



DEATH AND TAXES

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Death and Taxes

A man once famously said that nothing in this world is certain, except 'death and taxes.' The living God, in his word, the Bible, also tells us two things that are certain. Not death and taxes, but 'death and the judgement'. At this judgement we will owe God a huge debt, if it has not already been met, much greater than the largest of taxes.

Why is there a judgement?

In a court of law, a person must be judged and sentenced if they have committed a crime and broken the law of the land. We are also under the law of our holy Creator, who made us with a body, a mind, and a soul to love and obey him. But we have disobeyed and rebelled against him, and as we are born into this world, we do not care about it either. This is what it means to *sin* against God. That is our debt, and that is why judgement must take place.

What must be the sentence at the judgement?

It can only be one thing. God is holy and justice must be done. For someone who has sinned against him, it can only lead to being condemned – and that for ever and ever.

Is there any hope?

This God, whom we have rebelled against, has in love

and mercy provided a remedy for the dreadful problem of sin, with all its eternal consequences for us. This is through one person – Jesus Christ. Out of the billions of people to walk on this planet, all have fallen short of perfect holiness except him. Though he really, truly, actually walked on this earth, he never once sinned.

Why was Jesus different?

Jesus Christ is uniquely God and man, in one glorious person. This is a great mystery which we can never fully understand. But it is true, and it *must be* true if any are to be saved, for the simple reason that only God can deal with sin, only God can forgive it, and only God can do something perfect enough to be accepted by God! So Jesus only, the man who is God, was suited for the purpose of making an end of sin.

How did Jesus deal with sin?

He lived a perfect life, and at the end of that life he died on the cross, taking the punishment upon himself that a sinner deserves. So all the debt they owe to God has been paid. This crucial point is explained in the same place in the Bible which tells us about the certainty of death and the judgement. It says, 'Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many.' The 'many' are all those whom he died for, and they will in time come to trust and believe in him.

Can I know if I am one for whom Jesus died?

Jesus himself has something to say to anyone who is troubled about this point. All who see the evil of sin and want to forsake it, should come to him, and he declares, 'I will give you rest.' Though they may have sinned very wickedly, he will never cast them out, or turn his back upon them. These people, at the judgement, shall be pronounced for ever free from sin, and rather than suffering the wrath of God which they deserve, shall enjoy his gracious presence for ever and ever.

What about others?

There are but two groups of people out of the billions of people who have ever lived on this planet. One group will stand perfect before God at the judgement because their sins have been taken away, and the other will stand before him in all their sins and have to answer for them.

Which group do I belong to?

This is the vital question we must have answered if we value our everlasting peace and happiness. Still to us today in this fleeting, uncertain life, God declares with absolute certainty that *whoever* comes to trust in Jesus Christ for salvation '*shall* be saved.'