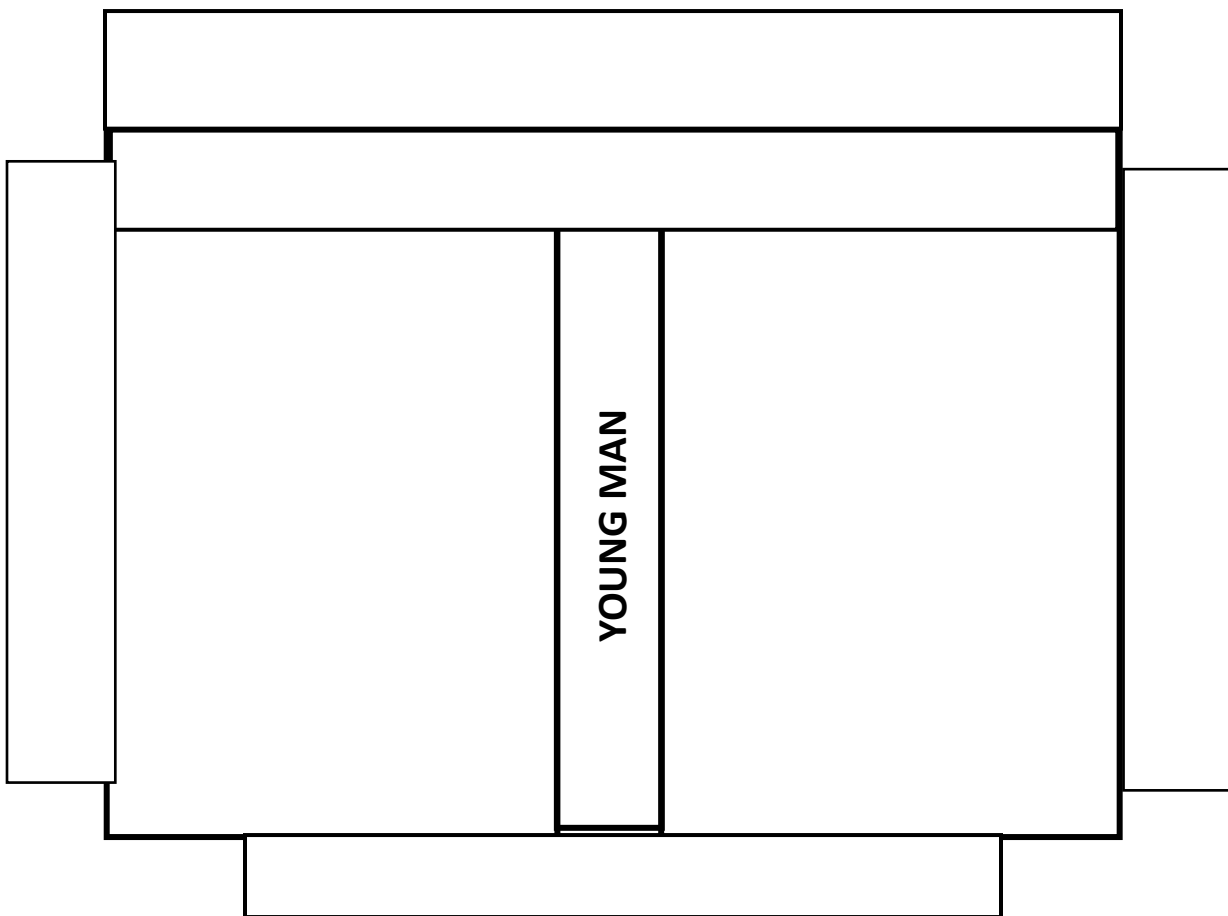


The Book of 2 Corinthians

2 Corinthians 5:10

Session 48: Notetaker



The Book of 2 Corinthians

2 Corinthians 5:10

Session 48: The Judgment Seat of Christ, pt. 2

In our previous session, we covered one of the issues we will face at the judgment seat of Christ (JSoC).

2 Corinthians 5:9 Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.¹⁰ For **we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ**; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad.

Verse 10 took us back to 1 Corinthians 3, where Paul first introduces us to the judgment seat of Christ. In our previous session, we started at verse 10, but today I want us to back up to 1 Corinthians 3:5.

1 Corinthians 3:5 Who then is Paul, and who *is* Apollos, but **ministers by whom ye believed**, even as the Lord gave to every man?⁶ I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.⁷ So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.⁸ Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

In this passage, we have four issues to discuss:

1. Planting
2. Watering
3. The Increase
4. The Reward

In verses 5-6, Paul is using gardening terminology. When he talks about planting and watering, he is talking about two issues, which have to do with presenting the gospel of Christ to people.

“Planting” is presenting the gospel. Basically, “planting” is making people understand the four points of the gospel: **1) They are sinners, 2) Their sin** alienates them from God now, and **will send them to Hell** after this life is over, **3) Christ died**

for our sins, because God loves them and wants to save them, and **4) They have a choice to accept or reject God's offer of salvation**. To fail to make a decision is to reject God's offer.

When you can make these four elements known, you have “planted,” just like Paul. Now, there are various ways to present the gospel, but these four points need to be a part of any legitimate presentation of the gospel. “Planting” is not just saying to someone, you need to be saved. Planting involves the points of the gospel as outlined in the opening chapters of the book of Romans.

Let me encourage you. If you do not know how to present the gospel, it is easy to learn. On the Dropbox, you can go look at the sessions, which make up the School of Evangelism. You will see how we role-played a presentation of the gospel, including how to deal with objections to the gospel (Paul lists the four categories in Romans 2), and how to deal with distractions of the gospel.

If we follow the gardening analogy, in order for planting to take place, the seed has to actually go into the ground. So, the kind of “planting” Paul has in mind is the actual presentation of the gospel message. When people hear the gospel, regardless of how they respond to it, the “seed” of the gospel has been planted.

Paul says there is a reward for “planting” which means there is a reward for making the gospel known to the lost. And especially in this day, there are different ways to present the gospel. What I mean by that is we have all kinds of technologies whereby we communicate the gospel of Christ.

And while we want to do that, a one-on-one, face-to-face presentation of the gospel is the “gold” standard. It is not only the best, it is also the hardest for people to do – for various reasons. But, if we are going to get a reward for “planting,” this is the one with the biggest reward. Why do I say that? Because not only will we receive a reward for making the gospel presentation, but when a person responds positively to the gospel, there is an immediate reward of the seeing the fruits of your efforts.

Now, does giving the gospel over the phone count? Or in a text conversation? Look, if we give the whole gospel and people have a genuine opportunity to trust

Christ as a result of that presentation, then it counts. But Paul isn't thinking about phones or texts; he is just thinking of presenting the gospel in a personal way. He has given the gospel to individuals and he has preached it to crowds. While the crowd has potential, the individual may be the "best" of the ways because this means you are directly dealing with a person where you can answer their questions and overcome their objections without the pressure of the other people around them.

Rehearse your presentation of the gospel until you know it by heart. People don't usually get saved in church, they get saved out in the world. And once you start looking, opportunities are everywhere. After you have learned your presentation, then get familiar with a couple of ways to introduce your gospel presentation into a conversation. Here is an example of something I have used that I found to be effective.

Somewhere in the conversation I will find a way to lead up to this question: "Do you go to church anywhere?" Then, no matter their answer, I ask, "Do you ever think much about spiritual things?" Then I follow with, "If you were to die today, do you know for sure where you would spend eternity?"

If they say, "Yes, I would go to Heaven," I ask them "How do you know?" If they say, "Because I have trusted Christ as my Savior" then the witness is not needed. If they say anything else, I say this: "If I could show you from the Bible, how you can know for sure that when you die, you could go to Heaven, would you like to know, so if you ever wanted that, you will know what the Bible says?" And if they say, "okay," then I give them the gospel. If they say "no, not now," I may say, "When would you like to know" or I maybe I give them a card with the QR code that contains a presentation of the gospel, or maybe my phone number.

Why am I telling you this? Because I want us all to get the reward of an ambassador, the reward for giving the gospel. At the beginning it may seem scary, but after you do it, it becomes very exciting.

What about if you just hand someone one of the MBI business cards that has the plan of salvation QR code on it? Does that count? If they listen to the presentation and get saved, then you were indirectly responsible for "planting the

seed.” This might qualify as the “precious stones,” aspect of reward, so to speak. I am borrowing that phrase from further down in the chapter and yes, I am using it in a different way, but stick with me; I am making a point.

What I am saying is that there are many ways in today’s world, to get the gospel to someone, both directly and indirectly. I can’t help but believe there is a greater reward for directly “planting the seed” in some way, and also a lesser reward for being indirectly involved.

But don’t think about this as “either/or.” Think about doing both, depending on the particular situation. Sometimes, you will have an opportunity to present the gospel yourself. Other times, there just won’t be a good opportunity to give them the gospel right then, so find a way they can hear the gospel later. How can we do that? By using those cards with the QR codes on them, or by scheduling a time when you can talk to them.

Now, let’s talk about “watering.” Paul said he planted and Apollos watered. I think Paul is giving us an example of the two types of labor involved in the gospel presentation.

1 Corinthians 3:6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

It is not that Apollos never planted, he only watered; I do not believe that is true. So, what is the “watering” that Paul refers to?

Sometimes when we present the gospel, people make a decision on the spot, to believe or not. If they believe, then there does not need to be any “watering.” If they do not believe, then it will be necessary for someone to “water” the seed that has already been planted.

In other words, later you or someone else may need to speak to them again to overcome some objection, or perhaps they have legitimate questions they need answering. If you can help clarify the gospel in some way, or persuade someone of its legitimacy, or overcome some objection they have, then that is watering.

We don't water seeds until after they have been planted. So, Paul planted (by making the gospel known) and Apollos came along behind him and watered (by reasoning with people who had not yet believed). Both of them were working to present the gospel so people would be saved.

Paul says, both receive a reward. Again, the reward for watering is not dependent upon the person trusting Christ, the reward is in connection with the labor on our part to convince those who have heard the gospel, but have not believed.

Therefore, it is possible for two different people to receive a reward for witnessing to the same person; the one who first gave the gospel, and the one who followed up to persuade. It is also possible for the same person to get a double reward.

1 Corinthians 3:7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.⁸ Now **he that planteth and he that watereth** are one: and **every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.**

According to Paul, there is a reward for planting and watering. In other words, each of us will have our own reward for how we have participated in evangelistic efforts. Notice, this is not about how many people were saved because of your efforts; why do you think that is? It is because we have no control over whether or not a person responds positively to the gospel or not. Secondly, even if they did believe the gospel, we have no power to perform the redemption. We cannot save them, and we cannot justify them (make them righteous). That is only in the power of God.

Now let's talk about "the increase." What is "the increase?"

1 Corinthians 3:6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but **God gave the increase.**

The "increase" is referring to the spiritual work that God does in a person who, by hearing the gospel, trusts Christ as their Savior. We can plant and we can water, but we cannot bring the seed to life. We can present the gospel, and we can try to persuade men, but we cannot save them, even if they believe.

There is a confusion here I want to address. Some would say, you can present and persuade, but you can't make them trust Christ. True, but neither does God. If God forced anyone to be saved against their will, then He would be opposing Himself. Free will is part of what it means to be made in the image of God. God is not forcing anyone to put their faith in Christ, and He is not picking who will or will not be saved. But, when a person does decide, of their own volition, to trust the work Jesus did on the Cross as sufficient to satisfy God's righteous judgment against them, only God can do the spiritual work of saving them.

When Paul says, "God gave the increase" he is not saying that God is the one making them decide to be saved. Unfortunately, many read the verse this way.

Now let's talk about the reward. When will the reward for our evangelistic efforts be given? It will be given at the judgment seat of Christ.

We will have more to say about this later on, but for now, just know that the reward is for the effort, not the results. We do not get a larger reward if the person we witnessed to trusts Christ.

Now I want to take us into the transition of verse 9. Paul is about to change terminologies because he is going to change issues. He is still talking about the judgment seat of Christ, but a different issue from evangelism. In evangelism, Paul used gardening or farming terminology: planting, watering, etc.

1 Corinthians 3:9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, **ye are God's building.**

Husbandry has to do with agriculture, so that is the evangelism issue. But now we see that Paul is changing his terminology to building terminology.

1 Corinthians 3:10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise **masterbuilder**, I have **laid the foundation**, and another **buildeth thereon**. But let every man take heed **how he buildeth** thereupon.

If you saw our last session, you already know this is talking about the building of our edification in our inner man. There is much to say about this, but to end the session for today, I need to skip us down to verse 12.

1 Corinthians 3:12 Now if any man build upon this foundation **gold, silver, precious stones**, wood, hay, stubble;

Listed in verse 12 are the kinds of building materials we give the Spirit of God, with which He can build our edification. The gold, silver, precious stones are metaphors for Paul's doctrine. The building materials vary in value not because the least of them (precious stones) are not worth very much, but because of their dependency on the other doctrines. In other words, some doctrines are likened to gold because of the type of doctrines in this component, while other doctrines are silver, and still others are precious stones. I am going to show you these doctrines today and explain why there are three categories and why they vary in value. By calling them gold, silver and precious stones, Paul is discerning between the categories of doctrine, which make up the entirety of our sonship education and edification.

Firstly, let's talk about the gold. (See Notetaker)

The "gold" construction materials are the doctrines that make up the Level 1 part of our education, where Phase 1 would be the instruction of Romans 8 (our adoption as sons and sonship establishment).

Phase 2 would be the doctrine making up the four decision-making skills of wisdom, justice, judgment and **equity**, which come out of Romans 12:3-15:7. Included would be 1 and 2 Corinthians.

This is the part of our education, which makes us Simple Sons.

The doctrines and their applications provide for the "silver" building materials that are meant to be layered upon the "gold." The doctrines in Ephesians 1-3 are Phase 1 of the Level 2 doctrines. Once these are understood and internalized, we become a "young man" in the faith. The application of the doctrines constitute Phase 2. Both phases constitute the "silver" doctrines, which cannot be fully realized or fully working in us without the "gold" materials already in place.

Since these building materials require some previous materials to be in place, they are silver (of a slightly lesser value in their ability to stand alone.) Once the

“silver” building materials have been given to the Spirit and He has done His work with them in our inner man, we attain unto the “wise man” status as sons.

That leaves us with the “precious stones.” What are “precious stones?” They serve as a sort of garnish that completes the look of what they are connected with. That means that 1 and 2 Thessalonians are the final brushstrokes of the doctrines which serve to embellish and highlight all the previous doctrines, and they finish off our sonship education. The doctrine of 1 Thessalonian is the Phase 1 component of our education which is the “precious stones” aspect.

Second Thessalonians is the Phase 2 component that provides the Spirit with the balance of the “precious stones” building materials. Considered below gold and silver in value, the precious stones are only lesser by virtue of the fact that they depend upon the other building materials to be in place before they can do their fullest work.

These building materials from 1 and 2 Thessalonians bring us to the “man of understanding” level of our sonship education.

This makes me think of how a woman dresses: she does herself first (face, hair, nails, etc.) which is the “gold” – she then pays attention to her clothes (appropriate to the event, pressed and clean) which is the “silver” – and lastly, to her jewelry (precious stones) which should complement the outfit, not outshine it. All of that together is what goes into dressing appropriately. Each of the levels is meant to showcase backwards.

In the same way, all of the doctrines (the gold, silver, and precious stones) which are the building materials for our inner man, should reflect back to the previous doctrines; showcasing them and the work they produced in us, all the way back to the foundation of Jesus Christ, for without that, there would be no building. And, at the same time, the building itself should showcase the Lord Jesus

While we have more to talk about in this passage, let’s end this one with a quick recap.

So far, we know we will receive a reward at the judgment seat of Christ for our “planting” and “watering” with regard to making known the gospel of the grace of

God. So evangelism will be an issue we will give an account of at the judgment seat of Christ.

Next, we will face the issue of our own edification at the judgment seat of Christ. More specifically, we will account for what kind of building materials are we giving the Spirit of God, to do the spiritual work of edification.

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The Most Important Decision