

## The Judgment Seat of Christ

In 1 Timothy 1:5, Paul tells Timothy:

*Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned...*

- Your sins were judged at the cross; faith in this truth is how you're forgiven and made part of the Body. This is implicit in the gospel message (Rom. 4:23-25, 2 Cor. 5:21, Rom. 8:3, Rom. 5:1).
- There *is* a judgment for the Body of Christ, because God is a God of judgment (Ecc. 12:14\*, Proverbs 16:11\*, Psalm 9:7-8, Psalm 33:4-5, Psalm 89:14\*, Job 34:12, Job 37:23), and by Him actions are weighed (1 Samuel 2:3\*). We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ and receive for the things done in the body, whether good or bad (2 Cor. 5:10). But this is not simply speaking about us "doing good things."
- Your flesh will *never* please God (John 6:63, Rom. 7:18, 23, Rom. 8:7-8). Thus, whatever is going to be evaluated at our judgment can't be according to our flesh. Your sins aren't judged, and your religious activity won't merit rewards (Gal. 3:1-3).
- The Word is the standard of judgment (John 12:47-50), and mechanism by which, through faith, we are transformed (2 Cor. 3:18, 1 Cor. 2:10-13, James 1:22-24).
- In 1 Corinthians 3:13, we see every man's work shall be tried by fire. In Jeremiah 23:29, God's Word is likened to fire. The remnant of Israel is said to be refined by fire in the prophetic scriptures (Malachi 3:3, Zechariah 13:9). This is exactly what Jesus tells the believing remnant of Israel in His earthly ministry in John 15:1-3. These are purged, just as Malachi 3 said, but they are purged through *the Word* which Jesus spoke. (That word "clean" in John 15 means *pruned* or *purged*, and comes from the Greek word *katharos*, where we get the word catharsis from, which is commonly used today as *a purging of emotions*, but also sometimes medically as *purification*, and historically as *the act of*

*clearing oneself of accusation.* In every case, it carries with it the idea of *removing that which is undesirable.*) In the context of John 15, Jesus is the vine, and His disciples are the branches; the ones that don't bear fruit are taken away, and the ones that do bear fruit are *purged* (John 15:2, *kathairo/καθαίρω*), that it may bring forth more fruit. But they are made clean or purged through Jesus' Word.

- What we do for the Lord must be from a place of faith in God's word, that is, who God says He has made us to be in Christ—not out of the flesh. Consider 1 Thessalonians 1:3, their work of *faith*, and labor of *love*, and patience of *hope*—their service reflected things that had been established in their spirit: faith, hope, and love (see 1 Cor. 13:13). In 1 Thessalonians 2:13, Paul states that when you receive the word of God as the very Word of God, it effectually works in those who believe, meaning it has an effect. It's a work of *faith* (2 Thess. 1:11), and as we received Christ Jesus by faith, so are we to walk in Him (Col. 2:6-7). That is why the secret things of the heart must even be brought into judgment (1 Cor. 4:5). Was your work performed according to faith in the doctrine? Was it performed with charity (1 Cor. 13:1-3)?
- The *sort* of work we do will be evaluated (1 Cor. 3:13). It's not the quantity, but the *quality*. We must take heed how we build upon the foundation of Christ that Paul laid (1 Cor. 3:10). Paul uses the analogy of building materials: gold, silver, and precious stones, which are associated with wisdom, knowledge, instruction, and understanding in Proverbs (Proverbs 3:13-15, 8:10-11, 16:16, 20:15). This makes sense, as Paul has been drawing a contrast between the world's wisdom and God's wisdom in the previous two chapters. Wood, hay and stubble on the other hand are materials that are readily burned, and in keeping with the parallels Paul has made, these materials must be likened to man's wisdom or the wisdom of this world. Compare these materials to the vessel unto honor and dishonor in 2 Timothy 2:20).
- To do the work properly, and to be a vessel unto honor, you must first be an *approved workman*. If you hire someone to do a job, you want to make sure they're qualified. We are approved by studying and rightly dividing the Word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15). We must also shun profane and vain babblings (2 Tim. 2:16); these can include false teachings (2 Tim. 2:18). Let also those who name the Name of Christ depart from iniquity (2 Tim. 2:21). If we *purge* (*ekkathairo*, "clean out") [ye are clean by the word I have spoken unto you] ourselves of these, we shall be vessels unto honor, prepared unto every good work (2 Tim. 2:21).
- Godly edification comes through faith (1 Tim. 1:4); and what we have in the Pauline epistles is a progression of doctrine meant to save, sanctify, educate, and equip the saint for the work of the ministry today (Eph. 4:11-15); this doctrine will also help us

understand our eternal vocation in the heavens (Eph. 4:1, Eph. 1:18; both *vocation* and *calling* here are the Greek word *klesis*; *your vocation* and *his calling* are one and the same, which is His body far above all principality and powers in heavenly places, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all). The Bible is the Word that God has spoken to man in the course of history; the Pauline epistles are the Word of God *to you*, personally, and are intended to cleanse you (Eph. 5:26), and to produce *Christ in you*, which is the hope of glory (Col. 1:27).

- Man was made a *living soul* (Gen. 2:7, 1 Cor. 15:45); this is different than the spirit. Man being a living soul distinguishes us from the animals, as even animals have a spirit (Ecc. 3:21). There is a flesh of man (1 Cor. 15:39) which returns to the earth, and a spirit of man, which returns to God who gave it (Ecc. 12:7), but the soul is unique. 1 Thess. 5:23 shows there's a threefold nature to man. The spirit of the mind must be renewed in knowledge after the image of Christ (Eph. 4:23, Colossians 3:10), and whatever is not Christ in the spirit of the mind will be destroyed at the judgment (1 Cor. 5:3-5). 1 Corinthians 5:5 does not say "that the soul may be saved," but "that the spirit may be saved." [Notice how Paul's spirit is present with them. How is it present? Through his word and judgment, which are reflections of his inner man.] We are to be transformed by the renewing of our mind (Rom. 12:2), and this is why Paul says that our inward man is renewed day by day (2 Cor. 4:16). This is what is built by knowledge in the inner man. We as believers were sometime alienated and enemies *in our minds* by wicked works—these are not even just our own works, but also the wicked works of the satanic world system, which built in us false knowledge to prevent us from receiving the knowledge of God. This false knowledge is referred to as *strongholds* in 2 Corinthians 10:4—they are imaginations and high things that exalt themselves against the *knowledge of God*. They're opposed to the knowledge of God. This is why our mind must be renewed. The renewing of the mind is how you are conformed to the image of Christ, and you do this *by faith* in the Word of God. Notice in Colossians 1:21 you are only presented *unblameable* and *unreprovable* if you continue in *the faith*, verses 22-23; this alludes to the work of faith which will be judged.
  
- What we do in His Body will be evaluated (2 Cor. 5:9-10); we were bought with a price, and we are not our own (1 Cor. 6:19-20), and our body is made part of the body of Christ, and we are members of each other (Rom. 12:5). What we do in our body affects the Body as a whole. Do we prefer others before ourselves? Do we seek their edification? There are practical instructions for us as to how we are to treat our brothers and sisters in Christ (Rom. 14:13-15, 15:1-2, Eph. 5:21). [There are also instructions for how we are to function under governments and in society (Rom. 13), and in our families Eph. 5:22-33)].

- We are *all* heirs of God by faith, *and* joint heirs with Christ *if so be we suffer with Him* (Rom. 8:17). There is a reward for suffering *with* Christ, for enduring hardness as a good soldier (2 Timothy 2). This suffering is having Christ formed in your inner man by faith and practical application of the doctrine in your life, and in this way, Christ is in you and you are suffering with Him, whether they be the sufferings of this present time, of which all are partakers, or the sufferings of Christ that one experiences as they continue to be edified and contend for the doctrine, which Satan strategically opposes. Paul endured this kind of suffering (Col. 1:24). This kind of suffering is rewarded with special roles of authority (2 Tim. 2:12). If we deny Christ in doctrine and practice, He also will deny us the right to reign.
  
- Christ *in us* is the hope of glory (Col. 1:27); in Galatians 4:19, Paul tells the Galatians plainly he was trying to form Christ in them, for they were walking after the flesh, not by faith. The level of grace we receive in our reward is according to the measure of the gift of Christ formed in us (Eph. 4:7). The end goal of ministry is not just to get people saved but to perfect the saints, to bring us to the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, that we might grow up into Him in all things (Eph. 4:11-16). That measure we develop through faith in God's Word will be evaluated; this will determine the level of glory we receive. Paul writes in Romans 8:18 *the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us*. In 2 Cor. 3:17-18, we are told that as we behold the glory of the Lord in His Word, we are changed from glory to glory. The level of glory we receive is proportional to the level of edification we participate in through the illuminating work of the Holy Spirit by faith in the Word.
  
- There are differing glories of resurrected bodies. There is a glory of the terrestrial body, that is, our earthly body, and there is a glory of celestial bodies, that is, heavenly bodies (1 Corinthians 15:40). There are also varying glories of the heavenly bodies (v. 41). So also is the resurrection from the dead (v. 42). What was our hope of glory? *Christ in us* (Col. 1:27). And to the extent we allow Christ to be formed in us is the extent of glory that will be revealed in us (Rom. 8:18, Rom. 8:29, Gal. 4:19).
  
- There is positional sanctification, and then there is practical or functional sanctification. Functional sanctification is the doctrine working in and through you; it is the outworking of Christ from your inner man to your outer man—it is the life of Christ being made manifest in your mortal body, and it is part of the gospel (Rom. 6:4). Positional sanctification is what happens upon salvation—it is the work God performs: He forgives you, justifies you, declares you righteous, sets you apart, makes a separation between your flesh and inner man, seals you with the Holy Spirit, and seats you with Christ far above all powers in the heavens. A perfect example of positional sanctification is the Corinthian church. These saints were having many issues in the flesh, and yet Paul calls

them sanctified (1 Cor. 1:2, 1 Cor. 6:11). Yet he calls them carnal and babes in Christ (1 Cor. 3:1). We learn of our positional standing in Christ in Romans 5:1-2, 5:8-10, 5:18-19; Romans 7:4.

- We learn of our practical sanctification in Romans as well in 6:8-14; 8:2, 8:10-11. Notice in Romans 8:10 it says that if Christ is in you the body is dead because of sin, and in 8:11 that if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, the Spirit shall also *quicken your mortal bodies*—this our current body (Rom. 6:12, 1 Cor. 15:53, 2 Cor. 4:11). Consider what Paul writes in Philippians 3:10-11. The Spirit quickens our mortal, fleshly body when we are made conformable to His death, and allow Him to *dwell* in us (Rom. 8:11), and He dwells in us *by faith* (Eph. 3:17). The entire work that God is doing today is by faith, not of our works, and faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God (Rom. 10:17).
- When we allow the death of Christ to work in us, that is, the death of our old man, His resurrection life is manifested in our mortal body (2 Cor. 4:10-11, Rom. 8:13). Death is the natural experience of the saint living in the flesh (1 Tim. 5:6), because the flesh is dead (Col. 3:3). Culture has taught us that being a Christian means God will come alongside you and bless you in your endeavors, what we aren't usually taught is that actually the gospel is that you died, and you're to set your affections on things above, to mortify your members which are on the earth (Col. 3:2, 5), because the only life you now have *is* Christ. That is why Paul says in Philippians 1:21 “...*to live is Christ, to die is gain.*”