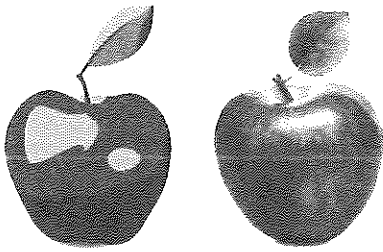


Christ Will Judge



Topic

God's judgment on humanity

Theme

God will judge unbelievers for their sins, condemning them to eternity in the Lake of Fire.

Desired Learner Response

The learner will share the gospel with the lost in light of God's coming judgment on them.

Materials

- Resources 1 and 16
- Paper and markers
- Shoe box

Scripture Focus

Various passages

Summary

God will judge the lost during the Tribulation, putting them all to death when He returns to earth to set up His rule. Then after the Millennium, all unbelievers from the beginning of time will be judged before Christ at the Great White Throne Judgment. Christ will condemn the lost to eternity in the Lake of Fire. None of their names will be found in the Lamb's Book of Life.

Outline

I. God's Judgment during the Tribulation

- A. Timing of the judgment (Jer. 30; Dan. 9:24–27; Rev. 3:10; 19:7–16)
- B. Descriptions of the judgment
 1. The seal judgments (Rev. 6)
 2. The trumpet judgments (Rev. 8:7–9:21; 11:15–19)
 3. The bowl judgments (Rev. 16)
- C. Responses to the judgment (Rev. 7:9–17; 11:1–14; 16:9, 11, 21)

II. Christ's Final Judgment of the Lost

- A. Timing of the judgment (Rev. 19:11–16; 20)
- B. Descriptions of the judgment (Matt. 8:12; 22:13; 2 Thess. 1:9; Rev. 14:11; 20:10; 21:23; 22:5)

III. Our Responsibility in Light of God's Judgment

- A. See people as lost (Matt. 9:35–38)
- B. Share the gospel (Matt. 10:27–31; 28:18–20)

Memory Verses

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:12, 15).

Warning! Imminent Danger!

Point out to your learners that there are different types of warning signs. Some tell us of imminent danger while some tell of possible danger. “Danger! High Voltage!” is a warning of imminent danger. If you ignore that sign, you will most likely be severely injured or even killed.

“Bridge May Be Icy” is a warning of possible danger. When it is July and the temperature is soaring, that sign seems absolutely ridiculous.

Organize your learners into groups of three or four. Give each group two pieces of paper and markers. Have them make one sign warning of possible danger and another sign warning of imminent danger. They can copy signs they have seen before or come up with new ones. Give them four minutes to work and then have them share their signs with the class.

ASK: What kind of “warning sign” should we raise when talking to the lost about eternity? (Q1) *We should raise an imminent danger “warning sign.”*

ASK: Why might we fail to raise an imminent danger warning sign when talking to the lost? (Q2) *We don't want to offend them. We want to stay positive when talking about God. We don't want to turn them off.*

The Bible has a lot to say about God's coming judgment on the lost. If we ignore that reality, the lost certainly will too. We must be careful to be honest with the lost and to raise the warning of imminent danger. This lesson will challenge us to share the gospel in light of God's coming judgment on the lost.

Judgment Is Imminent

Display a shoe box. Assure your learners the box is actually empty.

ASK: How would you respond if I told you I just learned there is a bomb in this box that will go off at any moment and destroy the entire church building?

ASK: How appreciative would you be of the warning to get out of the building?

ASK: How is warning people about this threat like warning the lost about God's coming judgment on sin? *Both dangers are imminent. Warning about the bomb allows people to get out of the building and escape the explosion. Warning the lost about God's coming judgment gives them an opportunity to escape the judgment through faith in Christ.*

The Bible has a lot to say about God's coming judgment on the lost. If we ignore that reality, the lost certainly will too. We must be careful to be honest with the lost and to raise the warning of imminent danger. This lesson will challenge us to share the gospel in light of God's coming judgment on the lost.

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

The previous lesson presented the opportunity the church has to serve God now so they might receive crowns at the Judgment Seat of Christ. This lesson will focus on the terrible events happening on earth while the church is in Heaven receiving their rewards. It will also cover the condemnation of all the lost of all the ages at the Great White Throne Judgment.

The serious nature of God's judgment on the lost makes this lesson hard to teach. But we should never ignore or try to avoid the reality of the coming Tribulation and the eternal nature of God's final judgment on the lost. Now is the time to consider God's wrath and to busy ourselves with sharing the gospel while we still have the opportunity.

I. God's Judgment during the Tribulation

A. Timing of the judgment (Jer. 30; Dan. 9:24–27; Rev. 3:10; 19:7–16)

While the church is in Heaven receiving their crowns (2 Cor. 5:10) and participating in the marriage to Christ (Rev. 19:7–10), the inhabitants on earth experience the unleashing of God's wrath on their sin.

God will judge unbelieving humanity to draw Israel back to Himself (Jer. 30) and to pour out His wrath on the world (Rev. 3:10; Isa. 26:21). There is nothing that happens during the Tribulation that unbelieving humanity won't deserve. It is only by God's grace that He allows anyone now to have enjoyment in life outside of a relationship with Him. No one would survive God's wrath if we all received what we deserved.

The pouring out of God's wrath on earth will happen during the Tribulation. The Tribulation will begin sometime after the Rapture when the Antichrist signs a peace treaty with Israel (Dan. 9:27), and it will end seven years later with the second advent of Christ (Rev. 19:11–16). The Tribulation is also called Daniel's seventieth week (Dan. 9:24–27). The "week" is seven years rather than seven days. The first sixty-nine "weeks" happened from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem (Dan. 9:25; Neh. 2:1–8) to Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem (Matt. 21:1–11).

B. Descriptions of the judgment

The book of Revelation describes God's judgment on the lost during the Tribulation. This lesson does not cover each of those judgments in detail, but even a survey of the judgments will help us realize how terrible life will be for those on earth during the Tribulation.

1. The seal judgments (Rev. 6)

John continued his account of the events happening in God's throne room. He reported that Jesus, the Lamb of God, took a scroll from the Father. The scroll is the title deed to the earth. Only Jesus has the right to open the seven seals on the title deed because He died to pay the penalty for sin. As He opens each seal, events unfold that bring about God's judgment on the earth. The seventh seal brings

seven trumpets. As an angel sounds each trumpet, more events occur. The seventh trumpet brings about seven bowls that are figuratively poured out on the earth. They bring the events leading to the end of the Tribulation.

The seal judgments include the coming of the Antichrist; worldwide war; severe famine; widespread death by war, hunger, and wild animals; martyrdom of believers; and cosmic disturbances (Rev. 6).

READ: Revelation 6:12–14. **ASK:** Describe the destruction and chaos that the world will face when the sixth seal is opened. (Q3) *A total disruption of normal life; unpredictable, frightening disturbances in creation; mass panic and complete despair.*

READ: Revelation 6:15–17. **ASK:** What will the inhabitants of the earth, including the rich and kings, realize about the source of the cataclysmic disasters? (Q4) *That the Lamb Who sits on the throne is causing them and that no one can stand in the face of His wrath.*

The world will call on the mountains to fall on them. They will want to escape God's wrath and be out of His sight. They will want the circumstances to end, and they will want to avoid answering to God. But they will hide and cry out in vain.

ASK: How does reading about the seal judgments affect your appreciation for salvation? (Q5)

2. The trumpet judgments (Rev. 8:7–9:21; 11:15–19)

The trumpet judgments will bring about more destruction and despair. The first four trumpets will result in hail and fire striking a third of vegetation, a third of the sea becoming blood, a third of the rivers being made poisonous, and a third of the heavens being darkened (8:7–13).

Trumpets five, six, and seven are called the three woes. They include some kind of insects or creatures tormenting the lost for five months, the destruction of a third of mankind by a demon-led army, and the transfer of the nations of the world to Christ's rule (9; 11:15–19).

3. The bowl judgments (Rev. 16)

The bowl judgments will occur near the end of the Tribulation. They will include sores on the lost, death of sea creatures as the seas turn to blood, rivers turning to blood, the sun scorching mankind, darkness and pain, the amassing of armies at Armageddon, and a massive earthquake accompanied by gigantic hailstones (16).

READ: Revelation 16:5–7. **ASK:** What will the angel who pours out the third bowl say about the Lord's judgments? (Q6) *That the Lord was righteous in striking the waters because the lost had killed God's people. They deserved to have blood to drink.*

All of God's judgments on the world throughout the Tribulation will be "true and righteous" (16:7). He will be right in pouring out His wrath. The world will deserve to experience it. That is a scary thought for those who are alive during the Tribulation.

The Tribulation will not be a time for God to show His grace by providing for and caring for the needs of the lost. Rather, God will show His grace by overtly judging sin. God's severe judgments will show the world He is a holy God Who must judge sin.

ASK: What is your reaction to the coming chaos and destruction in the Tribulation? (Q7)

C. Responses to the judgment (Rev. 7:9–17; 11:1–14; 16:9, 11, 21)

There will be two clear responses to God's judgment by the end of the Tribulation. Some will harden their hearts and reject God, while some will trust in Jesus as their Savior.

READ: Revelation 16:9, 11, 21. **ASK:** Why will many of the lost not repent in response to the tremendous outpouring of God's wrath? (Q8) *Their hearts are wicked and totally depraved. They will see God's judgment on them as unwarranted. They will see God as wrong and evil for causing them so much pain and suffering.*

God will send witnesses out into the world to share the gospel as He is pouring out His judgment on the world. The witnesses will be another measure of God's grace.

During the first half of the Tribulation God will send two unidentified witnesses to Jerusalem (Rev. 11:1–14). They will have special powers from God to perform miracles and control creation. They will be martyred and then rise from the dead in the middle of the Tribulation. God will call them to Heaven as a deadly earthquake strikes Jerusalem. The world's rejoicing over the death of the witnesses is a testimony to the witnesses' effectiveness (11:10).

God will also choose 144,000 Jews to apparently witness throughout the world in the midst of the troubles of the Tribulation (7:4). These Jews will be protected by God during the Tribulation. They will enter the Millennial Kingdom as subjects to Christ's rule.

READ: Revelation 7:9–17. **ASK:** What will be the results of the Jews' witness? (Q9) *A great multitude of people from every nation will put their faith in Christ for salvation.*

The fact that a great multitude of people are saved in the Tribulation is reflective of God's gracious heart. But His gracious desire for men to be saved must be balanced with His wrath against sin. God hates sin, and the sinner who does not repent will not go unpunished.

II. Christ's Final Judgment of the Lost

A. Timing of the judgment (Rev. 19:11–16; 20)

The Tribulation will end with the Second Advent of Christ (Rev. 19:11–16). He will return to earth with the church to establish His Kingdom. To prepare for His Kingdom, He will put to death all those who are lost (Isa. 11:4; Rev. 19:15) and will confine Satan to the Bottomless Pit (20:1–3). Believers from the Tribulation who are still living will enter the Millennium. They will be Christ's subjects in His King-

dom (20:4). They will marry and have children, who will grow up and also have children. This population growth will continue for the entire thousand-year reign of Christ. Those born in the Millennium will need to put their faith in Christ. They won't automatically be believers.

At the end of Christ's rule, God will give the order for Satan to be released from the Bottomless Pit (20:7). Satan will go throughout the earth to deceive those who have not trusted in Christ (20:8). They will gather together to try to overthrow Christ. God will send fire from Heaven to destroy them and cast Satan into the Lake of Fire, where he will spend eternity (20:9, 10).

God will then resurrect the unbelievers of all the ages to judge them (20:12). The Bible calls Jesus' throne at this judgment a "great white throne" (20:11), so we call it the Great White Throne Judgment.

Christ will judge the lost from the books of works and from the Book of Life (20: 12, 13). The Book of Life records the names of those who have trusted in Christ as their Savior. The books of works will give incriminating evidence of sin. Christ will condemn to the Lake of Fire all those who are not found written in the Book of Life (20:15). No one who stands before the Great White Throne Judgment will be found in the Book of Life.

B. Descriptions of the judgment (Matt. 8:12; 22:13; 2 Thess. 1:9; Rev. 14:11; 20:10; 21:23; 22:5)

The Bible gives details about the torments of the Lake of Fire. Nothing on earth could compare, for the human body would be destroyed before it could experience the smallest fraction of the Lake of Fire's full force.

READ: 2 Thessalonians 1:9. **ASK:** Why is being cut off from the presence of the Lord forever such a terrible state to be in? (Q10) *It means there is no more hope for those in the Lake of Fire. They cannot demand an audience with God to plead their case or beg for deliverance.*

God's presence will make Heaven what it is. And the absence of God's presence in the Lake of Fire will make it what it is. Being cut off from God's presence is the pinnacle of the punishments of the Lake of Fire. It means eternal doom with absolutely no hope of escape. It means the judgment will be final and will never end.

READ: Revelation 20:10. **ASK:** What do we learn about the Lake of Fire from this verse? (Q11) *The inhabitants will be tormented day and night for eternity.*

READ: Revelation 14:11. **ASK:** What relief will there be for those in the Lake of Fire? (Q12) *None. There is "no rest day nor night."*

Those who think the Lake of Fire is a party are sadly mistaken. The torment is beyond imagination and it continues forever. Relief and rest will never come to those in the Lake of Fire.

The Lake of Fire will also be a place of utter darkness (Matt. 8:12; 22:13). No one there will see even the faintest sliver of light ever again. This stands in contrast to the eternal state of the redeemed, which will shine forever with the light of Christ (Rev. 21:23; 22:5).

The "children of the kingdom" in Matthew 8:12 are Jews who thought they would be accepted into Christ's Kingdom on the basis of their Jewishness. Christ rejects them because they never put their faith in Him for salvation.

Along with the darkness comes “weeping and gnashing of teeth” (Matt. 8:12; 22:13). The “weeping” signifies sorrow and emotional suffering. “Gnashing of teeth” is a result of the painful agony of the Lake of Fire.

ASK: What three words would you use to describe the final judgment on the lost? (Q13)

III. Our Responsibility in Light of God’s Judgment

The severity and finality of Christ’s final judgment on the lost are somber truths that should motivate us to share the gospel every day.

A. See people as lost (Matt. 9:35–38)

We must see people as lost and in desperate need of a Savior. Jesus had this outlook as He carried out His ministry on earth.

READ: Matthew 9:35, 36.

Sheep having no shepherd are in constant danger from predators, from wandering off and getting lost, and from falling into holes or off a cliff. Sheep need a shepherd to protect them and guide them. Jesus likened the multitudes of Jews to sheep without a shepherd. He had “compassion” on them (Matt. 9:36), meaning He was strongly moved emotionally because of their condition. The Jewish religious leaders were causing the Jews to stray. They provided no shepherding help.

READ: Matthew 9:37, 38. **ASK:** Why is a field ripe unto harvest a good metaphor for the multitude of lost people? (Q14) *Both the ripened grain and the lost are numerous; both have a limited time before they expire; both need someone to “harvest” them.*

B. Share the gospel (Matt. 10:27–31; 28:18–20)

Jesus proceeded to send twelve apostles into the “harvest field.” He gave them special instructions before they embarked to preach the gospel of the kingdom (Matt. 10).

READ: Matthew 10:27, 28. **ASK:** What was to motivate the apostles as they shared the gospel? (Q15) *The fact that God would bring judgment on the lost by condemning them to Hell.*

The apostles were anxious and fearful to face the Jews who would oppose the gospel and threaten their lives. But they needed to overcome that fear with awe and respect for God. The Jews could kill the apostles, but they could not destroy their soul. God, on the other hand, has the power to send a sinner to eternal punishment in Hell. The apostles’ awe of God was to be their impetus for sharing the gospel.

God’s care for the apostles was another motivation for sharing the gospel (Matt. 10:29–31). They could proclaim the gospel because God valued them and

knew everything about them, including how many hairs they had on their head. The apostles were obedient to Christ. They shared the gospel throughout Galilee. Later, after Christ's death and resurrection, some of them even gave their lives as they carried out the Great Commission (28:18–20).

Today, God has chosen the church to be His primary means of sharing the gospel. That means witnessing is not an option for us. God expects us to share the good news of salvation with the world. Knowing the reality of God's judgment on the lost should encourage us to witness every opportunity we get.

MAKING IT PERSONAL

Seeing People in Imminent Danger

ASK: Do you see people as lost and in need of salvation from their sins? Does their "lostness" frequently cross your mind? (Q16)

RESOURCE: Display resource 16. **ASK:** How could you increase your awareness of the imminent danger the lost face every day? (Reveal or record answers.) (Q17) *Pray for the lost regularly; review the Biblical reality of eternity without Christ; don't let the mundane routines of life lull you into thinking life will go on forever as it is; make sure you are living with an eternal perspective.*

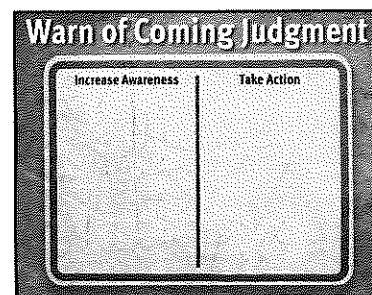
Taking Action

RESOURCE: Display resource 16. **ASK:** What actions should you take in response to the reality of God's coming judgment on the lost? (Reveal or record answers.) (Q18) *Ask God for open doors to share the gospel; get training on how to share the gospel effectively; be proactive in planning evangelistic opportunities; pray God would send laborers into His harvest around the world.*

Summary and Memory Verses

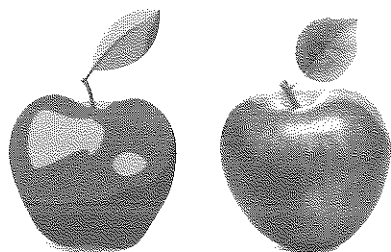
RESOURCE: Display resource 1. Add a summary statement for lesson 10 or use the following: Share the gospel with the lost.

Encourage learners to memorize Revelation 20:12 and 15. Give them an opportunity to say the verses in class next week.



Living in the Real	
1. Wake up to reality!	8. Handle God's Word as God intended.
2. Live in response to Who God is.	9. Take an active part in Christ's church.
3. Live in response to God's person.	10. Exercise your spiritual gifts.
4. Walk in newness of life as God's redeemed.	11. Live in light of the Judgment Seat of Christ.
5. Boldly approach the throne of grace.	12. Share the gospel with the lost.
6. Live in the power of the Spirit.	13.
7. Value and study the Bible as God's very words.	

Christ Will Rule



Topic

Christ's rule in eternity

Theme

Christ will rule for all eternity on the new earth.

Desired Learner Response

The learner will set his affections on things above as he anticipates eternity with Christ.

Materials

- Resources 1 and 16
- Worn out item from your past

Scripture Focus

Matt. 6:19–21; John 14:1–3; Phil. 3:12–21; Col. 3:1–3; Rev. 21:1–22:6

Summary

Christ will rule on the new earth for all eternity. The new earth will be a paradise. Being forever in the presence of Christ will be a source of continuous joy. Believers should anticipate eternity by setting their minds on things above and laying up treasures in Heaven.

Outline

I. Christ's Rule of the New Earth

- A. Christ's presence (Rev. 21:3–8, 21–23; 22:1, 2, 5, 6)
- B. Christ's new city (John 14:1–3; Rev. 21:9–21)
- C. Christ's new earth (Rev. 21:1, 2, 24–27; 22:3)

II. Our Anticipation of Eternity

- A. Seek the things that are above (Phil. 3:12–14; Col. 3:1, 3)
- B. Set your mind on things above (Phil. 3:17–21; Col. 3:2)
- C. Lay up treasure in Heaven (Matt. 6:19–21; Phil. 3:14, 15; Col. 3:2)

Memory Verses

*"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above,
where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.
Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth"
(Colossians 3:1, 2).*