



# CAPITOL COMMISSION

## *Life's Final Exam (Ecclesiastes 12)*

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*ANNOUNCEMENT for loyal readers:  
We will pause our weekly studies during  
the session break and continue April 28  
during the Veto Session.*

### INTRODUCTION

My favorite teaching strategy was to give a version of the final exam on the first day of class. We told college students that this was a pre-test. This practice was helpful in measuring both learning and teaching effectiveness. Best of all, students were being treated to a preview of the course learning outcomes. The purpose of these study notes is to give the reader a preview of the criteria that is used to judge us at the end of our brief season on earth.

### MAKING PROGRESS

***Ecclesiastes 11:1-2 Give generously, for  
your gifts will return to you later.  
Divide your gifts among many,  
for in the days ahead you  
yourself may need much help.<sup>1</sup>***

Jesus used a parable to describe how a dishonest steward used creative bookkeeping to make friends who might later remember him (Luke 16). Those of us with worldly wealth should be faithful to invest this in others, showing that we can be trusted with the true riches of heaven.

Money alone will not buy peace in your last days. The stroke victim in the room next door had no visitors except the young woman who was hired to spend afternoons with her. That retired medical doctor had money but no host of family and friends monitoring her care and spiritual health as did my older sister in the other room. Where are your investments? My mother gave herself and everything away over her long lifetime. She owns virtually nothing, but all of her earthly needs have been met by family over the past twenty five years.

### INVESTMENTS THAT ENDURE

***Matthew 10:42 "And if you give even a  
cup of cold water to one of the  
least of my followers, you will  
surely be rewarded."<sup>2</sup>***

Christians have brought civility to the jungles, introduced medicine to developing nations, dispelled myths, and built hospitals, clinics and orphanages around the world. The faith community in America is the largest care provider on earth, virtually feeding entire nations and doing this largely at no charge to the recipients. What are you contributing to humanity that will last beyond your days on earth? In a simple act of love, Juanita planted crocus and daffodil bulbs that brought a measure of joy to her husband on this first spring season after she lost her battle with cancer. The Kansas Legislature improved the delivery of education statewide and set structures in place to ensure adequate care for our elderly and disabled citizens. These impacts outlive us. Where are you investing your talents and treasures?

### ULTIMATE JUDGEMENT

***Ecclesiastes 8:11 Because God does not  
punished sinners instantly, people  
feel it is safe to do wrong.<sup>3</sup>***

Jesus was questioned by a wealthy religious ruler who asked how he could inherit eternal life. The young man boasted of keeping the Ten Commandments (at least those five that were mentioned in conversation). Jesus tested the ruler by asking him to sell everything, distribute the money to the poor, and follow Him. This was a test of the man's priorities. He had been violating the first and second commandments by honoring money over God. Those listening asked who could meet those high standards. Jesus responded: "What is impossible with men is possible with God" (Luke 18:18-27). Are you trusting on getting to heaven by doing more good works than bad?

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#### BIBLE STUDIES

**LEADERS/LEGISLATORS: WEDNESDAYS 7-7:50 AM, CAPITOL - ROOM 142 SOUTH**

**STAFF & GUESTS: WEDNESDAYS 12:05 – 12:55 PM, CAPITOL - ROOM 142 S (ROOM ASSIGNMENTS SUBJECT TO CHANGE)**

# Kansas

## Life's Final Exam

### MEET THE JUDGE

**Matthew 16:13** *Jesus asked his disciples, "Who are the people saying I am?"<sup>4</sup>*

Relatively few people have acknowledged the true identity of Jesus both when He walked in Galilee and in the Scriptures. Some said that He was John the Baptist, some said Elijah, and others would say Jeremiah or one of the other prophets (Matthew 16:14). Martha, sister of Lazarus, said "You are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one we have so long awaited" (John 11:27). Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16). Who do you say that Jesus is?

### PEEK IN THE COURTROOM

**Revelation 20:12-15** *And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.<sup>5</sup>*

Your goal must be to ensure that your name is written in the book of life. This is, in effect your pardon from Divine judgment.

### PARDONED

**John 17:2-3** *"Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent."<sup>6</sup>*

Pardon means to release from punishment (forgive). This differs from an acquittal, the result of being found innocent. However, the pardon must be accepted by the one pardoned. In *U.S. v Wilson*, 32 U.S. 150 (1853) George Wilson would not acknowledge the pardon, leaving his guilty conviction standing.<sup>7</sup> Jesus has authority to pardon you. Will you accept His payment for your sin debt and acknowledge the pardon (Luke 23:39-43)?

### CONCLUSION

*When the Gentiles heard this good news, they were very glad and thanked the Lord for his message; and all who were chosen for eternal life believed (Acts 13:48).*

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<sup>1</sup> The Living Bible. The Way series. (Tyndale House). 1975.

<sup>2</sup> The Holy Bible. New Living Translation. (Tyndale House). 2004.

<sup>3</sup> The Living Bible. The Way series. (Tyndale House). 1975.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> The Holy Bible. New Living Translation. (Tyndale House). 2004.

<sup>6</sup> The Holy Bible. New International Version. (Biblica). 2005.

<sup>7</sup> Jan LaRue. The Meaning of a Pardon. (CWA) 4/13/2006.