

“THE LIFE GOD REWARDS”

Big Idea . . . Part 4: THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST

1 Cor. 3:10-15; 4:1-5; 2 Cor. 5:9-10; Rom. 14:10-12

Intro: D. Webster . . . Life presents exams of various kinds (school, driving, law, . . .). Today, the final exam no believer misses. We’re reward-oriented society (Nobel, Academy, Emmy, Heisman, Purple Heart, . . .). T. Carlisle, “A man might . . . God is not only Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, etc., also REWARDER (Heb. 11:6). Don’t confuse this with G.W.T. If Christ returns for His church today (Rapture), the next event (in present heaven) is the Judgement Seat of Christ (PIC).

I. THE PLACE AND TIME OF THE JUDGMENT

BEMA (“judgment”) referred to a raised platform on which a ruler or judge decided if a person was guilty of a crime (Acts 18:12). Also, the place in Greek sports, where winners who competed according to the rules were honored with crown of laurel leaves (1 Cor. 9:24-27). PICTURE . . .

- A. (Lk. 14:12-14) *After* Rapture – Rapture includes 3 events: Resurrection of dead church age saints, translation of living saints, review of all saints
- B. *DURING* the Tribulation on earth
- C. Where? *In* Heaven (Before S.C. or Millennium) – According to Rev. 19:8 when Christ returns with His bride, she is already rewarded (“fine linens” stands for the righteous acts of the saints).

Question: Why not rewarded at death? Influence lives on (Heb. 11:4).

II. THE PERSONS OF IT

- A. The Judged? Bible teaches we are responsible and accountable to God (Rom. 14:10, 12; 1 Cor. 3:13; 4:5b; 2 Cor. 5:10 “we (Christians) must (not optional) ALL (inclusive) . . . EACH (individual) give account (1 Cor. 4:3-5). 7 times in 16 verses!
- B. The Judge? Not Pastors, deacons, spouse, kids, friends, boss, angels, etc. The Lord Himself (Matt. 16:27; 19:21; 1 Cor. 4:4; 2 Cor. 5:10; Jn. 5:22-23, 26-27). He is final authority, He sets standard, only He is qualified, only He knows all. Tone is mostly positive and encouraging.

III. THE PURPOSE OF IT

- A. NOT to decide eternal destiny (Heb. 9:27). This is decided in this life while on earth. Not for our sins (Past, present, or unconfessed ones). Cross dealt with all sins (1 Jn. 2:12).
- B. Is for ACCOUNTING (Matt. 12:36; Rom. 14:12; 1 Cor. 3:8, 12-15; 4:5; 2 Cor. 5:10) – for inspection, evaluation. Of our Christian walk and life. What did we do with our salvation? He is not judging our sins; He is rewarding our lives.
- C. Based UPON WHAT CRITERIA?
 - 1. Conduct: What did you do? (1 Cor. 3:12-15; 2 Cor. 5:10 whether “good” – acceptable – or “bad” – worthless) – Eccl. 12:14

- 2. Motives: Why did you do it? (1 Cor. 4:5) out of fear, for show, for self, etc. . . . 2 Cor. 5:14, to express love and to honor God.
- 3. Faithfulness: Were you a faithful steward? (1 Pet. 4:5; 1 Cor. 4:1, 2, 5; Lk. 16:10-11) – of time, money, gifts, etc. How well did I steward what the Master entrusted to me? Parable of Talents (Matt. 25:14-30).

IV. THE PRODUCTS OF IT (Lk. 12:21, 33)

- A. All will receive ASSIGNMENTS (Matt. 25:21; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 20:6) – eternal service to Him. Doing is the language of a servant all who believe experience heaven, but not all have the same experiences in heaven (authority, responsibility, reward).
- B. All will receive PRAISE (1 Cor. 4:5) – Focus is positive, time of celebration. Question. What will we do with them? (Rev. 4:9-11)
- C. Some will SUFFER LOSS – not of salvation (1 Cor. 3:15, 2 Jn. 8; Rev. 3:11). Loss in sense of forfeiting reward, not suffering, or of salvation.

ILLUS – Compare to Graduation time (glad to be there, but wish had tried more)

ILLUS – Jimmy Carter story . . . do your best?

V. THE PREPARATION FOR IT (1 Cor. 3:10 “Take care”)

- A. *LIVE* a “Fireproof” life by:
 - 1. Securing the right foundation (1 Cor. 3:11)
 - 2. Using the best materials to build (1 Cor. 3:10, 12) Difference in receiving and losing is here.
 - Permanent (things of Spirit, costly) – superior
 - Perishable (things of flesh, inexpensive, inferior) (not evil) – “Stuff”
- B. *LAY UP* treasures in heaven (Matt. 6:20) – Get right toward God (Lk. 12:21)
- C. *LOOK TO* please Him (2 Cor. 5:9) –

CONC: He is coming with rewards (Rev. 22:12). This should motivate us to faithfulness. The tragedy of many Christians is not that they live horribly disobedient but sadly inconsequential! Whatever we give to God on earth He will more than give back to us in heaven. “Only one life, twill soon be past. Only what’s done for Christ will last.” (C.T. Studd)