Images for the Journey

1. A picture of a very serious person hanging on the wall
2. A very large parlor that was full of dust
3. Passion and Patience
4. A fire burning against a wall
5. A beautiful, stately palace
6. The man in the cage
7. The man who dreamed about the final judgment
“Interpreter took Christian by the hand again, and led him into a room where a person was getting out of bed. As he put on his clothes, he shook and trembled. Then Christian said, ‘Why does this man tremble?’ The Interpreter then encouraged him to tell Christian the reason for his shaking. So he began and said, ‘Last night, as I was sleeping, I had a dream. The heavens became extremely black. It also thundered, and
lightening was flashing all around. I was terrified. In my dream, I looked up and saw the clouds being blown by the wind at an unusual speed. I heard a loud sound from a trumpet and saw a Man sitting on a cloud. Thousands from heaven were with him. They appeared in flaming fire. Even the heavens appeared to be on fire. Then I heard a voice saying, ‘Arise, you dead, and come to Judgment!’ With that the
rocks split in two, the graves opened, and the dead came forth. Some of them were extremely joyful and looked upward. Others were seeking to hide under the mountains. Then I saw the Man who sat on the cloud open the book and call the world to draw near. Yet there was a significant distance between him and those who gathered around because of a fierce flame that came forth from him (as between a judge and
The Seventh Image

the prisoners at the bar). The Man sitting on the cloud also proclaimed to those who attended him, ‘Gather together the tares, the chaff, and stubble, and cast them into the burning lake.’ With that, the bottomless pit opened just about where I stood. Out of the mouth of the pit there came an abundance of smoke, coals of fire, along with hideous noises. The Man also said to the same attendants, ‘Gather my wheat into the
barn.’ And with that, I saw many taken up and carried away into the clouds. But I was left behind. I also tried to hide myself, but I could not, because the Man who sat on the cloud still kept His eye on me. My sins also came into my mind and my conscience accused me on every side. After this, I awoke from my sleep.”

**Christian:** “What was it that made you so afraid of this sight?”
Unready: “I thought the Day of Judgment had already come, and I was not ready for it. But this frightened me the most: the angels gathered up several others and left me behind. Also, the pit of hell opened her mouth right where I stood. My conscience, too, caused me a lot of pain. And the Judge always kept His eye on me, showing indignation in his countenance.”
“Then the Interpreter said to Christian, ‘Have you given consideration to all of these things?’”

Christian: “Yes. And they give me both hope and fear.”

Interpreter: “‘Well, keep all these things in your mind so that they may act as a goad in your side, to prick you on in the way you should go.’ Then Christian began to prepare for his journey.”
“Then the Interpreter said, ‘May the Comforter always be with you, good Christian, to guide you in the way that leads to the City.’ So Christian went on his way, saying,
‘Here I have seen things rare, and profitable; 
Things pleasant, dreadful, things to make me stable 
In what I have begun to take in hand: 
Then let me think on them, and understand 
Wherefore they showed me was; and let me be 
Thankful, O good Interpreter, to thee.’”
The Certainty of the Judgment

• There is one appointment that all of us, without exception, will keep. In a way that we cannot comprehend now, we must humbly appear before the God of the universe to give an account of our lives.

• “So then each one of us shall give an account of himself to God” (Romans 14:12).

• “For we will all stand before God’s judgment seat” (Rom. 14:10).
The Certainty of the Judgment

• Solomon wrote: “Whatever is has already been, and what will be has been before; and God will call the past to account...God will bring to judgment both the righteous and the wicked; for there will be a time for every activity, a time for every deed” (Eccl. 3:17).
“There has to be cosmic justice in a world beyond the world in order to make sense of the observed facts about human morality.”
All Secrets Will Be Exposed

• God knows all things. Nothing is hidden from His sight.

• “The Lord is in his holy temple; the Lord is on his heavenly throne. He observes the sons of men; his eyes examine them” (Ps. 11:4).

• This truth led David, with overwhelming astonishment, to cry out, “Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it” (Ps. 139:1-6).
All Secrets Will Be Exposed

- The very words that we speak, even in private, are open to His scrutiny.
- “And I say to you, that every careless word that men shall speak, they shall render account for it in the day of judgment” (Mt. 12:36).
- Deeds done in the darkness, even the very motives of our hearts, will also be exposed.
All Secrets Will Be Exposed

• “Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men’s hearts; and then each man’s praise will come to him from God” (I Cor. 4:5).

• “For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil” (Eccl. 12:14).
“God will not be mocked and cannot be deceived; the character of every man will be clearly revealed in the sight of God and in the sight of the man himself. All self-deception will be banished. Every man will see himself as he appears in the sight of God...His conscience will be so enlightened as to recognize the justice of the sentence which the righteous judge shall pronounce upon him.”
The quantity and quality of our work will be measured. God has made each one of us a steward (one who manages His affairs; Luke 12:42; I Cor. 4:1), and will hold us accountable for that trust.

Parable of the Talents: “Now after a long time, the master of these slaves came and settled accounts with them” (Mt. 25:19).
Quantity & Quality

• Our Lord obviously expected these men to multiply His investment. In this text, the quantity of their work is inspected.

• Commenting on *The Vine and the Branches*, A. B. Bruce notes that Jesus was also concerned about the quality of the fruit: “He gave the disciples to understand that He expected of them not only fruit, but much fruit, and fruit not only abundant in quantity, but good in quality.”
Christ, The Righteous Judge

• No one will have an unfair advantage at judgment. Because He is the Righteous One – “O Lord the God of Israel, you are just” (Ezra 9:15, ESV) - His judgment will be unbiased, perfect, and true.

• “Now we know that God’s judgment against those who do such things is based on truth” (Rom. 2:2).
The Call To Watchfulness

• When the Apostle Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, he reminded them that “the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night” (I Thess. 5:2).

• With the final consummation in mind, Paul exhorted them: “So then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober” (I Thess. 5:6).
The Call To Watchfulness

• The Greek word for “alert” is our English name, Gregory, which means “watchful” or “vigilant.” Since Jesus is coming back as a thief, we are exhorted to be watchful – to be on the alert.

• This word is used 23 times in the New Testament from Matthew to Revelation.
“Christians have been warned by Jesus himself to be cautious about trying to discover the time of his return, yet he also advised them to ‘watch’...The correct answer will be evident only when the predicted final events actually take place; it cannot be determined by speculation.”
A Few of the “Alert” Passages

• “Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming” (Mt. 24:42).
• “Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour” (Mt. 25:13).
• “Blessed are those slaves whom the master shall find on the alert when he comes; truly I say to you, that he will gird himself to serve, and have them recline at table, and will come up and wait on them” (Lk. 12:37).
A Few of the “Alert” Passages

• “Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (I Pt. 5:8).

• “Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong” (I Cor. 16:13).

• “And what I say to you I say to all, ‘Be on the alert!’” (Mk. 13:37).
“Our world and every last man in it have been placed on emergency alert; the coming Judge of our race is at hand, and all eyes shall soon behold the sent Son of God. While we no more know the precise instant than did the Apostle Paul, we also know no less. And we have this
warning: ‘About the times...you know perfectly well that the Day of the Lord comes like a thief in the night...But you...are not in the dark, that the day should overtake you like a thief’” (I Thess. 5:1-4, NEB).
7 Images Christian Received

• A picture of a very serious person hanging on the wall: He needs a faithful pastor to shepherd him throughout his journey.

• A very large parlor that was full of dust: He needs to embrace the gospel, rather than the law, and live in repentance and grace every day of his life.
• **Passion and Patience:** He needs to lay up treasures in heaven and wait for God’s ultimate reward.

• **A fire burning against a wall:** He needs to understand that Christ continues to pour out the oil of His grace on his life every day and that Satan will never be able to put out the flame of the gospel.
• **A beautiful, stately palace:** He needs to accept, as part of his Christian worldview, that he will go through many tribulations on his way to the Celestial City.

• **The man in the cage:** He needs to live for Christ each day so that he will not gradually abandon Christ and move toward apostasy.
• The man who dreamed about the final judgment: He needs to be watchful and alert, always being mindful that Christ could return at any hour of the day or night.
Images For Your Journey

A Spiritual Guide & Friend
Living in the Freedom of the Gospel
An Eternal Perspective & Patience
Images For Your Journey

The Mystery & Sustaining Power of God’s Grace
Images For Your Journey

A Willingness to Suffer
Refusing to Walk Away from Christ
Images For Your Journey

On the Alert for Judgment Day