

The Book of 2 Corinthians

2 Corinthians 5:10

Session 50: The Judgment Seat of Christ, pt. 4

2 Corinthians 5:10 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.

Over the last few sessions, we have run a reference back to 1 Corinthians 3, where we have seen the first two issues we will face at the JSoC: 1) The reward for our evangelistic efforts (verses 5-9), and 2) The reward for our personal edification (verses 9-15).

Now that we have identified the building materials for our edification, let's return to the text of 1 Corinthians 3 and finish the passage concerning the JSoC.

1 Corinthians 3:12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; ¹³ Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. ¹⁴ If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. ¹⁵ If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

"The day" of verse 13 is the day we stand before our Savior at the judgment seat of Christ (JSoC). The "building" of our inner man is going to be tried by the Refiner's fire. Not that we ourselves will suffer fire, (as in Hell or the Lake of Fire); but our works will be tried for the purpose of refining and purifying them; or if they are the wrong kind of building materials, they will be burnt up. We will need that purifying if we are going to be presented to the Father perfect, complete and blameless.

When we stand at the Judgment, the Lord Jesus will reveal to us the true nature and state of our inner man. For a guy who got saved, and for some reason, he never grew in grace, and in no way was he conformed to the image of Christ, his

placement in the Creature (his “job” in the heavenly places) will reflect that edification did not take place.

That is not an attempt to humiliate him, but in the Creature, your position and job will be in accordance with the level to which you have been edified. I believe this man will still have an opportunity to serve God in a meaningful way. Will he, upon his arrival at the JSoC, wish he had engaged in edification? Yes. In fact, I believe that to some degree, immediately upon the death of his body, he will realize he should have lived differently. I do not mean he will suddenly know what edification is, or how he should have been doing it. I mean that once he is “out of the body,” he will immediately know that the way he lived his life was not what it should have been and the things that were so important to him, do not matter anymore.

I believe he will feel that way, even before he can explain “why” he feels that way. Even though the JSoC is meant to be a time of reward and rejoicing (it really is), the Judgment Seat will not be all rejoicing. We will talk about that in a bit. But, there is great news for every saint: even this man who had no edification will be brought to completion in his conformity to Christ, and will be presented to the Father, along with everyone else, as blameless.

Now let’s talk about a man who has tried to “grow in grace” and “mature spiritually,” but with the wrong materials. No, there is no literal fire, but what will happen is that the Lord Jesus will reveal each material of what this man was trusting in to grow/build him spiritually.

For example, this man may be trusting in his ability to keep the Ten Commandments to mature him spiritually. At the JSoC, the Lord Jesus will identify and demonstrate, just as the word of God does to us today, that keeping the Commandments (which of necessity must be done in the flesh) in no way conforms us to Christ. Whatever things this man thinks are valuable to his spiritual life, if they are not the building materials which God Himself has given us through His word, they will all be identified and shown to be “wood, hay and stubble” and unusable. They will be burned up as part of the purification process of completing our conformity to Christ.

Each man, no matter where he is in the edification process, will have a complete understanding of what is happening at the judgment seat of Christ. He will know why those things he thought were maturing him spiritually were not acceptable. He will not be in the dark, left to wonder what has happened.

I am also convinced that as the Lord Jesus deals with each one of us at that Judgment, there will be no bitterness toward Him, no charge of unfairness. There will be no excuse offered and there will be no finger pointing to put the blame on someone else; even if someone really did mislead us. At that time, we will understand that we were responsible for ourselves, and we will realize the truth of that.

We will all have a true picture of where we stand, and we will see our placement as perfectly just. Why? Because we will also recognize that if it were not for the grace of God, we would not be standing there at the Judgment to begin with, we would be in the Lake of Fire for eternity. And for that, we will be truly grateful. We all will.

At the end, all of us will be conformed to the image of God's Son. God has predestined this for every saint, and there is a reason for it.

So, what is the reason? It is not just so we can be presented blameless, although that is also necessary: but, once the process of our conformity to Christ is completed, the Lord can turn us all loose into the Creature, with our free will intact, and know for certain that sin or rebellion will never be the case for us,, henceforth and forever.

The angels were created without sin, yet they had the free will to rebel against God or not. We were also created with a free will. After the JSoC, we will not lose our free will, but we will know some things that will impact our future behavior, and our being conformed to Christ will be completed. Couple that with having a new, glorified body which has no sin in its members and we have a people who have a free will, but will never exercise it contrary to God.

So far we will stand before the judgment seat of Christ to, 1) receive reward for our evangelistic efforts, and 2) to have our edification evaluated. This is about

how well we built on the foundation of Jesus Christ. We receive reward for building properly and we will receive our position in the heavenly places on the basis of it.

In order to see a third issue for which we must give an account at the JSoC, we need to go back to the book of Romans. In Romans 14, Paul speaks to us about how to treat a fellow saint who is “weak in the faith.” What does it mean for someone to be “weak in the faith?”

In this passage, Paul is going to give several ways in which a Believer would be “weak in the faith.”

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The Most Important Decision