

## ***The Judgment Seat of Christ***

### **I. GOD INVITES EVERYONE TO BE GREAT IN HIS KINGDOM**

***<sup>19</sup> Whoever breaks (consistently) one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the Kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches (encourages) them, he shall be called great in the Kingdom of heaven. (Mt. 5:19)***

- A. God invites “whosoever” or literally everyone to be great in His Kingdom. This is a primary teaching in the Sermon on the Mount (constitution of the Kingdom; Mt. 5-7). We cannot repent of the desire for greatness because God designed our spirit with this longing. We must repent for seeking greatness in a wrong way. We must also repent for neglecting to seek greatness.
- B. Jesus taught on God’s invitation for our greatness more than any other man in Scripture. Jesus revealed a new paradigm for greatness. We are to focus on being great in His sight rather than in the sight of men. We understand that this greatness will be fully manifest in the age-to-come not in this age. Our greatness will be based on our heart responses not on natural gifting and resources and thus, it is available to everyone (whoever Mt. 5:19; 20:26-27; 23:12).

### **II. WE WILL ALL STAND BEFORE THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST**

***<sup>11</sup> No other foundation can anyone lay than...Jesus Christ. <sup>12</sup> If anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, <sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. <sup>15</sup> If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. (1 Cor. 3:11-15)***

- A. The foundation is our relationship with Jesus as born again believers possessing the free gift of righteousness (2 Cor. 5:17-21). Paul as a good architect built a good foundation on truth. On this foundation, we can use the wrong building materials. Therefore, we must be careful and discerning to protect ourselves from building with woeful mistakes. A ministry may be sincere and zealous but may not be careful to build God’s work in God’s way because God’s fire will reveal the truth of our works and will remove all the impurity that cannot enter God’s presence.
- B. The work that is done with precious metals will not be hurt. Rather their qualities will shine more brightly in God’s glory. Wood, hay, and straw or works done with a wrong spirit will burn. In this life, we can do that which Jesus esteems and remembers. This is what defines greatness.  
***<sup>18</sup> These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire...<sup>19</sup> "I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience..." (Rev. 2:18-19)***
- C. Our works follow us but not all of them. Some leave no lasting value. We do not need to put off proving our work to the future. I pray, “Lord, shock me now, do not wait until then.”

***<sup>13</sup> Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord..."Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them." (Rev. 14:13)***

D. Jesus remembers our human weakness in His evaluation.

<sup>14</sup> *For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. (Ps. 103:14)*

<sup>38</sup> *He being full of compassion...<sup>39</sup> For He remembered that they were but flesh... (Ps. 78:38)*

E. God pays us so well for all that we do. He even remembers the movements of our heart toward Him along with every small act of love.

<sup>42</sup> *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. (Mt. 10:42)*

<sup>10</sup> *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... (Heb. 6:10)*

<sup>16</sup> *Those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD listened and heard them; so a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who meditate on His name. (Mal. 3:16)*

<sup>5</sup> *The Lord...will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God. (1 Cor. 4:5)*

F. God judges according to three things: our deeds, motives and speech. Scripture most emphasizes our deeds. Our motives are more than fleeting thoughts but are the sustained thoughts we live by.

<sup>12</sup> *My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work. (Rev. 22:12)*

<sup>23</sup> *I am He who searches the minds and hearts. I will give to each one of you according to your works. (Rev. 2:23)*

<sup>6</sup> *He...will render to each one according to his deeds... 16 In the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ... (Rom. 2:6, 16)*

<sup>5</sup> *The Lord comes who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels (Lit. motives) of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God. (1 Cor. 4:5)*

<sup>36</sup> *Every idle word men speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. (Mt. 12:36)*

### III. THE NEGATIVE ASPECT OF THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST

A. The Lord will evaluate what we do both good and bad.

<sup>10</sup> *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. (2 Cor. 5:10)*

B. According to what we do good: our smallest and seemingly insignificant deeds are rewarded.

C. According to what we do bad: we answer for that which we have confidence to “not repent of”.

- D. To suffer loss is to not receive the full reward which one could have potentially received.
- E. Some are saved, yet as through fire or by means of God's fire which removes that which cannot go into God's holy presence. God's grace removes what cannot proceed into His glory.  
<sup>15</sup> *If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. (1 Cor. 3:15)*
- F. The idea is that the person is like one pulled out of the fire just in the nick of time. Some translate the Greek: "thus, as it were, only through fire". Someone's once "cherished ministry" shall burn like hay yet the person will survive the flames. The ordeal may be shocking and even severe. The builder is happy to escape a burning house with his life. However, his work is lost. Noah was saved "through water" as that which delivered him from the wickedness (1 Pet. 3:20).
- G. Paul spoke this qualifier to assure us that a person may not be burned up but rather their "work" (if it is built by flammable material). He is saved as through fire or as one escaping through the flames that remove all that cannot go into God's presence.
- H. Paul referred to the phrase "a firebrand plucked from the burning" (Am. 4:11; Zech 3:2; Jude 23).
- I. We can suffer the loss of some of our potential glory and position in the Millennium.  
<sup>8</sup> *Look to yourselves, that we (you, NIV, NAS, RSV) do not lose those things we worked for, but that we (you) may receive a full reward. (2 Jn. 8)*  
<sup>28</sup> *Abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. (1 Jn. 2:28)*
- J. In my encounter in the Spirit (Oct. 78), Jesus said, "You are saved but your life was wasted." I protested, "You have the wrong person." The idea came to my spirit that it is impossible to manipulate Jesus. I cried, "Can I have another chance?" The idea came that is appointed unto a person to die once then comes the judgment (Heb. 9:27). I wept with a profound sense of loss and regret. Then suddenly I was awake being on my knees by my bed. What matters most about our life is what Jesus thinks when our eyes meet. I must fear "regret" more than anything else.

#### IV. ETERNAL REWARDS: DIFFERENT EXPRESSIONS IN DIFFERENT DEGREES

- A. Our rewards in eternity will differ. There will be a vast range of degrees of glory and greatness including those who are called the least and the greatest. (The largest star known is the Pistol Star with a mass over 100 times that of our Sun being over 10 million times brighter).  
<sup>41</sup> *There is one glory of the sun...and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory. 42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. (1 Cor. 15:41-42)*
- B. The measure of God's glory will manifest in our resurrected body (1 Cor. 15:42; Dan. 12:2-3).  
<sup>43</sup> *Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. (Mt. 13:43)*

- C. Our work assignment and authority (over nations, tribes and cities, etc.) will bring us in close proximity to Jesus (Mt. 19:28, 30; 20:16, 27; 25:23; Lk. 19:17-19; 22:29-30; Rev. 2:26-27; 3:21).  
<sup>23</sup> *His Lord said, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' (Mt. 25:23)*
- D. We will receive varying praise from God (Jn. 12:26; 1 Pet. 1:7; Mt. 25:21, 1 Cor. 4:5).  
<sup>5</sup> *The Lord...will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God. (1 Cor. 4:5)*  
<sup>7</sup> *Your faith...may be found to praise... and glory at the revelation of Jesus... (1 Pet. 1:7)*
- E. Those who endure temptation by persistently resisting it are given crowns. There are nine NT references to the crowns that believers will receive from the Lord. Three times they are referred to in a general way (1 Cor. 9:5; Rev 3:11, 4:8); twice they are called the crown of life (Jas 1:12, Rev 2:10); once the crown of righteousness (2 Tim. 4:8) and the crown of glory (1 Pet. 5:4).  
<sup>12</sup> *Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. (Jas 1:12)*  
<sup>11</sup> *Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. (Rev. 3:11)*
- F. Our communion with Jesus will vary according to the degree that we have the spiritual capacity to receive from Him as the Morningstar (Rev. 2:28; 22:16; Gen. 15:1).  
<sup>16</sup> *I am the...Bright and Morning Star. (Rev. 22:16)*  
<sup>28</sup> *I will give him the morning star. (Rev. 2:28)*
- G. Our garments have varying dimensions of God's glory (Rev. 3:4-5, 18; 16:15; 19:7-8).  
<sup>7</sup> *His wife has made herself ready. 8 And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. (Rev. 19:7-8)*
- H. Treasures and rewards in heaven will include many things (Mt. 5:12; 6:4, 6, 18, 20; 10:41-42; 16:27; 19:21; Mk. 9:41; 10:21; Lk. 6:23, 35; 12:21, 33; 16:11; 18:22; Rev. 2:9; 3:18; 22:12).  
<sup>21</sup> *One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me. (Mk. 10:21)*
- I. Our position when gathering before the Lord in times of heavenly celebration will vary in degrees of honor.  
<sup>7</sup> *When invited to a wedding feast...10 sit down in the lowest place, so that... he who invited you comes he may say to you, 'Friend, go up higher.' Then you will have glory in the presence of those at the table with you. 11 Whoever...humbles himself will be exalted. (Lk. 14:7-11)*