will. Secondly, the people living in hell will not seek sanctuary. One of the most detailed pictures of hell comes from Jesus, who interestingly enough happened to talk about hell more than anyone else in the Bible. In the parable of a rich man and a poor man, both men die, and the rich man goes to hell while the poor man goes to heaven. In torment, the rich man sees the poor man, now in heaven. He makes several requests over the course of the story, but never once asks that he be let out. He only orders that the poor man, whom he thinks to still be lower than him and under his control, give him a single drop of water or goes to warn his living relatives. Those who live in hell will likely exhibit the same insanity of the rich man, never realizing that they should want to be anywhere besides where they are. Remember that all this is because God finally gave them what they wanted. The great news is that we all have a chance, now, to entirely change this eternal picture for ourselves!

### How Believers Will Be Judged

Remember that Jesus *did* live the perfect life as a human being, the sole person to meet God's standard? The gospel (which means good news) is that He gave His life for us when he was crucified and we have the opportunity to swap places with Him! I imagine that as I stand being judged, Jesus will look over my life and I will despair more and more until He finishes and says, “Oh, wait, one more thing. The punishment for these crimes has already been carried out. I died and felt the wrath of God in your place. Now come and enjoy your rest!” When I enter heaven, God will see me not as my once-sinful self but rather as His perfect son. If I were not following Jesus, no such exchange would happen—I would merely be seen as my imperfect self and justly sent to hell. However, my reward in Jesus will even extend beyond salvation: God Himself will “sing loudly” and rejoice over me (Zephaniah 3:17)! The judgment of Jesus will be a terrifying experience, but the future bliss that we may have with Him will be so great that it will eclipse any suffering we have ever experienced.

### What Does Judgment Mean for Us?

The pattern of the Bible is that God acts and we respond. God has given us the knowledge that we will face judgment, so it's our turn to decide what to do that knowledge. All will be judged, all will see their failures, and all will be declared guilty. We're more messed up than we would ever like to believe. However, at the same time, we're all more loved than we could ever imagine. Give your life to Jesus, and on the day of judgment, He will give you His.

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