

"From there he will come to judge the living and the dead"

New Testament Evidence

Acts 10:42: "And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead."

Acts 17:31: "Because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

2 Timothy 4:1: "I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom."

1 Peter 4:5: "But they will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead."

Matthew 25:31-32: "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats."

Fathers of the Church:

St. Justin Martyr: St. Justin Martyr affirmed the righteous judgment of Christ, emphasizing His return in glory to judge humanity. He stated: "*He shall come from the heavens in glory, when the man of apostasy, who speaks strange things against the Most High, shall dare to do unlawful deeds on the earth against us Christians*" (First Apology, 52). This highlights the certainty of Christ's return to establish justice, contrasting it with the actions of those who oppose Him.

St. Augustine: St. Augustine profoundly stated: "*He who created you without you, will not justify you without you*" (Sermons, 169). This emphasizes human cooperation in salvation. While God initiates creation and grace, human response and cooperation are essential in justification, leading up to the final judgment where one's actions and choices are evaluated.

St. Irenaeus: St. Irenaeus wrote about the resurrection and judgment: "*He will come at the end of time to judge the living and the dead, and to give to each according to their deeds.*" This reinforces the idea of accountability and the final reckoning of one's life choices.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem: St. Cyril taught: "*He shall come from heaven in glory at the end of this world on the last day. For the end of this world is the beginning of the next, and the judgment of the righteous gives the beginning of the blessedness.*" This illustrates the transformative nature of the final judgment as the gateway to eternal life for the righteous.

Saints:

St. Catherine of Siena: St. Catherine of Siena, focusing on mercy and justice, urged souls to seek Christ's mercy before the final judgment. She said: "*The soul cannot live without loving. But when she loves, she can do everything; all things are possible to her*" (The Dialogue). This underscores the transformative power of love and mercy, suggesting that those who love God and neighbor align themselves with His will, preparing for a favorable judgment.

Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC 668-682):

The CCC teaches that Christ's second coming will be in glory to judge the living and the dead, establishing His kingdom fully. It clarifies that this judgment will reveal the truth of each person's

relationship with God and neighbor, assessing their actions and choices throughout their lives. The final judgment will confirm the eternal destinies of all souls.

Theological Importance

Divine Authority:

These passages affirm that Jesus Christ has been given authority by God the Father to judge all humanity. This divine appointment emphasizes Christ's sovereignty and the completeness of His mission.

Second Coming:

The judgment is associated with the Second Coming of Christ, a central tenet of Christian eschatology. It underscores the expectation that Christ will return in glory to fulfill the final stage of God's redemptive plan.

Moral Accountability:

The teaching that Christ will judge the living and the dead holds every person accountable for their actions. It serves as a call to righteousness and faithfulness, knowing that all will be judged by Christ.

Hope and Assurance:

For believers, the promise of Christ's return and judgment provides hope and assurance. It reassures them that justice will be served and that Christ's victory over sin and death will be fully realized.