

God's world – Session 4

Day of Judgment, Day of Joy

The scandal and necessity of judgment

It's one of those scenes that remains in the memory, permanently etched into the mind. The rape and murder had been particularly brutal and pitiless. She was young, and there had been four of them, and she never stood a chance. The police investigation was surprisingly quick, but there was nothing surprising about the level of media attention that the trial received – it was saturation. The day that the verdict was delivered, and then the sentence read out, arrived, and that is the scene that lives on. Outside the courtroom were dozens, perhaps hundreds of people, angry, outraged, insistent. They were utterly determined that justice be done, that judgment be delivered. It was written all over their faces, as the nightly news cameras panned back and forth throughout the seething, protesting crowd. As the guilty verdict was announced, and then the defendants were led out to the waiting cars, there was a near riot. This was a group of people who wanted, who needed, judgment.

We have something of a love / hate relationship with the idea of judgment. On the one hand, there are times, like that crowd outside the court, when we recognise that judgment is the morally necessary and only satisfying outcome. We clamour for it. There are many proverbial sayings that speak of this need for justice – justice must be done, and be seen to be done; justice delayed is justice denied and so on. But on the other hand, perhaps the most hated claim made by Christians (echoing Jesus and the Apostles), is that God judges the living and the dead, and that some will fail that judgment. In movies and books, when God's judgment is portrayed it is almost always simply ridiculed. God is depicted as a cosmic dictator delighting to consign people, for completely trivial reasons, to an eternity of misery. The sense of outrage and indignation against this judgment is almost palpable. It is therefore critically important that as we discuss this aspect of the Christian faith, we do so carefully and accurately.

One of the most surprising things about this issue is that in the New Testament, the day of judgment is regarded, at least in part, as a day of great joy. It is something for which Christians wait longingly and pray fervently. In fact, the most well known prayer in the world, the Lord's Prayer, has at its heart the deep desire for the day of judgment – “your Kingdom come, your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven” is really a prayer that the day of judgment would arrive, and arrive soon! How can that be? Well, it all depends on the perspective. If what we have seen so far is true – that this is God's world, a good world, but a good world gone horribly wrong, infected and stained by sin and Evil through and through, but a world to which God remains utterly faithful and so has sent his own Son to restore and redeem – then praying for the day of judgment makes perfect sense.

From a Christian point of view, then, there are two aspects to this understanding of the day of judgment as a day of joy: 1) First, it is only rightly understood when it is seen as the completion of God's great 'restoration project' in Jesus Christ; in other words, the judgment of God is not at the other end of the spectrum to salvation, it is the completion of that salvation. Judgment is not the thing from which we are saved; it is the means by which we are saved finally. And that alone would be a reason for joy. 2) But second, the day of judgment will be a day of vindication; that is, it will be the moment when Jesus is shown to have been right all along, the one who has spoken the truth and lived the truth, who reveals God to us, who died for us, and who was raised again. In other words, on that day Jesus will be seen by all to be Lord of heaven and earth. And so the day of judgment is also a day of vindication for those who have put their faith in him, and that in trusting Jesus, they have honoured God. It is for these reasons that it makes sense for Christians to be unashamedly positive about the judgment.

A job to finish

In the last chapter, we discussed the great achievement accomplished by Jesus' life, death and resurrection. We saw that the heart of the Christian announcement is that in Jesus himself, and particularly in his resurrected body, there is now one part of the universe that has been entirely renewed and restored. Yet at the same time, it's perfectly apparent that there remains a job to finish. The world continues to be characterised by death and conflict; humanity for the most part continues to seek life independently from God.

Read Romans 8.18-25.

Rom. 8:18 I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. 19 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; 20 for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. 22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; 23 and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. 24 For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

How does Paul describe the situation the world is in now?

What are creation and God's children waiting for? Why (i.e. what will be different)?

The comparison Paul makes is important; if God remained committed to the world despite its initial rebellion, and sent his Son to save it, much more surely now is God committed to renewing

the world in its entirety (for this 'how much more' logic, see Romans 5.8-10), and so he will finish the work he has begun. As we saw last time, Jesus is spoken of in the New Testament as the first fruits of the harvest, that portion of redemption which indicates and guarantees what is yet to come. Although I suspect it sounds strange to people today (after all, 2000 years seems a lengthy wait), at the right time Jesus will return to finish what he has started!

Christ will come again

Of course, this is a hard claim to swallow – a man who lived 2 millennia ago, will somehow return to us! All sorts of questions spring to mind: how will he travel, by space ship? And where is he now, what planet is he on? In fact, a cheeky sceptic might even ask, what planet are Christians on to believe this?

But again, if we have understood the plan and purpose of God correctly in our previous sessions, then it actually makes good sense. That is, if it really is true that Jesus is God's Son, whose mission it was all along to do God's great work; and if it really is true that God's great work is not just what we would call a small, 'private' spiritual thing (showing people how to live their lives, and perhaps helping them to get to 'heaven'), but is actually a huge 'public' cosmic thing (putting the world to rights, transforming and renewing it so that it becomes, as one Bible writer put it, a place where 'righteousness is at home'); and most importantly, if it really is true that Jesus rose from the dead, that he crashed through death and so constitutes in himself the way of life - if all these things are true, then it makes perfect sense to keep watch for Jesus, just like he said in so many of his parables, looking for his return.

Read Acts 1.10–11, Philippians 3.20–21 and 1 Thessalonians 4.15–16

In each passage, how is the return of Jesus described, and what will its impact be?

Acts 1.10 While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. 11 They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

Philippians 3.20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. 21 He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself.

1 Thessalonians 4.15 For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. 16 For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

When Jesus returns, four crucial things will take place:

A. Jesus will be revealed as Lord

As we have seen, the basic Christian conviction is that Jesus is Lord through resurrection. This is true right now, even though it is a Lordship that is hidden, and therefore ignored and opposed by many. It is for that reason that the Bible speaks of Christians affirming this Lordship of Jesus by faith, for the moment. However, there will come a day, when Jesus returns, when what is known by faith, we will know by sight when this fact, presently hidden, is revealed.

Read Colossians 3.1–4, 1 Peter 1.6–7, 13; 4.12–13 and 1 John 3.1–2

In each passage, what does it mean for Jesus to be revealed?

Col. 3.1 So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, 3 for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

1 Peter 1.6 In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, 7 so that the genuineness of your faith — being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire — may be found to result in praise and glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed ... 13 Therefore prepare your minds for action; discipline yourselves; set all your hope on the grace that Jesus Christ will bring you when he is revealed ... 4.12 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. 13 But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed.

1 John 3.1–2 See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. 2 Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is.

It is important that the New Testament speaks about the 'second coming' of Jesus as him being revealed. In doing so, it emphasises the fact that in one sense, Jesus' return is not to do a new thing, but the completion of an old thing; or another way to put this would be to say that the return of Jesus makes public what is already true, but is only accepted by some. The really decisive thing about Jesus has already been accomplished – his death on the cross washing away our guilt and defeating those terrible enemies of humanity, sin and Evil and death; and his resurrection to new life. What's left to happen is for this to be revealed publicly. Then, truly, every one will know the truth about Jesus and his mission for the world.

B. The general resurrection of all people

The second essential thing that will occur at the return of Jesus is the resurrection of all people. That is, that all people who have died will be raised from death.

Read John 5.25–29

John 5:25 “Very truly, I tell you, the hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. 26 For just as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself; 27 and he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. 28 Do not be astonished at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice 29 and will come out — those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

What is the ‘hour that is coming, and is now here’? What is the hour that is coming, that is not yet here?

Who will be raised from the dead, and what happens after that?

It seems almost a universal human intuition that when we die, our lives are not simply extinguished like a spent fire-cracker, but that in some sense we continue to exist in a ‘life after death’. In fact, there are many people who report so called ‘near-death experiences’ who speak of something like this life after death. Of course, it is neither intuition nor the vague experiences of people who have come close to dying that form the basis of the belief that all people will be resurrected from death; rather, it is the fact that it has already started to happen – started, of course, with the resurrection of Jesus himself.

It is therefore from Jesus’ own resurrection that we take our clues as to what resurrection might mean for us. And the key is that when Jesus speaks of resurrection, both his own and ours, he has much more in mind than some shadowy ‘life after death’. One way to put it, in the words of British author Tom Wright, would be to say that resurrection refers to life after ‘life after death’! In other words, although it’s true that we continue to exist in some form as souls after we die, that is not the most important thing. The really big issue is that when Jesus returns, we will all be raised bodily, our souls and bodies re-united, just like Jesus was.

Now this turns out to be very important. It means that what Christians look forward to and hope for is much, much more than ‘going to heaven when we die’. I suspect that is an idea that has more

to do with Greek philosophy than Christian teaching. No, we hope not so much to go to heaven when we die, but to be resurrected from death when Jesus returns, resurrected to life again in the body, resurrected to enjoy God's world the way it was meant to be!

C. The judgment of all people

Resurrection for all people sounds good, and it is. But there is another important point to get clear - this resurrection of all is so that all people will appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

Read 2 Corinthians 5.9–10, Romans 2.6–11 and Romans 14 10–12

2 Corinthians 5.9 ... we make it our aim to please him. 10 For all of us must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil.

Romans 2.6 For he will repay according to each one's deeds: 7 to those who by patiently doing good seek for glory and honour and immortality, he will give eternal life; 8 while for those who are self-seeking and who obey not the truth but wickedness, there will be wrath and fury. 9 There will be anguish and distress for everyone who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, 10 but glory and honour and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. 11 For God shows no partiality.

Romans 14.10 Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. 11 For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." 12 So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

Who is judged and who judges?

What is the basis of the judgment? (PS. Another way to think about this would be to ask how Jesus describes what 'doing good' means, for example in his explanation of the great commandment?)

Judgment is the third crucial thing that will happen when Jesus returns. Of course, the most important thing about judgment is that it be fair and just. That's why the Bible repeatedly emphasises 3 things about this judgment.

First, the doer of this judgment is fair and just. The Bible is clear that the one who does the judging is someone who is entirely qualified to do so - Jesus. It is, as the Apostle Paul puts it, before his judgment seat that we must appear. And of all people, Jesus is the one who has the wisdom and

credibility to judge rightly. He knows when to be strict and when to be lenient, he knows how to show mercy and how to be fierce in the face of evil. And he has been through it all himself – he himself has been judged, badly and unfairly, and suffered the dreadful consequences of a miscarriage of justice. So we can be confident that he will judge justly.

Second, the extent of this judgment is fair and just: no one is exempt from judgment. All people are examined, and there are no favourites, no partiality is shown, no back doors into the presence of God. Jesus is not corrupt, as if he favours his friends!

Finally, the basis of this judgment is fair and just: it is on the basis of “what has been done in the body, whether good or evil” (2 Corinthians 5.10). In other words, what is judged is the way that we have lived our lives. This is not in any way a contradiction of the central Christian teaching we looked at last session, that we are saved through Jesus (and in particular, his death and resurrection), and not by our own moral goodness. The Bible calls this free salvation which God gives us in his Son, ‘grace’. And the point is that the salvation which is by grace will always show itself in a pattern of life that is pleasing to the Lord Jesus. That’s what it is to be a Christian – to be saved by the Lord Jesus and so to live your life for the Lord Jesus. It is the reality of this relationship of obedient trust that is the subject of the judgment. There is an important implication of this – it entirely excludes the possibility of what might be called the ‘unchanged Christian’, someone who abuses the grace and mercy of God, sinning to their heart’s content and getting away with it! Jesus told a story about people like that, who come to him on the day of judgment and speak of their extensive religious experience, and what they hear said to them is ‘I never knew you’, precisely because only the one who does the will of the Father in heaven will enter the kingdom of heaven – in other words, they too will be judged!

For those, then, who have honoured God in their lives, who have thanked him for the benefits they have received at his hands, who have sought to live aligned with him in thankful obedience and trust, and who have sought to love God and to love their neighbours as themselves, they will receive “commendation from God” (1 Corinthians 4.5) and be welcomed into the life of the age to come. What we do in this life echoes into eternity! Sometimes people call this ‘heaven’, and in a sense this is right. Strictly speaking, heaven is the place where God is, and for those who are judged to have lived well, they will be with God and so ‘in heaven’. However, the problem with the phrase ‘in heaven’ is that it sounds like souls floating around singing hymns to harp music! Whereas, as we’ve seen, it is as resurrected people that we are judged, and it is as resurrected people that we enjoy the life of the age to come. As we’ll see in our next section, that life is far from ‘floaty’!

On the other hand, those who have failed to honour God in their lives, who have persisted in turning from him, and who keep pretending they can live their lives asserting their independence from him in trespasses and sins, will be condemned in the judgment. We saw in the second chapter that this ‘turning away’ from God inevitably involves a ‘turning to’ something else, either oneself in pride, or some element of the created order in idolatry. And neither pride nor idolatry

have any place in the kingdom of God, since they seek to reject and replace God the king. This is the terrible reality of hell. Importantly, it was Jesus who spoke more of hell than any other figure in the Bible. It may be that we don't like to hear about it, but that doesn't make it any less true. As writer Flannery O'Connor put it, 'Truth does not change according to our ability to stomach it.' Jesus spoke in this way, like everything he did, because he loved us. After all, if you knew someone was in terrible danger - and there is no danger more terrible than hell! - wouldn't you do everything you could to warn them of that danger!? That's not scare tactics, it's love!

The Bible writers stretch the capacity of language to breaking point when they seek to describe hell. Three main images for it are used. On the one hand, hell is spoken of as a separation from God, and therefore from everything good that God provides, life and love and beauty. At the same time, hell is spoken of as a terrible, endless torment, an experience so terrible that you would do anything to avoid it - it was Jesus who used this idea most frequently. As well, hell is spoken about simply as death and destruction. How these all fit together is not clear; trying to describe something that has never been experienced never is! However, one thing that is clear, as Jesus put it, is 'what would it profit someone to gain the whole world' but to forfeit their life in hell?

One final thing - this judgment, and in particular the condemnation of those who have not lived their lives loving God and loving their neighbour, is all part of a much bigger picture - the final destruction of all that is Evil, and the final restoration of the world to the life and peace for which it was created.

D. World renewed and evil brought to nothing

The fourth vital thing that will happen when Jesus returns is that God's purposes for the whole world will finally be fulfilled. We saw towards the start of the chapter how the Apostle Paul described this great hope for relief from what he called the 'sufferings of this present time' - it's like labour pains. Now, describing childbirth is something best done only by those who have experienced it, and anything else is likely to be seen as rash words from someone who doesn't know what they're talking about! Nonetheless, the point that Paul is making is crystal clear. Some pain is terrible and meaningless, like the pain of a car accident. But some pain is terrible but not meaningless, having within it the hope of a magnificent outcome. Labour pains are like that, terrible in a way that can hardly be imagined by someone who hasn't gone through it, and yet at the same time, headed somewhere, directed towards an outcome which has great joy.

And Paul says, that's a bit like this world. Although the world is currently in the grip of destructive forces, subject to the decay and disintegration that we see all around us, that is not the final word. When Jesus returns, the world itself will be transformed, set free from its bondage, and will obtain the same glorious freedom that Christians also look forward to.

Quite what the nature of this transformation will be, we are not told. Imagine a world without earthquakes and tsunamis, droughts and floods, disease or cancer, need or scarcity, violence or hatred. And yet even as we start to let our imaginations go a little, we realise that this is primarily

negative. As well as that, imagine a world that is full of peace, the genuine peace of mutual love and care; imagine a world where the most precious things we know now are the most common things then – this is the point of the Bible at one point describing how the streets will be paved with gold! Imagine a world where truth was normal and beauty was deep and substantial instead of shallow and airbrushed, as it is so often now.

In the end, of course, words fail us, and as we did when we were thinking about the resurrection of all people, we need to learn from the resurrection of Jesus. Again, it's important to remember the fact that Jesus was raised with a transformed physical body. There were some things that were recognisably the same – such as the marks in his hands and feet from his wounds; and yet at the same time, there was a remarkable change, so that he seemed far less bound by what we call the ordinary laws of nature – perhaps in the age to come, even they will be transformed as well! In one place, the Apostle Paul parallels this continuity/ discontinuity to a seed which is sown and the tree which results – the same and yet different, all at the same time (see 1 Corinthians 15.42-44 for Paul's use of this image).

The thing that makes all this possible is that evil itself will finally and utterly be destroyed and brought to nothing.

Read 1 Corinthians 15.20-28.

1Cor. 15:20 But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died. 21 For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; 22 for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ. 23 But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. 24 Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power. 25 For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death. 27 For “God has put all things in subjection under his feet.” But when it says, “All things are put in subjection,” it is plain that this does not include the one who put all things in subjection under him. 28 When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to the one who put all things in subjection under him, so that God may be all in all.

What does Paul say will happen at ‘the end’?

What end result will God achieve through these events?

In a sense, we've come full circle at this point in our study. The picture is stark: Jesus has been raised, and is therefore now the Lord, the one who reigns in the position of authority. But the job is not yet finished – there are still enemies, what the Apostle Paul calls ‘rulers and authorities and powers’. In other words, the enemies that Paul has in mind are not people – people are those for

whom Christ died to save – but spiritual enemies that oppress and corrupt. And the last enemy to be destroyed is death, that great enemy, the enemy which makes a mockery of all we hope and achieve. And so the day of judgment, ‘the end’, is the day when at last all these enemies, and especially the enemy which is death, are destroyed once and for all, and the whole of creation is set free. And when that happens, the only way to describe it is to say that God will be all in all. In other words, there will be no thing and no person who does not fully and entirely reflect the glory of God for which we were created; and there will be no place or aspect of creation that is not fully receptive to the loving presence and Lordship of God.

No wonder the day of judgment is a day of joy!

So what?

I was reading recently about school system in the United States that had a program to help children keep up with their school work during stays in the city's hospitals. One day a teacher who was assigned to the program received a routine call asking her to visit a particular child. She took the child's name and room number and talked briefly with the child's regular class teacher. “We’re studying nouns and adverbs in his class now,” the regular teacher said, “and I’d be grateful if you could help him understand them so he doesn’t fall too far behind.”

The hospital program teacher went to see the boy that afternoon. No one had mentioned to her that the boy had been badly burned and was in great pain. Upset at the sight of the boy, she stammered as she told him, “I’ve been sent by your school to help you with nouns and adverbs.” When she left she felt she hadn't accomplished much.

But the next day, a nurse asked her, “What did you do to that boy?” The teacher felt she must have done something wrong and began to apologize. “No, no,” said the nurse. “You don’t know what I mean. We’ve been worried about that little boy, but ever since yesterday, his whole attitude has changed. He's fighting back, responding to treatment. It's as though he's decided to live.”

Two weeks later the boy explained that he had completely given up hope until the teacher arrived. Everything changed when he came to a simple realization. He expressed it this way: “They wouldn’t send a teacher to work on nouns and adverbs with a dying boy, would they?”

Victor Frankle was a survivor of the Nazi death camp system, and later went on to become a world renowned psychologist and psychotherapist. It was his experience in the concentration camp that taught him about the power of hope. Those who survived were the ones who maintained hope, without it, they were lost. Here is how Frankle puts it:

“The prisoner who had lost faith in the future - his future - was doomed. With his loss of belief in the future, he also lost his spiritual hold; he let himself decline and became subject to mental and physical decay. Usually this happened quite suddenly, in the form of a crisis, the symptoms of which were familiar to the experienced camp inmate. We all feared this

moment - not for ourselves, which would have been pointless, but for our friends. Usually it began with the prisoner refusing one morning to get dressed and wash or to go out on the parade grounds. No entreaties, no blows, no threats had any effect. He just lay there, hardly moving. If this crisis was brought about by an illness, he refused to be taken to the sick-bay or to do anything to help himself. He simply gave up. There he remained, lying in his own excreta, and nothing bothered him any more."

Frankle concludes this in regard to the significance of hope for a healthy life:

"It is a peculiarity of man that he can only live by looking to the future ... And this is his salvation in the most difficult moments of his existence, although he sometimes has to force his mind to the task ... any attempt to restore a man's inner strength in the camp had first to succeed in showing him some future goal. Nietzsche's words, "He who has a 'why' to live for can bear with almost any 'how'," are true. Whenever there was an opportunity for it, one had to give them a 'why' - an aim - for their lives, in order to strengthen them to bear the terrible 'how' of their existence. Woe to him who saw no more sense in his life, no aim, no purpose, and therefore no point in carrying on. He was soon lost. The typical reply with which such a man rejected all encouraging arguments was, "I have nothing to expect from life any more." What sort of answer can one give to that?"

We live in a world that easily tends towards hopelessness. There is so much that is wrong and so little that seems able to be done about it. Sometimes this hopelessness takes the form of the extreme despair as described by Frankle. At other times, the response that is made is to create for ourselves little hopes, local hopes, hopes that don't demand too much from us, or promise too much for us. Mostly, these end up being a bit like the experience of eating Fairy Floss - sweet at the time, but fundamentally lacking substance!

The fact is, however, that hope is vital for life, it is part of our very constitution as human beings, the embedded in the way we are made. One of the glories of the Bible is that we are given a new name for God after Jesus has completed his mission - he is named the God of hope. God is never called the 'God of law', or the 'God of demand'; but he is the God of hope.

The key question that the return of Jesus puts to us is this: will you see in him the hope for your life? Not hope in the sense that you might hope one day to travel the world, or win the lottery or hit a hole in one. Rather, hope in the ultimate sense, hope for a rich, meaningful life, clear in your conscience because Jesus has stood in your place, bearing the consequences of your sin and offering the sacrifice that you ought. And at the same time, and just as importantly, hope even in the face of death, that great enemy that ruins everything.

The hope that is found in Jesus is powerful enough even for these things!

We might summarise the key ideas from the Bible on the 'Last Day' like this:

Jesus will return to complete God's renewing work...

a. Jesus

- revealed as Lord

b. World

- Evil brought to nothing
- renewed in life and peace

c. Humanity

- all raised and judged
- those who turned to God receive life
- those who asserted independence
from God receive condemnation