

THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST

TEXT: I CORINTHIANS 3:8-15

INTRODUCTION:

1. The key words in our text tonight are “reward” and “labor” (3:8).
2. I am going to speak tonight about the judgment seat of Christ. Our reward at the judgment seat will be based upon our labor (cf. Scofield notes, p. 1214, bottom).
3. Salvation is based upon God’s grace, but rewards are based upon our works (labor). We are saved to serve.
4. “Ministers” (3:5) means “servants.”
5. Planting and watering is hard work (3:6-8). God gives the increase (3:6, 7), but there will be no increase if man doesn’t work.
6. “Husbandry” (3:9) is picture of God’s laborers working together in God’s mission field, whether at home or abroad. Jesus said in Matthew 13:38, “The field is the world.”
7. Another picture we see often in Scripture is that of a building (3:9-14).
8. Paul said in Ephesians 2:20-22, “And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”
9. We must build according to the instructions God has given to us in His Word. By “the grace of God” (3:10) we will be successful, and we will be rewarded at the judgment seat of Christ (3:12-15).

I. WE MUST TAKE HEED HOW WE BUILD (3:10).

1. All Christians will have to give an account, so Paul says, “But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon” (3:10b).
2. Romans 14:10 says, “for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.”
3. Second Corinthians 5:10 says, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”
4. Some Christians are building with wood, hay, and stubble (3:12), but it is all going up in smoke (3:13-15).
5. Some Christians “shall suffer loss” (3:15), but they will not go to hell (cf. Rev. 20:11-15).
6. Second John 8 says, “Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.”
7. “Look to yourselves” (II John 8) means, “Take heed” (I Cor. 3:10).

II. THE TIME OF THE JUDGMENT SEAT

1. Most pretribulational rapturists place the judgment seat immediately after the rapture. “The event herein described takes place immediately following the translation of the church out of this earth’s sphere” (J. Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come*, p. 220).
2. Since the rapture is imminent, so is the judgment seat. James 5:9 says, “Behold, the judge standeth before the door.”
3. Revelation 19:7 says, “The bride “hath made herself ready.” This indicates that the judgment seat will take place before the marriage supper.

III. DIFFERENT CROWNS GIVEN AT THE JUDGMENT SEAT

1. An incorruptible crown (I Cor. 9:24-27).
2. Crown of rejoicing (I Thess. 2:19, 20).
3. Crown of life (James 1:12; Rev. 2:10).
4. Crown of righteousness (II Tim. 4:8).
5. Crown of glory (I Peter 5:4).

CONCLUSION:

1. Queen Elizabeth I commissioned a rich nobleman to go on an important trip for her. The man tried to get out of it on the grounds that his business would suffer in his absence.
2. The queen said to the man, "Sir, if you will look after my business, I will look after yours."
 3. The man went, and upon his return he found that the queen had kept her promise, and he was better off than he was before.]
 4. Let us trust God, and let us work diligently for Him. And we will be rewarded.
 5. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (I Cor. 15:58).
 6. In the last chapter of the Bible, our Lord gave this promise – "And, behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:12).
 7. These are the key words – reward and labor (I Cor. 3:8).