



# Christian Questions

TALK RADIO WITH A PURPOSE

You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. Jeremiah 29:13

Dear Darryl,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Question Radio. You wanted to know the answers to the two questions the Apostle Peter asked in 1 Peter 4:17-18 and why Peter asked these questions without giving an answer.

“For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And, ‘If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?’” (1 Peter 4:17-18)

In verse 17 when Apostle Peter says that it is time for judgment to begin with the family [or house] of God, he is referring to the on-going present trial of the Church, the consecrated Body members of Christ, during this Gospel age. He then proceeds to ask the question as to what the outcome will be for those [these same consecrated members] who do not obey the gospel of God. The answer, found in Hebrews 6:4-6 and Hebrews 10:26-31, is a dire one because these individuals have shared in the holy Spirit, and have tasted the goodness of the word of God” (Hebrews 6:5). If they keep on deliberately sinning all that is left is the fearful expectation of judgment [second death] that will befall the enemies of God (Hebrews 10:26-27). Peter is pointing out to the brethren that they are on trial now for their spiritual lives and that their commitment to obedience and righteousness, albeit difficult, is extremely serious. Therefore, Peter’s question is rhetorical and is designed to produce an effect rather than a specific answer. “The Lord will judge his people. It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” (Hebrews 10:30-31)

In verse 18, the Apostle alludes to Proverbs 11:31, “If the righteous receive their due on the earth, how much more the ungodly and the sinner!” Both verse 18 and Proverbs 11:31 refer to the Day of Judgment on earth for the world of mankind. Peter, in verse 18, is making a contrast between the two classes of salvation—the heavenly and the earthly. He says if it is hard for the righteous (those who have lived relatively righteous lives on earth) to be saved, he asks what will become of the ungodly and the sinner? He is targeting primarily evildoers in the world. Here again this is a rhetorical question because it is unanswerable, since judgment for the world is yet future and will be determined on an individual basis during the Millennium. Those who have previously lived relatively righteous lives will have a much easier time in the Day of Judgment, since they will have fewer sins to make right. Others who have lived sinful lives will have a very difficult time changing their behaviors and some who remain incorrigible will enter into second death. What will





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happen to even the most ungodly sinner, though, is not a question that can be answered now. Each person, regardless of his sins in this present life, needs to have an opportunity to learn righteousness, internalize it, and practice it in the peaceable kingdom on earth. Only in the Day of Judgment can Peter's question actually be answered.

Why did Peter ask these questions without giving definitive answers? We believe they were not meant to be answered definitively. He asked them as an admonition to each believer to be on guard of his own fallen nature so that he would not fall into a life of sin and lose the grace of God. Peter concludes by telling the Church in verse 19 what they must do to remain in that grace. "So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good."

We hope we have answered your question. Be sure to sign up for CQ Rewind at [www.christianquestions.net](http://www.christianquestions.net). The service is free without obligation and will provide you with scriptural perspective on many questions and topics.

Sincerely,

Christian Questions Radio

