

Notes on the Last Judgement— from Paul Wilson 03/19/24

Hello All,

Some of you may be interested. Participants in yesterday's KLUC Lenten Bible Study asked for these items below that we mentioned in relation to the Last Judgement and Matthew 25:31-46:

- 1) In relation to God judging: "If God is the ultimate source of all love, life, joy, peace, and beauty, then to reject God is to reject the fountainhead that provides all the good that we desire and enjoy. To rebel against God is to put yourself in danger because to reject the source of good, leaves us to experience not-good. To reject the source of beauty, leaves us to experience not-beauty. To reject the source of peace, is to experience not-peace. To reject the source of life, is to experience not-life. To run from the light, is to be left in the dark. In a sense, judgement is to get what we want. To reject the fountainhead of all that is good is to put yourself into the presence of all that God wants to save you from." — The Rev. Chris Roth, Anglican priest at St Leonard's on the Hill in Red Deer.
- 2) I love Roth's words, above. Matthew 12:31-32 says, "Therefore I tell you, people will be forgiven for every sin and blasphemy, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come." Sinning against the Holy Spirit is not the blasphemy of swearing per se, nor is it even not know or rejecting what one might think they know of Jesus. It is persistent, insistent, word and action denying and rejecting truth, that chooses evil, and that refuses all offers to change. When we speak of a time of judgement to come, I don't believe it is God who punishes us with death. Rather like what Roth says, we choose death by choosing what is not-God, and what is not-God cannot exist with God, so we choose and become nothingness—against God's desire for all people. I suspect that there are some people who so live by the lie that even when finally confronted with what is life, will still choose un-life.
- 3) Dr. Chris Kerr, chief medical officer of Hospice & Palliative Care Buffalo, has done research on the visions of dying people: "The visions sparked inner change even at the end of life. 'It's the most remarkable of our studies,' Kerr told me. 'It highlights the paradox of dying, that while there is physical deterioration, they are growing and finding meaning. It highlights what patients are telling us, that they are being put back together.'" (This quotation is from an article based on Dr. Kerr's research in his 2020 book, *Death Is but a Dream*. The article does not tell us what heaven is, we need scripture for that, but it does stretch the imagination in ways that can be faithful. See: Phoebe Zerwick, "What Deathbed Visions Teach Us About Living", *New York Times*, Mar 13, 2024.  
<<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/03/12/magazine/deathbed-visions-research.html>>