

The day finally arrived when Forrest Gump died and went to Heaven. He is at the Pearly Gates, and is met by Peter. Peter says, "Well, Forrest, it's certainly good to see you. We have heard a lot about you. I must inform you that the place is filling up fast, and we've been administering an entrance examination for everyone. The test is short and you have to pass the test before you can get into heaven.

Peter asks him what days of the week begin with the letter T? Forrest says, "Well, how many days in the week begin with the letter "T"? That one's easy. That'd be Today and Tomorrow." Peter's eyes open wide and he says, "Forrest, that's not what I was thinking, but I'll give you credit for that answer."

Peter asks him a second question. "How many seconds are there in a year?" "Now that one's harder," says Forrest, "but I think the only answer can be twelve." Astounded, Peter says, "Twelve? Twelve? Forrest, how in Heaven's name could you come up with twelve seconds in a year?" Forest says, "Shucks, there's got to be twelve, January 2nd, February 2nd, March 2nd." Peter interrupts him and says, "Hold it, I see where you're going with this, and I'll have to give you credit for that one too."

Let's go on to the final question." "Can you tell me God's first name?" "Sure" Forrest replied, "its Andy." "Andy!" Peter said, "Ok, I can understand how you came up with your answers to my first two questions, but just how in the world did you come up with the name of Andy as the first name of God?" "That was the easiest one of all," Forrest replied. "Andy walks with me, Andy talks with me, Andy, tells me I am his own." So Peter opens the Pearly Gates and said, "Run, Forrest, run."

But the point of the story is that we all have our own ideas about what judgement day will be like, but there will be nowhere to run on judgment day. There's not going to be a test, but what there is going to be is a spiritual examination. Everything that you did in your life whether good or bad is going to be revealed and God is going to be looking for the mark of allegiance.

I want to share with you 4 points this morning on the subject of judgment. And point number 1 is this, "The One who is doing the judging on judgment day is the One who showed the world just how much He loves the world."

Now many of you might be thinking to yourselves, "Wait a minute, what right does God have to judge me?" Well that's a fair question, so let me go ahead and try and answer that question for you. One of the most quoted Bible scriptures is John 3:16, where it says that, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son."

But what does that mean? It means that God sent His Son, Jesus into the world, not because people prayed for that to happen and not because people were so good in their lives. He sent His one and only Son into the world to save sinners like you and I.

Now there is a group called the Black eyed peas who had a number one hit a few weeks ago, and they asked God this question, "Where is the love?" And again that's a fair question to ask anyone in today's society. But our God answers that question by asking us to read, Romans 5:8. "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Now what does that mean? Does that mean that while I was busy sinning God died for me? Yes! It means that but it means more than that. Does it mean that while I was try to impress my friends with how much I can drink, Christ died for me anyway? Yes! It means that, but it means more than that. Well, does it mean that every time we lied to our mother or father, Christ died for us anyway? Yes! It means that, but it means more than that. Well what does it mean then?

It means that even when you never even gave God a second thought, He sent His Son to die for you anyway. It means that even when you were away having sex with someone before you were married, Jesus died for you anyway. It means that even when my wife and I were busy taking drugs and getting drunk, Jesus died for us anyway.

So you need to understand that whether you are a Christian or not this morning Jesus Christ died for you anyway. So just remember the next time you hear that song, "Where is the love?" you can point people to Jesus and say, "I didn't even know Jesus, but He died for me anyway".

There was a school bus on its way home one night but the bus driver realised that the brakes didn't work; he didn't know what to do because the bus was full of children. So he realised that the situation was going to be fatal, he knew that he was going to die and probably kill all of the children when the bus finally crashes.

As he was driving he noticed a farmer's field up ahead but there was a young boy at the gate, sadly the driver had no choice, he drove into the young boy but managed to save himself and the rest of the children. When the parents of the children were looking for the bus driver to thank him for saving their children they found him at the front of the bus with his arms around the young boy he called killed. When one of the parents asked, "Who was the young boy?" Someone in the crowd replied, "His Son".

Now that's what God done for each and every one of us and that's how He showed His love to the world. Because when you finally begin to understand that love, you will also begin to understand that there is hope. Because Jesus goes on to say in John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

When God came to earth in the form of Jesus, he brought hope with Him. James 4:12 "There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy." The choice is yours, will you be saved or will you be destroyed?

And that brings me to my next point; The One who created human life also has the right to destroy it.

This woman was returning home from work one evening and her husband noticed that their neighbour's son was sitting alone outside his house. So they asked the boy what he was doing there at that time of the night. "I've run away from home," he said. "You haven't got very far have you?" said the man. The little boy looked at him and said, "I'm not allowed to cross the road."

And the point of the story is that God gives us rules for our own safety. The One who created the heavens and the earth has the right to desire obedience from us. The One who sent His One and only Son into the world to die for our sins has the right to desire obedience from us.

Hebrews 5:7-9 "During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him."

The Hebrew writer tells us that Jesus suffered but at the same time He learned obedience. So if God's own Son had to learn obedience, who are we to say to God, "God, you have no right to ask for obedience from me!" And we do that with our parents don't we? They tell you to come back into the house at 10:30 and you will stay out until 10:45. They tell you not to have a party in the house when they go on holiday, but you'll go ahead and have a party anyway. And you do that because you think you are going to get away with it.

No matter how much of a warning your parents give you about the consequences, you do it because you think you are smarter than they are. And people do that in the religious world too don't they?

They read **Romans 10:17** where it says, "Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ." They hear someone preaching about Christ and they think just because they have heard about God they will be saved. They read **John 6:40** where Jesus says, "For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

And so because they believe there is a God, they think this is all they need to get into heaven. Or maybe they read **Acts 17:30** where it says, "In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent." And so they repent and turn from their sinful life towards God and they think this is all the obedience God requires from them.

Or maybe they read **Romans 10:9** where it says, "That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." And so they confess Jesus is lord and again they think that's it, they will be saved.

And the list can go on and on, but Jesus tells us that if you want to show total obedience to me then you need the mark of allegiance. You need to be baptised for the forgiveness of your sins. **Acts 2:38** "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

You see the Holy Spirit is the mark of allegiance. And when you were baptised into Christ you received the Holy Spirit as a gift from God to dwell in you and to act as a deposit guaranteeing you a place in heaven.

Ephesians 1:13+14 "And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the praise of his glory."

How many times have you seen a sign telling you there is danger if you do this or that? Maybe you see a sign that says, "Do not touch high voltage electricity." Now are you going to obey that sign or just ignore and die?

You see when Jesus says, He wants you to believe and repent, He doesn't just mean believe and repent. He wants total obedience to the gospel. He wants you to believe, repent, and confess Jesus as lord but He also wants you to be baptised for the forgiveness of your sins.

You see, without Jesus' death, there is no resurrection. Without Jesus' blood, there is no hope and without baptism there is no forgiveness. But it doesn't stop there, He wants obedience from you all of your life.

Now you need to ask yourself a serious question this morning, **am I going to be obedient to God and so be saved? Or am I going to just ignore His warnings and so be destroyed?** Now that's your choice, because no one can make that choice for you.

That's my next point; **On judgement day everyone will appear in front of God the same way, whether they are a Christian or not.**

What's judgement day going to be like? What are you going to say when you are face to face with the judge?

What about **Robbie Williams**, what's he going to say, to save him from hell when he's face to face with God? **Let me entertain you!** Or what about **Eninem**, what's he going to say, to save him from hell when he's face to face with God on judgement day? Is he going to say, **"God, Let's get down to business!"**

I can imagine God saying to him, **"Didn't you say, look if you had one shot, one opportunity, to seize everything you ever wanted, in one moment, would you capture it or just let it slip?"** Maybe God would say, **"Now you listen, you had your chance to be obedient to me, but you did let it slip."**

What is **Eninem** going to do then? I would imagine that his, **"Palms would become sweaty; his weak arms would become heavy."** Maybe he would be sick and have, **"Vomit on his sweater already from his mum's spaghetti."** And if he never repented and turned to God in his lifetime, it really will be a case of, **"Snap back to reality, oh there goes gravity,"** when he realises just how unworthy he is before God.

You see life is short and you can't make up your mind to be obedient to God on judgement day. God wants obedience now in your lifetime, He wants faithfulness now. You see the time is coming when everyone on earth and under the earth, everything demon in hell is going to face judgement. And whether you are a Christian or not every one of us will appear before God and do the same thing and we will all say 3 little words.

So what is everyone going to do and what are those 3 little words? **Philippians 2:5-11** **"Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."**

You're going to bow down to God on your knees and you are going to confess with your tongue that Jesus is indeed lord. And if you haven't been obedient to God before that time, you can be sure that on judgement day you will obey His words. There won't be any discussions about what you have done.

You can't say, **"Well, I thought you were a God of love, where is the love?"** Because all of His faithful followers will just say, **"Do you remember the Black eyed peas? "God sent His love when He sent His Son."**

You see we don't get into heaven because we are so good here on earth. We get into heaven because Jesus was so good 2000 years ago. We don't get into heaven because we perform well now. We get into heaven because Jesus performed like no man could on Calvary. So you can't earn your salvation but you need to think about the words of **Lincoln Park**. **"I tried so hard and got so far, but in the end it doesn't even matter, I had to fall, to lose it all, but in the end it doesn't even matter."**

Isaiah 64:6 tells us that **"All our good deeds are like filthy rags to God."** It doesn't matter how hard you tried to be a good person, if you haven't got the mark of allegiance, you haven't been obedient. If YOU haven't died to self, and been buried with Christ and been risen again to a new life in the waters of baptism, all your efforts are in vain.

You see, no one is good enough for heaven; no one even deserves to get into heaven. It's all down to Jesus and His work just over 2000 years ago on the cross.

It's because of what Jesus done that we get access into heaven; it's nothing to do with us. All God wants from us is obedience.

And He is only going to say, 1 of 2 things to us all on that day. He's either going to say, "Well done, good and faithful servant!" Or He's going to say, "Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels." But you can't choose on that day what God is going to say to you, you have to choose now.

And that brings me to my final point; God knows what is going on in the world and judgement is certain. Please turn your Bibles to Genesis 4 where we find that Cain has killed his brother Abel out of jealousy.

Genesis 4:9-15 "Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" "I don't know," he replied. "Am I my brother's keeper?" The LORD said, "What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground. Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth." Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is more than I can bear. Today you are driving me from the land, and I will be hidden from your presence; I will be a restless wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me." But the LORD said to him, "Not so; if anyone kills Cain, he will suffer vengeance seven times over." Then the LORD put a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would kill him."

Evidently Cain thought that nobody would notice his crime. "I'll take him out into the field, we'll be all by ourselves, I'll kill my brother, who's going to know?" And so God comes to him and says, "Cain, where is your brother?" And this arrogant fool thinks he can even fool God. "I don't know, I don't make it my job to keep up with my brother". And God says, "What have you done? Listen!"

Now I'm sure there was a pause and Cain turned his head and he hears the sound of the birds in the trees, the sound of the breeze against the grain. "What? What?" Then God said, "Your brother's blood cries up to me from the ground". And for the first time God curses a man.

And Cain, he is so hardened in sin at this point, he doesn't respond with remorse, he doesn't fall down on his face and repent. He responds with reproach, he says, "You can't do that, that's too much, I can't bear what you've done." Basically he's saying, "God, you don't have the right to assign that kind of judgment." Let me tell you something about the people of the world, they are always blasting God at his right to assign judgment.

Have you ever heard this question? How can a loving God send people to hell? The devil has been getting people to ask that question since the beginning of creation. That is not the question the Bible asks. The Bible says up front that a Holy God has the right to assign judgment. Here is the question of the Bible, How can a Holy God let people into heaven? How can a Holy God let me into heaven?

And that is the question the Bible answers. Now the amazing thing to me is that God put a mark on Cain to say to the rest of the world, "Even this evil man's blood is my property, so don't touch it." But God also sent out another word. He put the world on alert that God hears the cries of the Abel's who have been treated unjustly and he will take up their cause.

One of the things that burdens us as believers, is that we see a world where there is little justice and we get upset with God. Why do innocent babies get shot when there is a war? Who's going to speak for all the infants that were torn out of wombs by abortionists? What about all the women who have been raped and the people who did it were never caught?

All the millions and millions of kids who have been abused and violated and nothings ever happened?

You know the list just goes on and on and on and on and on. And sometimes it gets so big that people even start to doubt God. And they see this world that is so full of un-judged evil; they start to think that nobody is in control.

The story of Cain and Abel tells us that judgement is certain. God has heard the cry of every innocent drop of blood that's ever been spilt. Revelation 6:9-11 "When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?" Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and brothers who were to be killed as they had been was completed."

That's probably not the answer you want to hear to that question. "God, how long are you going to wait before you avenge the blood of all the righteous people on earth"? And the answer is, "I'll take care of it, but not yet." But you need to understand; nobody is going to escape the justice of God's court.

I heard about a man, who was convicted of trying to bribe a witness, his lawyers filed appeals. So he spent 3 years after he was convicted out of jail through the appeals process. They lost all the appeals and so he was sentenced to 4 years in prison. They never told him where to report or where to go, so he never went. And for 7 years he just went on about his life doing his own thing. Until finally someone caught the mistake and went to get him. I guess he just thought, "I won't have to pay, I've escaped justice".

And that happens in the world, sometimes in the world, people fall through the cracks in the justice system. But God's justice system doesn't have any cracks. 2 Corinthians 5:10 says, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad."

You see the blood of Abel still cries for justice. Now you might be thinking to yourself, "Well wait a minute, I've made mistakes, I've gone the way of Cain in my life, what hope is there for me, if all the people I've hurt are crying for justice?" Well, Abel still speaks, but loved ones Abel doesn't have to have the last word.

Let me close by telling you that Jesus speaks too and Jesus speaks a better word than Abel. In Hebrews 12 we are told "How awesome God is, how God is a consuming fire, how God is a God that makes men tremble and quake." But this is what it says about us. Hebrews 12:22-24, "But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel."

You see, Abel's blood cries out for judgement, but Jesus' blood cries out for mercy. Abel's blood sends the sinner away from God to wander and Jesus' blood opens the way back to God. And so the Hebrew writer said back in Hebrews 10:19 "Brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus."

All men can't hear the blood of Abel but God can but there is something else that God can hear that men can't hear. God hears the blood of Jesus and God hears every time the blood of Jesus speaks for a sinner. Every time.

And if they do not have the blood of Jesus to speak for them, the blood of Abel will speak against them and they will be lost. The Bible says in **Romans 8:34** "Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died--more than that, who was raised to life--is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us." The mark of Cain says, "I'm guilty." The mark of allegiance says, "It's paid for, by the blood of Jesus."

If you don't have the mark of allegiance in you this morning, then that means you have the mark of Cain, the mark of disobedience. Who knows when judgement day will come but the question you need to ask yourself this morning is this, **are you prepared to meet your maker?**