

Four Great Certainties

Can you be sure about anything?



Never before have men lived in such an uncertain age. Life on this planet is very uncertain. The international situation is uncertain. The economy is uncertain. Cancer and heart disease make good health uncertain. The world is in great agitation. Statesmen scan the future. All is uncertain.

Among young and old, hearts reach out to find something that is certain. Can you really be certain about anything? Yes, there are **Four Great Certainties** -- four things you can be sure about.

1st Great Certainty - Death

"It is appointed for men to die once..." Hebrews 9:27

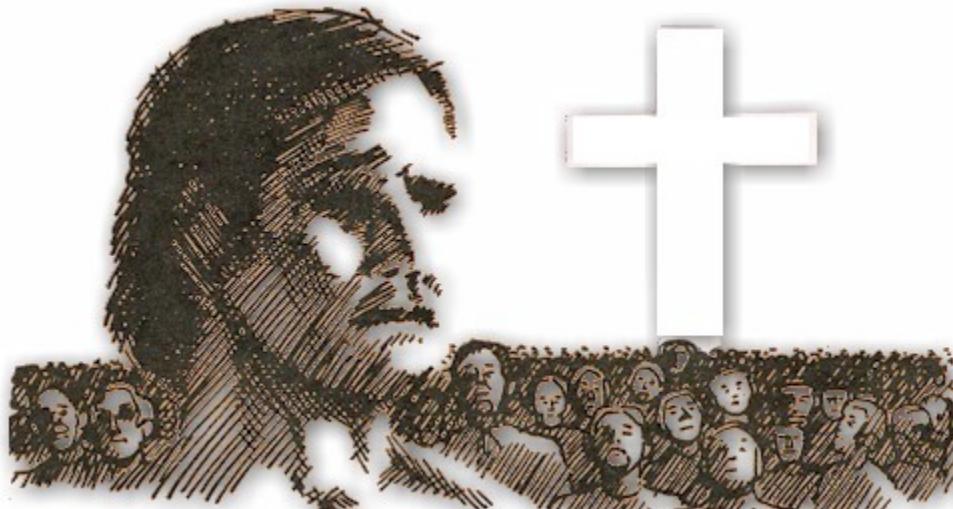
"Life is a constant and daily journey toward death. One after another dies, and the living must merely engage in the mersable business of carrying one another to the grave. All of us are traveling the same road together." -- Luther

Why?

Death is appointed us, not as punishment for personal sins, but as the result of Adam's sin.

Sin made its entry into the world through one man, and through sin death.... As a result of one man's sin death by natural consequencee became the common lot of men." Romans 5:12, 15.

"In Adam all men die." I Corinthians 15:22.



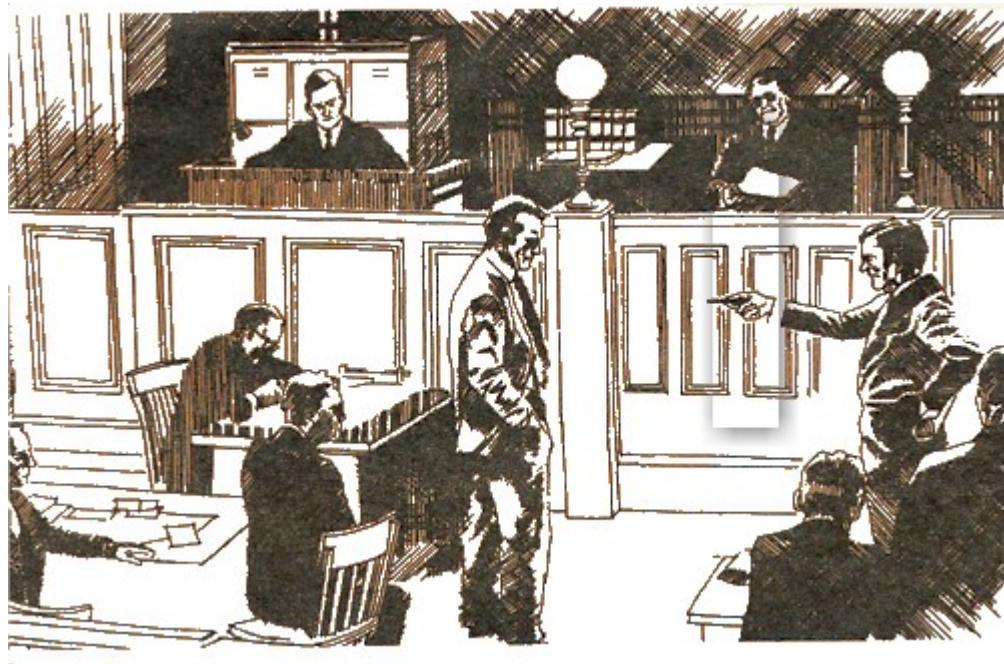
2nd Great Certainty - Judgment

"It is appointed for men to die once, and after that comes judgment...."
"Hebrews 9:27

"We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." Romans 14:10.

Judgment beyond this life is only fair and right.

"Cheats never prosper," you may say. But they often do. Honest Joe, big-hearted Ben, and kind Kathy often get the worst end of the deal. The Bible acknowledges that this often happens here and now (Ecclesiastes 7:15; Psalm 73:1, Hebrews 11:32-39).



The Bible also tells us that we live in a universe where all accounts must finally be squared. A final judgment upon this life is certain. *"Though a sinner does evil a hundred times and prolongs his life, yet I know that it will be well with those who fear God."* Ecclesiastes 8:12.

Judgment is before a law which is fair and just.

We shall be judged by a law which is "holy and just and good" (James 2:12, Romans 7:12). The law knows no favorites. Judgment will be impartial (Romans 2:11-14).

Human courts are not always fair, because they do not consider all the evidence. God's judgment will consider all the evidence -- even the hidden motives and secrets of men's hearts (Matthew 12:36, 1 Corinthians 4:5, Romans 2:15, 16).

Those who have hate in their hearts will be guilty of murder (1 John 3:15). Those who have lustful thoughts will be guilty of adultery (Matthew 5:27, 28). All who bear grudges will be condemned (James 5:9). Everyone who fails to love God above everything, and his neighbor as himself, will stand guilty of being ungrateful and unjust (Matthew 22:37-39).

We don't consider a man to be honest unless he is honest 100% of the time. Neither will the law of God consider a man to be righteous unless he is really righteous all the time (see Psalm 106:3; James 2:10).

Any failure to come up to God's perfect standard is sin (1 John 3:4; Matthew 5:48).

Judgment will decree a punishment to fit the crime.

There will be degrees of punishment (see Luke 12:47, 48). The final end of all sinners is death. "*The wages of sin is death.*" Romans 6:23. "*Their lot shall be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.*" Revelation 21:8.

Reflections:

If you should die tonight, could your life stand the test of the judgment?

Do you realize that if you stand on the basis of how good you are or how well you have lived, your case is hopeless? The Bible says, "*There is none righteous, no one who...*All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Romans 3:10, 23. "*All our good deeds are like filthy rags.*" Isaiah 64:6.

Is it your desire to be found right with God so that you can face the judgment with confidence? If it is, **there is good news for you!** Let's consider the next great certainty.

3rd Great Certainty - The Good News of Jesus Christ



"And just as surely as it is appointed for all men to die once, and after that pass to their judgment, so it is certain that Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many...." Hebrews 9:27, 28, Phillips.

The good news of Jesus Christ is as certain as death and judgment. God loves you and wants you to know what He has done for you in and through His Son, Jesus Christ. *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* John 3:16. Consider what this good news is:

The Son of God, who is our Creator and Judge (John 1:1-3; 5:22), took our place. Oh our behalf He met the just requirements of God's law.

First, He lived for us a sinless life -- a life which fulfilled the law of God in every respect (Matthew 5:17, John 15:10).

Second, He died for us and paid the penalty for our breaking the law of God. The Bible says, *"Christ died for our sins."* 1 Corinthians 15:3. *"While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."* Romans 5:28. His sacrifice on the cross was sufficient to save the whole world (1 John 2:2).

Christ Rose from the dead and commanded His followers to tell everyone the good news that forgiveness and eternal life are offered freely to all who repent and believe. In fact, it is these glad tidings that produce repentance and faith by the hearing of the gospel. (Luke 24:47; Mark 16:15, 16; John 20:31; 1 John 5:13).

Repentance is acknowledging that we are sinners and being sorry for breaking God's law.

Faith is trusting wholly in Christ, who obeyed the law perfectly for us and died on the cross to pay the penalty of our sins.

Because of what Christ has done for us, God is able to declare that we are fully in the right when we put our faith in Jesus. He can do this and still be just (Romans 3:24-26).

When Christ took our place, our sins were counted against Him and He was punished for them just as if He had committed them Himself. In the same way, when we believe on Jesus, His upright life is counted ours and we are rewarded just as if we had actually lived that wonderful life (2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 4:3-7; 5:18, 19; Matthew 10:41).

God begins to reward us for Christ's sake even now.

Although God accepts us as we are, He does not leave us as we are. When He puts Christ's sinless life to our credit, He not only declares that we are righteous, but He treats us as righteous, so --

He accepts us in His family as sons (John 1:12).

He gives us the Holy Spirit (Galatians 4:6).

He radically changes our lives so that we can live a new life of gratitude for God's love and respect for His law (1 John 5:1; Romans 5:1-5; 7:6, 22; 8:3-7; 1 John 2:4, Psalm 119).

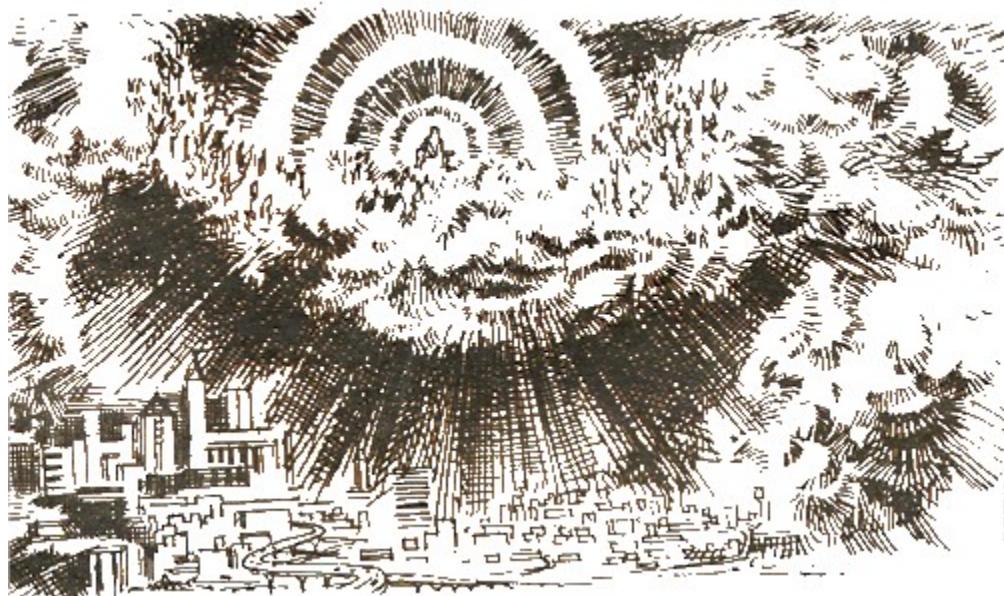
Reflections:

Do you realize that with His Son, God gives you everything? This is what Romans 8:32 says!

Do you realize that believing on Christ puts you on God's side? With Him you can face anything (Romans 8:30-39).

When you are right with God, then you can look forward to the **4th Great Certainty** with joy and confidence. Perhaps you already anticipate what the final certainty is.

4th Great Certainty - Christ's Coming Again



"Just as it is appointed for men to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but to save those who are eagerly waiting for Him" Hebrews 9:27, 28.

It is certain that Christ "will appear a second time." He said, "*I will come again.*" John 14:3. History has an appointed end. Christ will come "with power and great glory" and wind up the affairs of this old world (Matthew 24:30).

Those who "obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ... shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power." 2 Thessalonians 1:8,9.

To believers who wait eagerly for Him, Christ's return is the "blessed hope." Titus 2:13.

Believers are not yet perfect or wholly without sin (Philippians 3:23-14; 1 John 1:8). In their present frail, mortal state, they must fight against sin, suffer and wait for their salvation to be openly disclosed (Romans 8:16-25). The present comfort

of the Spirit is only the "first fruits" or "down payment" of their immortal inheritance (Romans 8:23, Ephesians 1:13, 14).

When Christ comes, "*the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.... This mortal nature must be put on immortality.*" 1 Corinthians 15:52, 53. *God... will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away.*" Revelation 21:3,4.

The sure and certain hope of Christ's coming inspires believers to live blameless lives (Titus 2:11-13).

"Every man that has this hope in Him purifies himself, even as He is pure." 1 John 3:3

An Invitation:

"If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." Romans 10:9.

We invite you to know the joy and peace that comes by believing the message of Christ (Romans 15:13). When faith brings you into fellowship with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, you will want to have fellowship with those of "like precious faith." Make contact with other Christians who love the Word of God.

Feel free to write us.

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