

PAYDAY SOMEDAY

MTG 25:31-46

I. CHRISTIAN CONSENSUS: GENERAL (FINAL) JUDGMENT

- A. Vague expectation of immortality in many religions, not about Judgment
- B. O.T. frequently refers to God as Judge, but little regarding final Judgement
- C. Distinctive N.T. perspective, rooted in Jesus' words, clarified in creeds
 - 1. Particular Judgment (e.g. Jesus to thief on cross—"this day . . . paradise")
 - 2. General Judgment to follow Second Coming

II. CHRIST-CENTERED (Jn 5:22)

- A. Preliminary/preparatory events: Resurrection, Ascension, Second Coming
- B. Jesus to judge
 - 1. Emmanuel (God-with-us)—our Savior and Intercessor to judge us
 - 2. Comfort in considering Judgment in light of loving Persons

III. CULMINATION: FINAL ACT IN CREATION DRAMA

- A. Creation *ex nihilo*—instantaneous, singularity
- B. Providential history—Augustine's *City of God*
- C. Justice ultimately secured
 - 1. Inner sense of rightness satisfied
 - 2. God's mysterious providence revealed—goodness evident

IV. CRITERIA: FINAL SEPARATION

- A. Those Who've Done Good
 - 1. "Good" evident in work of farmers, coaches, doctors, teachers, parents
 - 2. Heaven awaits those who have enabled humans flourishing (living in accord with their divine design)
- B. Those Who've Done Evil
 - 1. In essence, evil sucks away the good, depriving creatures of goodness
 - 2. Examples, great & small
 - a. Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago*
 - b. John Paul II condemns "culture of death"
 - c. Failure to care for needy—food, clothes, prisoners ("corporal acts of mercy")
- C. Interpretive dilemmas hinge on balance between justice and mercy
 - 1. Universalists—Origin & his followers (widely evident today)
 - 2. Natural Law (cf. Romans 1-2) and prevenient grace for unreached multitudes
 - 3. Jews & limited views rooted in Law
 - 4. N.T. balance between faith and works

V. CONSEQUENCES

- A. Revelations: saints & sinners fully exposed
- B. Separations: final sorting, sheep & goats
- C. Rewards: Heaven's wonders & Hell's distress