

1. Preparing ourselves for the Judgment Seat of Christ

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Last year we ministered a series of messages on the subject of End-times, to gain biblical insights concerning certain events that will take place in the future.

(The video recordings are viewable on our Youtube channel, entitled: "Endtimes Revealed Through Bible Prophecy", dated May to mid-June 2020).

Today we begin a new study of God's Word on "The Judgment Seat of Christ", and how we position ourselves towards this exciting event.

2 Corinthians 5:10 (NKJV) *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*

Romans 14:10–12 (NKJV) ... *For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. 11 For it is written: "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God." 12 So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.*

- At some point in the future, there will be an event called "The Judgment Seat of Christ"
- Every Christian will appear before Christ to give an account of himself to God
- The "Judgment Seat of Christ" would better termed "The Reward Seat of Christ", since we will be rewarded for our faithful service to Christ during our lifetime on earth
- Judgment seat – Gr. bema – a tribunal seat from which an official would recognise & reward athletes for their achievements
- The "Judgment Seat of Christ" is different from "The Great White Throne Judgement" where the wicked will be judged for their sins (Rev. 20:11)
- The Judgment Seat of Christ will take place in heaven
 - After the Rapture of the church (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)
 - Before the 2nd Coming of Christ (Matthew 24:27–30)
 - (sometime during the 7 Year Period of the Great Tribulation)

The doctrine of the Judgment Seat of Christ is established mainly by:

- a. Jesus' teaching in the gospels, including some of the parables

- b. Paul's teaching in his letters to the churches
- c. Jesus' letters to the seven churches in Asia (Revelation chs. 2 & 3)
- d. Other references in the book of Revelation

1. Some Scripture References that speak about our future rewards

Matthew 16:27 (NKJV) *For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.*

- Jesus is referring to His 2nd Coming to earth, to set up His 1,000 year reign on the earth (Millennial Reign of Christ)
- Then (when He returns) He will reward each of us according to our good works
- Our rewards will be **announced** in heaven at the Judgment Seat of Christ, and largely **rolled out** at the beginning of the Millennial (1,000 Year) Reign of Christ

Luke 14:13–14 (NKJV) *But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. 14 And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for **you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.***

- The “resurrection of the just” is reference to the bodily resurrection of all believer at the time of the rapture of the church (I Corinthians 15:51-52)
- Jesus will repay (reward) every believer for serving Him faithfully, and for their sacrificial giving to the poor

Revelation 20:12 (NKJV) *And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and **books were opened**. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And **the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.***

- This refers to the Great White Throne Judgment which will take place at the end of the Millennial Reign of Christ
- At this judgment, only unsaved people will be judged for their sins
- Christian will not appear at this judgment because our sins have already been paid for by Jesus' sacrificial death
- **Books were opened ...**
- **Heaven keeps meticulous records, not only of the sins of the wicked, but also of the faithful works of the righteous**

Matthew 10:41–42 (NKJV) *He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet **shall receive a prophet's reward**. And he who receives a righteous*

*man in the name of a righteous man **shall receive a righteous man's reward.** 42 And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, **he shall by no means lose his reward.**"*

- According to Jesus, every minute detail of our faithful service in God's Kingdom is noted, and will be counted towards our rewards

2 Timothy 4:7–8 (NKJV) *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Finally, **there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.***

- Apostle Paul speaks of God's reward for him that are laid up for him
- Christians who have served God faithfully in this life have rewards laid up for them in heaven, to be received and enjoyed in the life to come

Revelation 11:18 (NKJV) *The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, **and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great, and should destroy those who destroy the earth.***

- There is a "set time" in heaven when Jesus will reward His servants
- Once again, that "set time" & event is called: The Judgment Seat of Christ
- At this time & event, Christ will reward:
 - His prophets
 - His saints
 - Those who fear His name

2. Salvation is purely by God's grace – rewards will be purely by our works

Ephesians 2:8–10 (NKJV) *For **by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.***

- Salvation is a free gift from God. It cannot be earned through anything we do, nor can it be paid for. It can only be received through faith Christ and His finished work on the cross

- In contrast to that, rewards are earned, and come to us as a direct result of our faithfulness in serving God
 - Much faithfulness in serving God = much rewards
 - Little faithfulness in serving God = little rewards
 - No faithfulness in serving God = no rewards

1 Corinthians 3:5–15 (NKJV) *Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one? 6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. 8 Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and **each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor.** 9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building. 10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. 11 For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 14 **If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward.** 15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.*