

The Gospel of John (33); The Third Discourse of Jesus (3)

Introduction:

This is the third Lord's Day that we are considering the third discourse of Jesus that is recorded by John the Apostle in this Fourth Gospel. Last week we gave our attention to verses 24 through 30, although we were unable to address adequately the last three verses. Today we will give particular attention to the meaning and implications of verses 28 and 29, in which Jesus said,

Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

A simple reading of these words conveys the truth that God has appointed a day in which Jesus Christ will summon the entire human race to rise from the dead and then brought before the tribunal of God to be judged. The outcome of this great judgment will be either eternal life or eternal damnation for all. And yet, this very clear assertion of our Lord is not understood in this way by most evangelicals. They have been taught, for the most part, that the judgment of Christians and the judgment of the unsaved takes place on a number of different occasions in the future, through intervals of time of at least 1,000 years, and in most cases, 1,007 years. And so, these verses compel us to address issues of eschatology, or the biblical doctrine of last things, of events that will transpire at the end of the history of this world. We will do so today, at least in a measure.

Jesus was speaking to certain Jewish leaders who desired to kill Him. Jesus had healed a man on the Sabbath Day, which itself was a capital crime in the eyes of these Jewish leaders (vs. 5-15). But then when speaking about the matter to them, Jesus had made Himself equal with the Father, which they regarded as blasphemous; therefore, they believed Him to be also worthy of death for this second offense (vs. 16-18).

Jesus had performed quite a number of miracles both in Judea and Galilee, all of which He said were works that His Father had directed and enabled Him to do. But He also declared that His Father would yet do greater miracles through Him in order that people would marvel at the wonder of these works, but also that people would come to honor Him--Jesus Christ, the Son of God--as they honor God the Father (vs. 19-23).

What were these greater works that He would do? Jesus revealed what they were in verses

²¹For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will.

²²For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, ²³that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

Jesus said that the Father had given Him authority to *impart life to His people* and to *judge the world* in righteousness. He then explained more fully the nature of this work. We read in verses 24 through 30:

²⁴“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. ²⁵Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. ²⁶For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, ²⁷and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. ²⁸Do

not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice ²⁹and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation. ³⁰I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.

First, Jesus declared with assurance in **verse 24** that His people, His disciples, “have passed from death into life.” They may be assured that they presently have salvation. They do **now** possess and enjoy the gift of God in Jesus Christ, which is eternal life.

Secondly, in **verses 25** through **27** Jesus declared that He had the authority, and therefore the ability, to impart **spiritual life** to those who are **spiritually dead**. Jesus is the One who causes people to come forth from spiritual death--without the life that is in Him-- to live in the glory and enjoyment of that life that is in Jesus Christ. God the Father had given authority to the Son to impart spiritual life, but He also gave Jesus authority to **execute judgment** on those who continue in spiritual death. God gave this authority to Jesus because He was the Son of Man, in other words, because Jesus was the promised Messiah, the One destined to reign over the Kingdom of God on behalf of His Father.

And thirdly, in **verses 28** through **30** we read that God gave His Son the authority to raise all the **physically dead** from their graves and to judge them. On that great Day of Judgment King Jesus will raise every human being that has ever lived on this earth and then through judging them, He will separate His people from all the rest, sending them to their two separate destinies. He will raise His own people unto the resurrection of life. He will raise all others unto the resurrection of damnation.

And lastly, **verse 30** reveals that all that the Son of God does and will do is because He is acting on behalf of, and in the authority of God His Father.

Let us first consider...

I. Our Passage and its emphasis on good and evil works

How are we to understand this reference in verses 28 and 29 to the judgment of good and evil works? Jesus said, “Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—**those who have done good**, to the resurrection of life, and **those who have done evil**, to the resurrection of condemnation.” The basis of separating the righteous from the unrighteous will be the works or the life of the individual. We are justified by faith alone. The presence and reality of our justifying faith will be shown in the righteous works of our life on the Day of Judgment. It is not what you say you believe that will determine the outcome but what your life demonstrates what you believe.

This is troubling to some. How do we understand this judgment of works? “I thought that we are saved by grace, not works, how do we understand this judgment of works?” Further, one might become troubled at this prospect and ask, “How do I know that I have done enough good works?” “Does this not produce uncertainty in the matter of assurance of salvation?”

Certainly the Word of God teaches that we are saved by God’s grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus Christ alone, apart from the merit of any works we do. But the one who is truly saved by God’s grace has been transformed by grace to live a life of good works. **Ephesians 2:8-10** underscore these truths:

⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹**not of works**, lest anyone should boast. ¹⁰For **we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works**, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

God saves sinners by grace through faith (v. 8), not due to the works they do (v. 9). If you are saved, it is because He has made you His work, not because you have worked in order to be accepted by Him. You are His work of creation, just as He first made all things in His work of creation. But He created us a new for a purpose, that we would be ones whose lives are characterized by good works (v. 10). And so good works, as the Bible defines them, are the evidence that one’s claim to have been saved by grace through faith alone

is legitimate. The future judgment of works will validate every true Christian and will expose every hypocrite, who claims to be a Christian, but whose life says otherwise. Consider these verses:

1 John 2:3, 4. “Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. ⁴He who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”

1 John 2:29. “If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him.”

1 John 3:7, 10. “Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. ¹⁰In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor *is* he who does not love his brother.”

It should be noted that this is not so much a matter of doing enough works, rather, it is the nature and quality of works that we do after having come to faith in Christ that will validate that we are Christians on the Day of Judgment. We are not to fear the coming judgment, for we will stand in Christ unashamed, standing in His righteousness alone, not our own. John wrote, “And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, *we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming*” (1 John 2:28).

But again, one might ask, “How do I know if the works I have done are good enough?” After all, the apostle Paul could write of himself, “I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. (Rom. 7:21). “Why, everything I do, even the good that I do is so tainted with evil that I could hardly claim that it is good at all!” And besides, I know some non-Christians who seem to outstrip me in the good works that they do, how will I pass the bar of God?” And so, in order to answer these legitimate questions and confirm our hearts, it is important that we specify what the Bible defines as the “good” works that our Lord will be scrutinizing on the Day of Judgment? In addressing this we could do no better than recalling the statement of this matter in our **Confession of Faith of 1689**. It contains a very good description and explanation of this matter. An entire article was devoted to this subject, “Of Good Works.” Here it is:

1. Good works are only such as God hath commanded in his Holy Word, and not such as without the warrant thereof are devised by men out of blind zeal, or upon any pretense of good intentions. (Micah 6:8; Heb. 13:1; Matt. 15:9; Isa.29:13)
2. These good works, done in obedience to God's commandments, are the fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith; and by them believers manifest their thankfulness, strengthen their assurance, edify their brethren, adorn the profession of the gospel, stop the mouths of the adversaries, and glorify God, whose workmanship they are, created in Christ Jesus thereunto, that having their fruit unto holiness they may have the end eternal life. (James 2:18, 22; Psa. 116:12, 13; 1 John 2:3, 5; 2 Pet. 1:5-11; Matt. 5:16; 1 Tim. 6:1; 1 Peter 2:25; Phil. 1:11; Eph. 2:10; Rom. 6:22)
3. Their ability to do good works is not at all of themselves, but wholly from the Spirit of Christ; and that they may be enabled thereunto, besides the graces they have already received, there is necessary an actual influence of the same Holy Spirit, to work in them to will and to do of his good pleasure; yet they are not hereupon to grow negligent, as if they were not bound to perform any duty, unless upon a special motion of the Spirit, but they ought to be diligent in stirring up the grace of God that is in them. (John 15:4, 5; 2 Cor. 3:5; Phil. 2:12f; Heb. 6:11f; Isa. 6:7)
4. They who in their obedience attain to the greatest height which is possible in this life, are so far from being able to supererogate, and to do more than God requires, as that they fall short of much which in duty they are bound to do. (Job 9:2, 3; Gal. 5:17; Luke 17:10)
5. We cannot by our best works merit pardon of sin or eternal life at the hand of God, by reason of the great disproportion that is between them and the glory to come, and the infinite distance that is between

us and God, whom by them we can neither profit nor satisfy for the debt of our former sins; but when we have done all we can, we have done but our duty, and are unprofitable servants; and because as they are good they proceed from his Spirit, and as they are wrought by us they are defiled and mixed with so much weakness and imperfection, that they cannot endure the severity of God's punishment. (Rom. 3:20; Eph. 2:8, 9; 4:6; Gal. 5:22, 23; Isa. 64:6; Psa. 143:2)

6. Yet notwithstanding the persons of believers being accepted through Christ, their good works also are accepted in him; not as though they were in this life wholly unblamable and unprovable in God's sight, but that he, looking upon them in his Son, is pleased to accept and reward that which is sincere, although accompanied with many weaknesses and imperfections. (Eph. 1:6; 1 Pet. 2:5; Matt. 25:21, 23; Heb. 6:10)

7. Works done by unregenerate men, although for the matter of them they may be things which God commands, and of good use both to themselves and others; yet because they proceed not from a heart purified by faith, nor are done in a right manner according to the word, nor to a right end, the glory of God, they are therefore sinful, and cannot please God, nor make a man meet to receive grace from God, and yet their neglect of them is more sinful and displeasing to God. (2 Kings 10:30; 1 Kings 21:27, 29; Gen. 4:5; Heb. 11:4, 6; 1 Cor. 13:1; Matt. 6:2, 5; Amos 5:21, 22; Rom. 9:16; Titus 3:5; Job 21:14f; Matt. 25:41-43)

Yes, these “good” works are what we are to do, and we are to put forth effort to know what it is we are to do and seek the Lord’s grace to do them, but on the other hand, these good works flow forth from the new life that God has given us in Jesus Christ. These good works are natural and common to the true Christian. He has given us a nature that desires these things, thinks in accordance with these things, and purposes to do these things because we love the Lord and His Word and we love righteousness. It is impossible for an unregenerate person (not born again) to perform these good works, but it is also impossible for a regenerate person not to perform these good works. It is who He has made us to be. We are new creatures in Christ Jesus. Therefore, let us take to heart the words of the Apostle Paul,

This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men. (Tit. 3:8)

Let us next consider...

II. Our Passage and the Biblical doctrine of the end times

As we were concluding last week I stated this: “*When verses 28 and 29 are understood rightly, it renders unbiblical the popular view of the end times, that of dispensational premillennialism.*” Here are these verses again:

²⁸Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice
²⁹and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

The Lord Jesus spoke of a singular “hour”, a single event, if you will, when Jesus will cry out from heaven, issuing a command for all people everywhere--all people who have ever lived and died throughout history, to rise out of their graves. They then come before Him to be judged for how they lived in His world.

We see that all the human race is divided into two groups. There are those that are raised from the dead unto “the resurrection of life” and there are all others that are raised from the dead unto “the resurrection of condemnation.” Their destinies are pronounced through the judgment that Jesus Christ will execute on that day, even as He performs the will of His Father. We would argue that this is a single event that takes place at the end of history, upon the second coming of Jesus Christ. When Jesus returns the second

time, He will cause a general resurrection of all the human race and He will judge every one individually, the outcome of that judgment will either be eternal life or eternal damnation.

This understanding of the end-time general resurrection of the dead and general judgment of all mankind is the position that is unique to the understanding of eschatology (last things) of *amillennialism*. This understanding does not fit into the scenario presented and promoted by most evangelicals for the last 100 years, which is *dispensational premillennialism*. [At the end of these notes we included a chart to graphically portray these two views of the end times.]

In order for us to understand this subject it is important for us to review a few matters. Now we addressed these matters somewhat last spring, when we were studying the epistles to the Thessalonians, but it bears repeating. Because these verses in John 5 speak so clearly to the matter, they lead us to address it at this time in our study of John's Gospel.

A. What are the historical Christian views of the millennium?

There are three major views of Christians respecting the biblical teaching of the millennium, or the promised kingdom of the Messiah. These include premillennialism, postmillennialism, and amillennialism.

1. Dispensational Premillennialism

This is the belief that the second coming of Jesus Christ will occur just before a future 1,000 year millennium. Actually, they believe that the Second coming of Christ will occur in two stages. Jesus will first descend from heaven to take up in the rapture both the dead and living that belong to the Church, which they define as all true believers from Pentecost until the rapture. Jesus will return to heaven with His saints while a seven year period of intense tribulation transpires on earth. At the end of the seven year tribulation, Jesus will perform the second stage of His return, coming to the earth visibly and physically, conquering all of His foes at the battle of Armageddon. At that time the Lord will resurrect the dead. Premillennialists¹ believe, however, that only true believers who had died during the endtime seven year tribulation along with all true believers of the Old Testament period will be resurrected at the second coming of Christ. They teach that Jesus will then establish and reign over the kingdom promised to King David. Jesus will reign as the Son of David over the world for 1,000 years in a kingdom characterized by peace and righteousness. All unbelievers, they say, will not be resurrected and brought to final judgment until the end of the 1,000 year earthly millennium.

Dispensational premillennialism is the predominant position held today by most evangelicals. This view of the future has been popularized and perpetuated by the popular book series, "Left Behind", written by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins. Most premillennialists are only familiar with their position, for that is the only position that they have been taught. One of the most respected staunch advocates of premillennialism is John MacArthur. I believe that he is mistaken in his understanding. We will refer to his statements to show what dispensational premillennialists believe about the end time events.

2. Postmillennialism

This is the belief that the Second Coming of Jesus Christ will occur not before, but rather *after* the 1,000 year millennium. The proponents of this view teach that the world at some point in the future will be so greatly transformed by the gospel, by the working of God in history in bringing salvation to the world, that there will be ushered in the Kingdom of God on earth before the Second Coming of Christ. This millennium will be 1,000 years in duration in which the world is Christianized. At the conclusion of this millennial age, the second coming of Christ will occur; He will return to judge the world.

¹ We normally would distinguish between historic premillennialism and dispensational premillennialism, but because of the unwieldy wording, we simply refer to premillennialism. The position of historic premillennialism is very much like amillennialism. It was held by John Gill and Charles Spurgeon, with many other notable men of history.

This post-millennial view was held by most Bible-believing Christians for at least two centuries until the early part of the 20th century. Postmillennialists have had great confidence in God's power to bring revival to His world. The 18th century Puritans were largely post-millennial. Almost all Bible-believing Christians in the 19th century were post-millennial. Given the advance of the gospel throughout the 19th century throughout the world, it would be easy to see their readiness to see the onset of the millennium. Post-millennialism was the predominant position of Baptists until this century.

Postmillennialists are still around, but they are relatively few in number. One rather disturbing aspect of some postmillennialists (not all) is their belief that the millennium will be brought about by the transformation of society through the applying of Scripture to all of life. This might sound like a good thing, but these folks believe that the Mosaic law of the Old Testament must be reinstated in society and by this means the millennium will be realized. They advocate the Mosaic laws to be forcefully imposed and enforced by the government upon all citizens whether Christian or not. These Christians are sometimes called theonomists, or Reconstructionists.

3. Amillennialism

This is the position that I hold to be true. It is also the view reflected in our church's confession of faith. This position holds that there is no literal 1,000-year kingdom on earth taught in the Scriptures. The "1,000 years" of Revelation 20 is a symbolic number signifying this current gospel age. The 1,000 years is to signify the present kingdom age of long but unspecified duration. The Lord does not want His people to know when His Second Coming will take place, therefore He did not give a precise duration of the kingdom of this church age.

Amillennialism became the predominant position of the Christian era beginning with Augustine in the 5th century AD. Roman Catholicism is amillennial; it is one of the doctrines that many Protestants agree with Rome as to the Bible's teaching. Most of the Reformers were amillennial, including Martin Luther and John Calvin. The position is most commonly held today among evangelicals who are Reformed or Calvinistic in their theology. J. I. Packer, R. C. Sproul, and D. Martin Lloyd-Jones are/were amillennial in their understanding. The amillennial position is held today by Protestants who are Presbyterian and Reformed Baptist.

Although I had believed in a premillennial return of Christ in the first years after I had become a Christian (for that is the position I had been taught), I have held to the amillennial view of the end times since the early 1980's. Holding this position has not been easy, in that I have had numbers of folks who came to reject me and my ministry over the years because of my convictions on this matter. Many, if not most premillennialists can be quite intolerant of views of the end times other than their own.

The point we should make is this: the issue of the millennium is a controversial one, but it should be one in which tolerance and deference to others should be granted. Please do not misunderstand, the doctrine of the millennium is an important teaching, but it is not an essential doctrine. Good Christians differ on their understanding of these matters, but who have honestly come to the Bible as the Word of God but who sincerely differ on their understanding.

Now with respect to our passage before us, John 54:28 and 29, we are saying that this teaches a single event in which all humanity are raised from the dead and are brought before King Jesus to be judged. The outcome of that judgment will be the gift of eternal life for those whom Christ redeemed, and eternal damnation for all those who refused to repent of sin and believe the Gospel. But a single endtime general resurrection of the dead and general judgment of mankind is not believed by dispensational premillennialists. They claim the bible teaches that 1,000 years separates the judgment of Christians and the judgment of unbelievers. If I were to "translate" verses 28 and 29 to fit their view of the end times, it would have to read like this:

²⁸Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice
²⁹and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, *and 1,000 years later* those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

They would need to put a time frame of 1,000 years (actually 1,007 years) separating two different resurrections and two different judgments. But actually it gets more complicated than that, as we will next consider:

B. The differences of belief regarding specific future events between various views of the end times.

1. The major tenants of amillennialism (which I believe is biblical)

(1) There is one body of the redeemed of all of history—His Church, all who are saved by the atoning death of Jesus Christ, who are saved from sin by God’s grace through faith. The Church of Jesus Christ is comprised of all true believers of both the Old and New Testament era.

(2) There is one promised Kingdom of God in the Old Testament which currently exists, over which Jesus is Lord, but His kingdom will be more fully manifest at His second coming. The Kingdom over which Jesus is King was promised in the Old Testament realized spiritually in this church age and will be realized physically at the second coming of Christ. Jesus Christ is presently reigning on the throne of David His father according to the flesh (Cf. Acts 2:29-33). This promised Davidic kingdom was inaugurated when Jesus rose from the dead and ascended to the throne of God. This kingdom will exist unto eternity (not just 1,000 years.)

(3) There is one future resurrection of all humanity at the second coming of Christ. The Lord will raise both the saved and the unsaved in a general resurrection of all mankind.

(4) There is one general judgment of all mankind, who will all be judged according to their works, the outcome of which is eternal damnation for the lost and eternal life for the righteous who are saved by Jesus Christ (Cf. Rom. 2:5-11).

2. The major tenants of dispensational premillennialist

(1) God has two different and separate peoples: Israel and the Church. Israel are ethnic Jews through history. The Church includes all believers from Pentecost to the rapture of the Church at the beginning of a future seven year tribulation. When the Lord comes to rapture His Church, which is the first stage of His Second coming, He will again regard ethnic and national Israel as His chosen people. Seven years later at the second stage of the second coming of Christ, the nation of Israel of ethnic (believing) Jews will become the preeminent nation over the Gentile nations in a future 1,000 year millennium.

(2) God has two separate kingdoms: (1) the Kingdom of God, which is spiritual in nature, which exists presently, which was not foretold in the Old Testament, **(2) the Kingdom of David,** which is a future, earthly kingdom of Israel, which is the 1,000 year millennium.

That dispensationalists do not believe that this church age was foretold in the Old Testament may be seen in most of their writings. John MacArthur, who does not like to be identified as a “dispensationalist”, even though he holds to its basic teachings, wrote of the Kingdom of God inaugurated by Jesus Christ in this age: “OT prophets didn’t see the great time period between the two comings. The church age was a ‘mystery’ hidden from them (cf. Eph. 3:1-9; Col. 1:27).” No, the mystery that was unknown by the Old Testament prophets was the equal place that the Gentiles have alongside the Jews in this present kingdom age. The Church is spiritual Israel, comprised of all who have faith as had Abraham (Rom. 4). But that the Old Testament prophets foresaw, even prophesied of this church age is clear. Peter declared, in Acts 3:24, “Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold *these days*.” Moreover we read in 1 Peter this word:

Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, ¹¹searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. ¹²*To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven-- things which angels desire to look into.* (1 Pet. 1:10-12)

(3) Jesus' second coming is in two stages: (1) the secret rapture of the church of all believers since Pentecost will take place before a future seven year tribulation period on earth, and (2) the visible literal return of Christ to the earth will occur after the tribulation, at which time He will establish national Israel as the leading and favored nation in the inaugurated 1,000 year millennium.

(4) There will be at least three major physical resurrections, but also many minor ones. These include (1) the resurrection of the Church, which is believers from Pentecost to the rapture, (2) at the end of the seven year tribulation there will occur the resurrection of the Old Testament saints and those Jews who died during the tribulation, and (3) the resurrection of the unsaved at the end of the 1,000 year millennium. But in addition, this position must make allowance for the resurrection of Gentile believers who were saved in the tribulation, and for believers who die during the millennium, each individual who becomes a believer to be raised as soon as death occurs.

5. There will be at least three future judgments, but also many minor ones. There is (1) the judgment of the Church (believers since Pentecost) after the rapture; the outcome of this judgment is not salvation but rewards; (2) the judgment of Gentile "nations" and Jewish people at the end of the seven year tribulation to determine what Gentile nations and Jews will continue to live on in the 1,000 year millennium; and (3) the judgment of all and only unbelievers at the end of the 1,000 year millennium, the outcome of which is the eternal lake of fire. But in addition, they must make allowance for many judgments to take place of believers who die during the millennium.

To show the complexity of all of these events in the dispensational understanding, consider the note of **John MacArthur** in his study Bible on 1 Corinthians 15:23.

Because of His resurrection, "those who are Christ's" will be raised and enter the heavenly state in 3 stages at Christ's coming (Matt. 24:36, 42, 44, 50; 25:13): **1)** those who have come to saving faith from Pentecost to the Rapture to meet the Lord in the air and ascend to heaven (1 Thess. 4:16, 17); **2)** those who come to faith during the Tribulation, with the OT saints as well, will be raised up to reign with Him during the Millennium (Rev. 20:4; cf. Dan. 12:2; cf. Isa. 26:19, 20); and **3)** those who die during the millennial kingdom may well be instantly transformed at death into their eternal bodies and spirits. The only people left to be raised will be the ungodly and that will occur at the end of the Millennium at the Great White Throne Judgment (see notes on Rev. 20:11-15; cf. John 5:28, 29), which will be followed by eternal hell (Rev. 21:8).² [He noted 3 different resurrections, but then included a fourth, that of the unsaved.—Lars]

We may ask of premillennial proponents: Is this complex scenario a suitable position when considering the simplicity and straight forward words of our Lord? "

Do not marvel at this; *for the hour is coming* in which *all who are in the graves* will hear His voice ²⁹and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation. (John 5:28f)

There is no place in the premillennial scenario that allows for this event as simply stated by our Savior.

² John MacArthur, **The MacArthur Study Bible** (Thomas Nelson, 1997), pp. 1755f.

Next week, Lord willing, we will address the understanding of the millennium set forth in Revelation 20, which is viewed as the decisive passage that speaks to these matters.

And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,
so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many.
To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time,
apart from sin, for salvation. (Heb. 9:27f)
