

What is the Judgment Seat of Christ?

It is the judgment of Christians for their service to Jesus Christ.

Perhaps one of the greatest doctrinal studies, to encourage a Christian to live right, is the study of the Judgment Seat of Christ. It appears that most Christians believe the only judgment they will ever face is the White Throne Judgment. However, when a person receives the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour, he no longer has to appear before the "great white throne" (Rev 20: 11). There will be saved and lost people at that judgment (Jn 5:27- 30). However, the white throne judgment is a judgment of **works** for salvation. In this age, a man is not saved by his works. Therefore the white throne judgment is not for Christians.

The Judgment Seat of Christ is the judgment that Christians have to go through. There are many Christians who believe that once they get saved, they can live like the devil because they won't wind up in Hell. However, they are sadly mistaken in their doctrine and in their Christian walk. A Christian will have to give account for everything he does (Rom 14:10-12). Nothing will be overlooked in the Christian's life at this judgment (Heb 4: 13).

The apostle Paul gives a stern warning about this judgment. He says, in 2 Cor 5:10, "For we **must all appear** before the **judgment seat of Christ**; that everyone may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad." The reference to "all" in the verse is a reference to Christians only (see verses 1-8 for the context). There will be no lost people at this judgment.

If a man has done something good, according to the Lord, he will be rewarded. But, if he has done something bad, he will receive this thing that he has done. And it won't be a slap on the wrist! Paul states in 2 Cor 5:11, "Knowing therefore **the terror** of the Lord, we persuade men ..." Like it or not, this is going to be a **terrible judgment**.

Review your own life as a Christian. Think of how many times you had the opportunity to lead a soul to Christ and kept your mouth shut; or should have prayed and you goofed off instead; or had the opportunity to give some of your money to the Lord's work and spent it on yourself; or should have read your Bible and blew the time in front of the TV; etc. God has a record of the whole mess. It all comes up at this judgment.

The way this judgment progresses is found in 1 Cor 3:11-15. Once a man has gotten saved, he has the right foundation in Jesus Christ. After that, he begins to build. The things he does **for the Lord**, with the **right motive** (1 Cor 4:5), show up as gold, silver and precious stones in his building. The things he does for God, with the wrong motive, or that he does for himself and not for God, show up in this building as wood, hay and stubble. When he dies, his building is

finished. Then at the Judgment Seat of Christ he presents this building to the Lord, and the Lord sets it on **fire**.

Gold, silver and precious stones will survive the fire. He will be rewarded for the things that survive. Wood, hay and stubble, of course, will burn. He'll get nothing for these. **Gold** stands for God because it is the highest element. Crowns are made of gold. The articles in and near the holy of holies in the tabernacle were made of gold. New Jerusalem is gold. **Silver** stands for redemption, which is what Christ did for us on the cross. You will find references to this in Ex 30:12-16, Lev 27:6, Num 3:47 -49, etc. **Precious stones** stand for souls (Mal 3: 17, 1 Pet 2:5, etc.). So every time you lead a soul to Christ, you get a stone for your crown (Zech 9:16).

In addition, there are five crowns that will be given out at the Judgment Seat of Christ, if the Lord so chooses. The **first** crown is the **Incorruptible Crown**, which is found in 1 Cor 9:24-27. This crown is given to the man who keeps himself PHYSICALLY FIT through temperance (self-control, self-denial), so that he is always able to do any task that God requires of him. He must apply himself diligently to every task as a living sacrifice (Rom 12: 1-2). He must deny himself (Matt 16:24-25). He must live by the Spirit (Rom 8: 1, 13, 14).

The **second** crown is the **Crown of Rejoicing**, which is found in 1 Thes 2: 19. This crown is the SOUL WINNER'S CROWN. You get this one for leading souls to Christ. Each new soul that you win to Christ adds a stone to this crown.

The **third** crown is the **Crown of Righteousness**, which is found in 2 Tim 4:8. This crown is obtained by all them who are LOOKING FOR THE APPEARING OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST (Titus 2:13). The greatest hope a Christian has for solving all of his earthly problems is the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. When the Lord Jesus Christ takes us home to heaven, there is not a problem, which you are currently experiencing, that will not be solved. That ought to get you looking for Jesus Christ.

The **fourth** crown is the **Crown of Life**, which is found in Jas 1:12. This crown is given to men who ENDURE TEMPTATION. According to Rom 8: 13 the way to do this is to "mortify the deeds of the body." This way you will not yield to temptation. It is like you are a dead man. This crown also shows up in Rev 2:10. There it is a martyr's crown given to the tribulation saints who are slain for their faith in Jesus Christ. So, you see that this crown is given to men who pay a great price. Your fight against temptation and sin would have to be great to match a man who is a martyr.

The **fifth** crown is the **Crown of Glory**, which is found in 1 Pet 5:4. This crown is primarily a PASTOR'S REWARD. It is given to men who properly feed their flocks with the word of God (see the context in verses 1-3). Perhaps this crown

is also available to teachers of the word of God. Obviously, if a teacher is teaching out of a modern translation, and doesn't believe that the King James Bible is the word of God, he wouldn't be properly feeding the flock, and he wouldn't get this crown. Even men, who profess to believe the King James Bible, could be teaching with the wrong motive, and miss this crown. The Lord is the only one who can make this judgment properly.

In addition to these crowns and the gold, silver and precious stones, certain saints will be rewarded with **authority over cities**. In Lk 19, beginning with verse 11, the Lord spoke a parable about the Kingdom of God. Each servant was given a pound (verse 13), which is an English currency. Today it is called the Pound Sterling. When the first servant reported his earnings, he had multiplied the original pound ten times. Therefore, the Lord gave him authority over **ten** cities. Likewise, the man who multiplied his pound five times was given authority over **five** cities. These men will be given this authority during the 1,000 year reign of the Lord Jesus Christ on this earth (Rev 20:6).

The servant, who did nothing with his pound, lost the pound and was given no authority. Furthermore, in verse 24, notice that his pound was given to the man that had ten. So, not only do men get to rule over cities, they also get to keep what they've earned for Jesus Christ. Like a man said, "Work for the Lord. The pay may not be that great, but the retirement plan is out of this world!" Then again, the pay may be greater than you think.

At the end of the parable, the man who laid up his pound in a napkin lost the pound, but he was not thrown out. In other words, a Christian will not lose his salvation at this judgment. The enemies of the Lord are the ones who are slain in verse 27. 1 Cor 3: 15 says, "If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but **he himself shall be saved**; yet so as by fire."

So, it is now time for you to quit working for yourself and to begin working for the Lord Jesus Christ, "as the servants of Christ," (Eph 6:6). Paul exhorts you in Eph 6:7, 8, "With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether *he be bond or free*." It should be obvious to you that the Lord will pay far better than any earthly master. Furthermore, you will be able to enjoy his treasures for eternity (Matt 6: 19-21). These are what are known as your **inheritance in** the kingdom of God.