
Words of Truth

Taking God Seriously

By: Brian A. Yeager

Do you think God is a joke? Seemingly, most people do. God says that Jesus is going to judge all of humanity past and present (Matthew 25:31-46, John 5:28-29, II Corinthians 5:10, I Thessalonians 4:13-17, and II Peter 3:9-14). God says that the Day of Judgment will be at an unknown time (Matthew 24:35-36 and Mark 13:31-33). God says that Jesus will come as a thief in the night (I Thessalonians 5:1-8). Now let me ask again, do you think God is a joke? If you said "NO", are you living your life as if Jesus could come right now? Are you ready to give an account to Him for all that you say and do (Romans 14:11-12)? If not, you either do think God is a joke or you're just plain stupid. Which one is it? If you're not ready, how long is it wise to put it off (Matthew 25:1-13)?

Most of the time people live life like there is always a tomorrow. The word of God says that is not how we should live (James 4:13-16). Most of the time people live life as though they can wait to fully repent of their sins and be saved. The word of God says that is not how we should live (Matthew 24:42-51). The consequence of any sin, whether seemingly small or great, is separation from God (I Corinthians 6:9-11 and Galatians 5:19-21), getting His vengeance (II Thessalonians 1:7-9), and eternal damnation in the lake of fire (Revelation 21:8). God says that it is better to cut off body parts or to pluck out your eye than to go to Hell (Mark 9:42-48). Do you believe Him? Do you think He is joking?

The entirety of the word of God shows us a pattern concerning our Heavenly Father and how we should take Him seriously. Statements such as this should stick in our minds: *"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God"* (Hebrews 10:26-31). We do greatly err if we think God will not act on His promise to punish those who walk contrary to His will.

God Does Not Issue Empty Threats

Under the Law of Moses there were many days of Judgment from God. If you start reading in Isaiah chapter thirteen and continue forward you can see such for many consistent chapters. However, even though God was very active in judgment, people still thought He was not serious about His threats. God did not allow that to go on without His response. Notice: *"And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish*

the men that are settled on their lees: that say in their heart, The LORD will not do good, neither will he do evil. Therefore their goods shall become a booty, and their houses a desolation: they shall also build houses, but not inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, but not drink the wine thereof. The great day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, A day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers. And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the LORD: and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD'S wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land" (Zephaniah 1:12-18).

When you read texts like that, don't you think that those people in Jerusalem sure weren't using their brains? In times past, when God got angry He caused massive destruction (Genesis 6:5-7:23, Genesis 18:16-19:28, Genesis 38:1-10, Exodus 12:1-30, Leviticus 10:1-3, Numbers 16:1-35, Numbers 21:1-9, II Samuel 24:1-17, I Kings 13:1-24, etc.). If you are a student of the Scriptures, you know many more examples could be provided. The fact is, God has proven of Old that He is not a joke.

God hasn't changed (Malachi 3:6). While He may choose to wait until the Judgment Day for humanity to be judged and punished, He still is severe. He even chose in the first century to send punishment prior to the Judgment Day (Matthew 24:1-34 and Acts 5:1-11). There is nothing more severe than Hell though. Such is eternal and final. However, even before that, when sinners die they still face torment until the Day of Judgment (Luke 16:19-31). Again, God is no joke! He is to be taken seriously. His warnings are true!

God Is Not A Liar

"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good... Because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he... And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent... Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God: Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is: which keepeth truth for ever... In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Numbers 23:19, Deuteronomy 32:3-4, I Samuel 15:29, Psalms 146:5-6, and Titus 1:2).

Conclusion

The past two articles should make us all take a step back and truly examine ourselves. I know of no sin in my life, yet I still quiver thinking about I Peter 4:16-19. At the same time, there is great comfort to be had in being a faithful servant of the Almighty God. There is great comfort in taking Him seriously and being properly prepared for the Judgment Day. Our next article will carry on from that thought and present the other side of taking God seriously. We have considered the severity of God. We should also consider His goodness (Romans 11:22).