

# 4. Preparing ourselves for the Judgment Seat of Christ

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Subtitle: Producing “fruit” of eternal value

We are currently studying God’s Word concerning “The Judgment Seat of Christ”, or better called “The Reward Seat of Christ”, and how we can position ourselves for this future event.

**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 this event called “The Judgment Seat of Christ”, where Jesus will reward us Christians for our faithfulness in serving in His Kingdom during our lifetime on earth
- The Judgment Seat of Christ will take place in heaven
  - After the Rapture of the church (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)
  - Before the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Christ (Matthew 24:27–30)
  - (sometime during the 7 Year Period of the Great Tribulation)
- Immediately after the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Jesus Christ to earth, He will set up His literal kingdom on the earth, which will last for 1,000 years
- We, the resurrected saints, will rule and reign with Him
- Our positions of authority allocated to us during that 1,000 year reign will be part of the rewards that Jesus gives us in return for our faithfulness during our present life on earth

## 1. Future Rewards for our present Labour of Love

**Hebrews 6:10 (NKJV) For God is not unjust to forget **your work and labor of love** which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister.**

- When we serve other believers, God considers it a work & labour of love that we show toward the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ
- Here we are assured that God does not forget our work & labour of love
- In other words, He will justly reward us for our faithfulness in serving Him

**Revelation 14:13 (NKJV) Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’ ” “Yes,” says**

*the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.”*

- When we go to heaven, whether through natural death or through the rapture, our works (labours of love) will follow us
- These “works” will be examined & summarized, and rewards will be allocated to us according to the sum-total of our “good works”

## **2. God expects us to live fruitful & productive lives**

**John 15:5 (NKJV)** *I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, **bears much fruit**; for without Me you can do nothing.*

**John 15:8 (AMP)** *When you bear (produce) much fruit, My Father is honored and glorified, and you show and prove yourselves to be true followers of Mine.*

- Jesus is the vine, we are the branches
- We demonstrate and prove ourselves to be true followers of Jesus when we produce much fruit
- As we serve in God’s Kingdom, it is not just about “works” for “works’ sake”, but about producing fruit
- God wants us to live productive lives and produce lasting results

**John 15:16 (AMP)** *You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and I have appointed you [I have planted you], that you might go and bear fruit and keep on bearing, and that your fruit may be lasting [that it may remain, abide] ...*

- God is looking for lasting fruit in our lives (ie. fruit of eternal value)
- There are multiple variations/possibilities of “fruit production”, depending on each believer’s available “time, talent and treasure”

**1 Peter 4:7–11 (NKJV)** *But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. **8** And above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.” **9** Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. **10 As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.** **11** If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

The Bible speaks of various areas of “fruit production”:

- The fruit of soul saved (Proverbs 11:30)
- Fruit as a result of financial giving (Philippians 4:17)
- Fruit of souls saved & disciples trained (Romans 1:13)
- The fruit of the gospel (Colossians 1:6)
- (Example of Susan Wesley, mother of John & Charles Wesley)

### **3. Our works will be tested by fire & examined for authenticity**

**1 Corinthians 3:8–13 (NKJV)** *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.***

- Apostle Paul referred to himself & Apollos as fellow workers in God’s Kingdom
- Vs. 8 “each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor”
- Vs. 13 “each one’s work will become clear; for the Day will declare it”
- This “Day” is reference to the day of the Judgment Seat of Christ
- Vs. 13 “the fire will test each one’s work, of what sort it is”
- Every believer’s work will be tested by fire, to reveal the true quality and genuineness of the things produced
- Vs. 12 “if anyone builds...with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw”
- Gold, silver and precious stones are durable & superior materials that are able to withstand fire
  - these are indicative of genuine labours of love
- Wood, hay and straw are temporary & inferior materials that cannot withstand fire
  - these are indicative of worthless works, which will be burned up

**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.*

“**bad**” - Greek word - “**kakos**” - which primarily means “**worthless**”

Worthless works will be burned up, and the person who's works have been burned will suffer loss of rewards.

**1 Corinthians 3:14–15 (NKJV)** *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.***

- Suffering loss is specifically in relation to rewards, not in relation to salvation
- Salvation is given by grace, and by grace alone
- Rewards are given for faithfully serving in God's Kingdom

#### **4. Producing works with the right attitude and the right motivation**

It is possible to do the right thing, and still suffer a loss of rewards if things are done with the wrong motivation.

**Matthew 6:1 (GW)** *Be careful not to do your good works in public in order to attract attention. If you do, **your Father in heaven will not reward you.***

**Matthew 6:5 (GW)** *When you pray, don't be like hypocrites. They like to stand in synagogues and on street corners to pray so that everyone can see them. I can guarantee this truth: **That will be their only reward.***

**Matthew 6:16 (GW)** *When you fast, stop looking sad like hypocrites. They put on sad faces to make it obvious that they're fasting. I can guarantee this truth: **That will be their only reward.***

God wants us to serve Him with a pure heart and with the right attitude and motivation.

**1 Timothy 1:5 (NLT)** *The purpose of my instruction is that all believers would be filled with love that comes from a **pure heart, a clear conscience, and genuine faith.***