

## WEEK 2: PEACE/JUDGMENT

READING: 1 Corinthians 3:10-16 (Read scripture aloud)

*“10 According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. 11 For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— 13 each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. 14 If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.*

*16 Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? 17 If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.”*

### INTRODUCTION

Good morning, we're Aaron and Kelly Briles. This morning we will be lighting the Peace candle, and introducing the second of the four last things: Judgment. If you missed last week and the idea of the last things sounds unfamiliar, the Four Last Things: Death, Judgment, Heaven and Hell, are the traditional Advent sermon series of the Church, intended to help us prepare our hearts for Christ's coming.

Reflecting on the last thing of Judgment is like being visited by the ghosts in Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol. It is an invitation to look honestly at the way we live our lives and to change. As it said in our Scripture reading, it's an opportunity to consider if we're building our lives upon the foundation of Jesus with things which are eternal and pleasing to God, or if we're spending our days on that which is temporal and passing away.

### DEVOTIONAL

There are two prevailing notions of what the Judgment Day will be like- one which places us as what that preacher of the Great Awakening, Johnathan Edwards, called “sinners in the hands of an angry God.” And the other, which assumes that since Jesus has taken our sin, there is no need for us to give an account of the way we lived; that in receiving Jesus we received not only the “get out of hell free” card, but the “get out of judgment free” one also. What has Scripture told us we ought to expect about the Day of Judgment?

We are told that everyone will stand before the judgment seat of God, from the pastor to the pagan, and that “God will repay each person according to what they have done.” (2 Cor 5:10, Romans 2:6, Proverbs 24:12). This is not to weigh if we did enough good things to get into heaven - Jesus alone makes us righteous before God, and because of Him, the Judgment seat has also become a seat of mercy to those who have placed their faith in Him. Our works will be judged, but we who are in Christ Jesus will not be condemned. The Judgment, while painful, is necessary, like the cauterizing of a festering wound. No child wants the splinter pulled or the bone set, but it must be cleaned out and set aright so that it may be healed.

ADVENT: THE LAST THINGS by Caitlyn Wymer

As we light the Peace candle, we remember Jesus, our prince of Peace, who has reconciled to himself all things and made peace by the blood of his cross. We thank Him, that we may even view the day of Judgment with peaceful expectation, knowing that the victory of our Savior and elder brother has made us eternally secure. And we look forward to the glorious return of our King. Of the increase of His government and of peace, there shall be no end. Come, Lord Jesus.

**LIGHTING OF THE HOPE & PEACE CANDLE: Light Two of The Purple Candles.**

**QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:**

Now, we invite you to pause and reflect on these questions with the Holy Spirit....

- Imagine our gentle, loving Jesus sitting before you, watching you with kind eyes. You begin to talk through your life together- asking each other questions, laughing together, weeping together. What are some of the things you are eager to tell him that you did? What do you think would make him proud? (Pause kind of long)
- What are some of the things you would rather not tell him? The things you wish you hadn't done? (Again, long pause)
- And when all that's done, Jesus looks in your eyes and smiles and forgives you. Your sins and regrets and burdens roll off, never to be picked up again, finally dealt with and totally powerless over you. And you enter your life of eternal union with Jesus truly, totally free.

**CLOSING PRAYER**

**SONG RECOMMENDATION: Before The Throne Of God Above**