



THE WAY

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FROM THE CHAPLAIN

In our Year 7 class, we had a discussion about judgment. I asked the students where they see judgment in society. Their answers ranged from courtrooms to referees, and one brave soul even said, "parents." The idea didn't quite hit home until I told them that their judgment day was just around the corner—next week, when their parents would see their report cards. Suddenly, there was a collective gasp, followed by an undeniable air of dread. They knew that everything they had done (or hadn't done) would be laid bare before the people who mattered most - Mum and Dad.

Judgment Day, much like report card day, is the moment when we are held accountable - this time not by our parents but by our Father in heaven. It's the day when eternal consequences are determined, based on our actions or inaction.

But what students often don't understand about parents is that we don't enjoy being angry or handing out consequences. In that way, we reflect the heart of God. The Lord declares in Ezekiel:

"As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign Lord, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Why will you die, people of Israel?" (Ezekiel 33:11).

God's judgment stems from his love and purity, not from a desire to punish. He longs for us to turn back to him, to choose life. He proved this by sending Jesus - born in a manger yet destined to die for our sins. The baby in the cradle is both the God we cannot see and the human we struggle to be.

In his great mercy, God offers us something incredible. Through Jesus, he virtually says, 'Trust me. Let my Son take your sins. I'll exchange your report card for his so you can pass into eternal life.'

This Christmas let's remember that the judgment we fear is overwhelmed by the grace we're offered - a grace that calls us to turn, live, and be with God forever.

Reverend Denis Oliver
College Chaplain
