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## Foundations Leaders' Guide

### Lesson 8 – Eternal Judgment

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#### Objectives

- Continue to get to know group members
- Understand the Biblical criteria by which every person will be judged before God

#### Preparation

- Establish a meeting place and time
- Pray for the members of your group, that throughout the semester they would “be filled with a knowledge of God’s will so they may live a life worthy of the Lord” (*Colossians 1.9-12*)
- Print a notes sheet for each student
- If you are co-leading, determine who will lead which parts of the meeting

## Meeting Notes

### 1. Welcome Jesus

*Matthew 18.20:* “For where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am among them.”

- ✓ Lead the group in prayer by welcoming Jesus as Lord, and asking Him to teach and transform each member of the group **as He desires**.

### 2. Welcome Each Other

- ✓ Lead the group in a personal discussion about how each member is doing, how God is working in the group and life of each member, or any other topics. It can also be helpful for the group to share a funny story or personal story relevant to the day’s lesson.

### 3. Receive From the Lord

#### 3.1 Review

Spend time reviewing the content from lesson 1, including Standing in the Gap’s mission, the four chairs of discipleship, and the content from any previous lessons.

**Teacher’s Note:** *Group members should already be familiar with this content. To help them remember and memorize it, ask questions. For example, rather than stating “The purpose of Standing in the Gap is to be and make disciples of Jesus Christ,” ask “What is the purpose of Standing in the Gap?”*

#### 3.2 Eternal Judgment

The first four Foundational topics we have studied are focused on our present life here on earth. Like our last topic, the resurrection of the dead, our final topic, **eternal judgment**, extends outside the scope of time and life on earth and instead turns the focus to **eternity**. After the resurrection of the dead occurs, the Bible teaches that everyone will be subject to judgment from God. This topic has eternal consequences for every individual, and is therefore of great importance.

God is described in the Bible as the judge of all the earth:

📖 *Isaiah 33.22*

📖 *Optional reading: James 4.12*

📖 *Optional reading: Hebrews 12.22-24*

- ? Think about the authority and responsibilities of a judge. When you think of God, do you think of him as the judge of the whole earth? Why or why not?

As a judge, God does not desire to condemn. Rather, he delights in mercy:

📖 *Ezekiel 18.30-32*

📖 *2 Peter 3.9*

At the throne of God’s eternal judgment, the **only way** we can receive eternal life from God’s judgment is through faith in Jesus Christ. Without faith in Christ, we will be condemned:

📖 *John 3.16-21*

📖 *Optional reading: Revelation 20.11-15*

Though true Christians can have confidence they will not be condemned, we will all appear before God’s throne to be judged based on our deeds during our earthly lives:

📖 Romans 8.1

📖 2 Corinthians 5.9-10

Paul writes that our deeds will be tested, and ultimately judged **according to their quality**:

📖 1 Corinthians 3.11-15

? What do you think it means to build upon the foundation of Jesus Christ? Why is this important?

Jesus also teaches that we will be judged based on **how well we have managed** what God has given us:

📖 Matthew 25.14-30

📖 Optional reading: Luke 19.11-27

Servant	Begins With	Earns	Increase	Reward/Punishment
1	5 talents	5 talents	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal affirmation: “Well done, good and faithful servant”</li> <li>• Placed in charge of many things</li> <li>• Invited to come and share his master’s happiness</li> <li>• Given the talent from servant #3</li> </ul>
2	2 talents	2 talents	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal affirmation: “Well done, good and faithful servant”</li> <li>• Placed in charge of many things</li> <li>• Invited to come and share his master’s happiness</li> </ul>
3	1 talent	0 talents	0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal condemnation: “You wicked, lazy servant”</li> <li>• Talent is taken away and given to servant #1</li> <li>• Thrown outside and away from the master, where there is “weeping and gnashing of teeth”</li> </ul>

In this parable, the departing master invests his money with 3 servants. Each servant is given a different amount, **according to his ability**. We see that the first two servants earn a profit for their master, and though they started and finished with different amounts of money, are considered **equally faithful** with what they have been given and are **equally rewarded** (except for the talent taken from servant #3). The third servant, on the other hand, earns nothing, is considered **wicked** for his faithlessness, and is punished accordingly.

? What do you think God has entrusted to you? What is he expecting from you when He returns?

From these passages, we can learn that God does expect something from each of us. Although the servants who were condemned did not necessarily do evil deeds, they were condemned based on their **lack of good deeds** for their master. Though we are saved through faith in Christ alone, not by deeds, we also know that good deeds will always be the result of a true, saving faith:

📖 *James 2.14-17*

- ? Compare and contrast the servants in Jesus' parable with the man in *1 Corinthians 3.11-15*. What similarities and differences do you see?

There is a difference in both **action** and in **consequence** for the man who built with wood, straw, and hay in *1 Corinthians 3.11-15* and the wicked servants in Jesus' two parables. Though the man who built with wood, straw, and hay suffers loss as his work is burned, Paul writes that **he is still saved**. However, the wicked servants are punished by their master. The key difference is that though the man in *1 Corinthians 3* built poorly, **he still built something**. The wicked servants, on the other hand, accomplished nothing for their master.

- ? What do you think about these passages' teachings on God's judgment?

In conclusion, God is the ultimate judge of the earth, and after the resurrection of the dead, will judge all people. Those who are not in Christ will be judged according to their deeds, but will ultimately be condemned in the light of God's perfect standards. Those who are in Christ will not be condemned, but will instead be saved to eternal life and rewarded based on how well they have used what God has entrusted to them. As you seek first Christ's kingdom, work in such a way that God will be pleased with your work and call you His "good and faithful servant."

#### 4. Offer Response to the Lord

- ✓ Lead the group in prayer by thanking the Lord for His presence, and asking Him to continue to teach and transform the group through the power of the Holy Spirit.