

## CHRIST'S JUDGMENT OF HIS PEOPLE

January 19, 2014

II Corinthians 5:1-21

**“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.”**

**II Corinthians 5:10**

No thought should be more sobering than this: we must appear before God in judgment. He knows everything; nothing is hidden from Him: “Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do” (Heb. 4:13). Thus, the evidence upon which He judges is exhaustive. He is all-powerful; nothing limits the reach of His judgment or obstructs its implementation. His judgment will be perfect.

Two future judgments are identified in Scripture. One is so dreadful that heaven and earth are described as fleeing from it. This is the judgment of all whose names are not written in the Lamb’s book of life (Rev. 20:11-15); those who suffer damnation. All who are judged there will be “cast into the lake of fire.”

The other judgment examines the works of all whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life. It is often referred to as the Judgment Seat of Christ. It has nothing to do with a person’s eternal destiny; that was determined when God judged their sins in Christ’s crucifixion. It focuses rather on “the things done in his body, according to that he hath done” (II Cor. 5:10).

**The judgment.** The terminology is taken from the first century athletic arena, where competitors vied for victory. In that venue an enthroned ruler placed the victor’s crown upon the champion’s head, rewarding his superior performance. This imagery is utilized to describe God’s evaluation of how believers’ have run the race of life. The “judgment seat of Christ” is the throne upon which Christ will sit, passing judgment on believers’ works.

**The matters judged.** This will judge the acceptability of every believer’s works. It evaluates his service for God on earth, “the things done in his body” (v. 10). The basis of this judgment will be whether the works are well-pleasing to Christ (“accepted of him,” v. 9) or worthless (“bad,” v. 10).

I Corinthians 3: There is but one foundation upon which to build our lives: Jesus Christ (11). We are warned, “Every man’s work shall be made manifest: . . . shall be revealed by fire” (13). When “gold, silver, precious stones, wood hay, [and] stubble” (12) are subjected to fire, the wood, hay and stubble are destroyed. Similarly, the works which cannot withstand the evaluation of God will be proven worthless.

**Preparation for judgment.** “Let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon” (10). How might we “take heed” in preparation for this judgment?

(over)

1) Honor Christ just as we honor the Father. "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him" (John 5:22, 23).

2) Recognize that our bodies are the dwelling place of God's Spirit (I Cor. 3:16-17; 6:15-19), and be governed by that realization. Though many things may be "lawful," not all things are "expedient" (I Cor. 6:12).

3) We must not be ruled by this world's wisdom, "for the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God" (I Cor. 3:18-20). We are not to be followers of this world-system, for it is wholly given to practice "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." Those who love it are not partakers of God's love (I Jn. 2:15, 16).

4) "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (I Cor. 10:31). We exist for one purpose: God's pleasure (Rev. 4:11; Col. 1:16). Anything that does not fit within this purpose will be worthless when we appear before God.