



The Armor of Faith

Topic Summary: The Profession of Faith Judgment of the Living and the Dead



Christ the King
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Introduction

[Greeting:] → Welcome to “The Armor of Faith,” a show where we hope to bring our listeners closer to the Word of God and the blessings we receive through living in the fullness of the Catholic faith. My name is Doug and I will be your host as we discuss the blessings of the Church Christ built upon Peter.

I am joined today by my panel: [names]

Our panelists provide support and catechesis for religious formation at St. Philip Benizi Catholic Mission in Cedaredge CO. Our panelists are also in the process of study as lay Dominicans who are also known as the Order of Preachers. So, welcome to our panelists as well as our listeners.

Let us open with a prayer:

Heavenly Father, we lift up our hearts in thanks and praise for this opportunity to open and share your Holy Word this day. We pray that You are with us and all our listeners as we share with one another the blessings of faith. We pray You will grant us wisdom and understanding as we seek to learn Your Holy Truth.

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit we pray.

Discussion:

During our last session, we discussed that as we reflect on the resurrection, we must contemplate that it not only represents the past or what will come, but it also draws us to the life in which we are engaged. As we concluded, we discussed that “we are brethren not by nature, but by the gift of grace,” and that this grace calls us to love one another. If we understand this, we must realize that our new life is not found in the ways of hate or injustice, but in our efforts of love to do what is right and just for all who cross our path.

We also mentioned that the good news is that we may be forgiven for our failings, but that forgiveness requires a choice; a choice of contriteness and the effort to repent. The question before us as we face each day, as we make the choices of our daily journey is, will we succumb to the desires of the world, or will we endeavor to follow the One who lived, died, and rose so we might join Him forever within His kingdom where love is shared by all?

As we reflect, we must consider that before we may enter into His kingdom, there is a **judgment** to come, and that is the subject for our discussion today.

As we say the Profession of **Faith**, we say:

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

As we follow this portion of our Profession of **Faith**, we observe that after the resurrection, Jesus ascended to heaven and is now seated at the right hand of the Father, from whence Jesus will come in glory to judge the living and the dead.

In Matthew 28:16-20, we read:

16 The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped, but they doubted. 18 Then Jesus approached and said to them, “All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”
(Matthew 28:16-20)

(Question: Here we are told that all power in heaven and on earth has been given to Jesus and that He has directed His disciples to teach all nations to observe all that He has commanded them. As Jesus has the power to command, what other power do we might think is included in what was granted to Him?)

As we examine this power of **judgment**, I would like to share a passage from Malachi 3:13-21, which reads:

*13 Your words are too much for me, says the LORD.
You ask, “What have we spoken against you?”
14 You have said, “It is useless to serve God;
what do we gain by observing God’s requirements,*

*And by going about as mourners
before the LORD of hosts?*

15 *But we call the arrogant blessed;
for evildoers not only prosper
but even test God and escape.”*

16 *Then those who fear the LORD spoke with one another,
and the LORD listened attentively;
A record book was written before him
of those who fear the LORD and esteem his name.*

17 *They shall be mine, says the LORD of hosts,
my own special possession, on the day when I take action.
And I will have compassion on them,
as a man has compassion on his son who serves him.*

18 *Then you will again distinguish
between the just and the wicked,
Between the person who serves God,
and the one who does not.*

19 *For the day is coming, blazing like an oven,
when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble,
And the day that is coming will set them on fire,
leaving them neither root nor branch,
says the LORD of hosts.*

20 *But for you who fear my name, the sun of justice
will arise with healing in its wings:
And you will go out leaping like calves from the stall
21 and tread down the wicked;
They will become dust under the soles of your feet,
on the day when I take action, says the LORD of hosts.*

(Malachi 3:13-21)

(Question: So, in verse 14 of this passage, we read the lament, “*It is useless to serve God; what do we gain by observing God’s requirements...?*” The complaint continues, “*But we call the arrogant blessed; for evildoers not only prosper but even test God and escape.*” (Malachi 3:14-15) As we reflect upon this exchange, what is the concern which is being raised and what is the reply of God?)

(CCC 678) “Following in the steps of the prophets and John the Baptist, Jesus announced the **judgment** of the Last Day in his preaching. Then will the conduct of each one and the secrets of hearts be brought to light.....”

2 “*There is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, nor secret that will not be known.* 3 *Therefore whatever you have said in the darkness will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered behind closed doors will be proclaimed on the housetops.*” (Luke 12:2-5)

(Question: Here, we see a foreshadowing of the accounting we will face. What do we **believe** this reveals as to over what we shall be **judged**?)

4 I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body but after that can do no more. 5 I shall show you whom to fear. Be afraid of the one who after killing has the power to cast into Gehenna; yes, I tell you, be afraid of that one.”
(Luke 12:2-5)

(Question: Here we are told to not be afraid of those who kill the body, but of the one who can cast us into Gehenna. How do you think someone might be able to do that to us and who might that be?)

21 “You have heard that it was said to your ancestors, ‘You shall not kill; and whoever kills will be liable to judgment.’ 22 But I say to you, whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment, and whoever says to his brother, ‘Raqa,’ will be answerable to the Sanhedrin, and whoever says, ‘You fool,’ will be liable to fiery Gehenna. 23 Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar, and there recall that your brother has anything against you, 24 leave your gift there at the altar, go first and be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift. 25 Settle with your opponent quickly while on the way to court with him. Otherwise your opponent will hand you over to the judge, and the judge will hand you over to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. 26 Amen, I say to you, you will not be released until you have paid the last penny. (Matthew 5:21-26)

(CCC 678) “.....Then will the culpable **unbelief** that counted the offer of God’s grace as nothing be condemned. Our attitude about our neighbor will disclose acceptance or refusal of grace and divine love....”

(Question: We are told here that our attitude about our neighbor will disclose acceptance or refusal of grace. How does our anger and failure to reconcile with our brother demonstrate refusal of God's grace?)

16 Have the same regard for one another; do not be haughty but associate with the lowly; do not be wise in your own estimation. 17 Do not repay anyone evil for evil; be concerned for what is noble in the sight of all. 18 If possible, on your part, live at peace with all. 19 Beloved, do not look for revenge but leave room for the wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” 20 Rather, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.” 21 Do not be conquered by evil but conquer evil with good. (Romans 12:16-21)

(Question: Here, we are told, if our enemy has need, care for them; for by doing so we will heap burning coals upon their head. How might we think that works and is there a trap here we might fall into?)

14 If you forgive others their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions.
(Matthew 6:14-15)

35 A good person brings forth good out of a store of goodness, but an evil person brings forth evil out of a store of evil. 36 I tell you, on the day of judgment people will render an account for every careless word they speak.” (Matthew 12:35-36)

(**Question:** We probably remember the old childhood saying, “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.” As we examine this scripture, we might want to rethink that saying because it appears that our words can come back to bite us. Why do our words matter and why might we be called to render an accounting of them?)

(CCC 678) “....On the last day Jesus will say: “Truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.”

31 “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit upon his glorious throne, 32 and all the nations will be assembled before him. And he will separate them one from another; as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. 34 Then the king will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, 36 naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.’ 37 Then the righteous will answer him and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? 39 When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?’ 40 And the king will say to them in reply, ‘Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.’ 41 Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 42 For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, 43 a stranger and you gave me no welcome, naked and you gave me no clothing, ill and in prison, and you did not care for me.’ 44 Then they will answer and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and not minister to your needs?’ 45 He will answer them, ‘Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me.’ 46 And these will go off to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.” (Matthew 25:31-46)

(**Question:** As we read this passage, we see another explanation as to what Jesus might **judge** about us. There doesn't seem to be any mention of social accolades, prestige of position, the number of trophies we have earned, what we choose to wear each day, or even what might be in our bank account at the time of our passing. What is the nature of this **judgment** and what might we do to do what is right and just in the eyes of heaven?)

[Jesus Instructed His disciples] *12 As you enter a house, wish it peace. 13 If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; if not, let your peace return to you. 14 Whoever will not receive you or listen to your words—go outside that house or town and shake the dust from your feet. 15 Amen, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.* (Matthew 10:12-15)

(Question: After giving these instructions to the disciples He sent forth, Jesus states that it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah than those who will not receive His disciples and rejects their words. Why do we think this might be?)

(Question: As we look back over these elements of these few examples from scripture, we see that a pretty long checklist could be developed from which to evaluate what we have done and what we have failed to do during the course of our lives. Knowing all the mistakes and bad things I have done in my few short years, I might be tempted to collapse in despair. What would you tell me should give me hope?)

41 At the judgment, the men of Nineveh will arise with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and there is something greater than Jonah here. (Matthew 12:41)

16 For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. 18 Whoever believes in him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. (John 3:16)

Quotes:

"No more is it possible for the evildoer, the avaricious, and the treacherous to hide from God than it is for the virtuous. Every man will receive the eternal punishment or reward which his actions deserve. Indeed, if all men recognized this, no one would choose evil even for a short time, knowing that he would incur the eternal sentence of fire. On the contrary, he would take every means to control himself and to adorn himself in virtue, so that he might obtain the good gifts of God and escape the punishments"

– Saint Justin Martyr, Father of the Church, (First Apology 12 [A.D. 151])

For there are three ways of performing an act of mercy: the merciful word, by forgiving and by comforting; secondly, if you can offer no word, then pray - that too is mercy; and thirdly, deeds of mercy. And when the Last Day comes, we shall be **judged** from this, and on this basis we shall receive the eternal verdict.

– St Faustina

And even if the sins of soul are as dark as night, when the sinner turns to My mercy he gives Me the greatest praise and is the glory of My Passion.

– St Faustina

Let our **judgment** of souls cease, for God's mercy upon them is extraordinary.

– St Faustina

"If a man finds it very hard to forgive injuries, let him look at a Crucifix, and think that Christ shed all His Blood for him, and not only forgave His enemies, but even prayed His Heavenly Father to forgive them also. Let him remember that when he says the Pater Noster [Our Father],

every day, instead of asking pardon for his sins, he is calling down vengeance on himself.”
– Saint Philip Neri

Final Thoughts:

As we discussed the **judgment** we all shall face, we see there are a number of things over which we will be **judged**. It is true, it is by the grace of God and our **faith** in the only begotten Son of the Father by which we have the opportunity to receive salvation, but it is not as simple as saying, “We **believe**.” If we do **believe**, then, there is a small matter of how we choose to live that **belief**.

Of course, we will make mistakes along the way. We are fortunate in that we are not **judged** such that we are condemned by one transgression. We are blessed that our life is **judged** through the merciful eyes of our Lord and Savior. As we discussed, we will be forgiven if we **believe** in Him and approach Him with a contrite heart which is also willing to forgive as we hope to be forgiven. It sounds simple, but we should reflect upon the challenge we face, and that is what we harbor and may be buried within our hearts.

As we do our examination of conscience and seek forgiveness and reconciliation, let us also ask Jesus to guide us in our feelings and our endeavors so we give no place for evil to hide within us.

Wrap Up: Well, our time has come to an end. We hope you will be able to join us next week as we pick up our discussion with

Let us conclude with a prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank you for this opportunity to open and discuss Your Holy Word. We pray that as we go our separate ways, You will continue to walk with us and help us to see how we may put on the armor of **truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation**, and the **Word** of the gospel not only for the benefit of our lives, but also the lives of all who cross our path. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, we pray. Amen.

Thank you all and God bless.

Next Session: The Profession of Faith: I Believe in the Holy Spirit