

# The Judgment Seat of Christ

## II Corinthians 5

### Crowns #2 - 5

- Open to Phil 3:14 we must press to the prize
  - II Cor 5:10 Judgment seat good or bad
  - Revelation 4 cast crowns
- I. CROWNS ARE FOR CHRISTIANS. There are five.
- A. The Crown of life to all who love the Lord Jesus Christ and persevere to the end. The perseverance of saints is the proof of salvation. [last week] Faithful Witness who is loyal unto death gets the Crown of Life in Revelation. 2:10; James 1:12.
  - B. The Crown of rejoicing consists of people won for Christ. The unselfish Worker who faithfully wins souls gets the Crown of Honor in I Thess.2:19; Phil 4:1. Note the background of this crown.
    1. Acts 16 Phillipi and beaten
    2. Acts 17 was a 97 mile walk
    3. Three plus weeks of ministry
    4. This was the letter back to them.
    5. The only things we can take with us are people! Are you taking anyone with you? Who, your friends, neighbors, children?
  - C. The Steadfast Racer that resists all Disqualifiers gets the Unfading Crown of Self-Control in I Cor. 9:25-27.
    1. This is the crown for holy living as in Romans 6:6-14.
    2. This is the crown for focused living as in Hebrews 12:1-2.
    3. Some of the principles of this kind of life may be found in Hans Finzels' book Baby Boomers.
      - a) GUARD AGAINST THE APATHY OF AFFLUENCE Revelation. 3:17
        - (1) self-sufficiency
        - (2) independence
        - (3) spiritual indifference
      - b) VALUE RELATIONSHIPS OVER AND ABOVE FINANCIAL GAIN Phil 4:1; I Th. 2:19-20.
      - c) DREAM ABOUT WINNING THE ULTIMATE PRIZE Matthew 25:21-23 His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. <sup>23</sup> His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. (KJV) Luke 21:1-4 And he

looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury.

<sup>2</sup> And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites.

<sup>3</sup> And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all: <sup>4</sup> For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had. (KJV) Philippians 3:14 <sup>14</sup> I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

(KJV)

- d) RUB SHOULDERS WITH THE LESS FORTUNATE TO REMIND US THAT THE MORE WE HAVE THE MORE WE NEED TO GIVE I Tim 6:18-19
- e) FOCUS ON THE SECRET OF GODLY CONTENTMENT I Tim 6:6-8
- f) Are you holy and focused? On what?
- D. The Victorious Warrior who faithfully watches for Christ gets the Crown of Righteousness in II Tim. 4:8. Remember Paul is now at the end of his life. He is in the depths of Mamertinum.
  - 1. This crown is for anticipating Christ. Are you?
  - 2. This crown is for following to the finishing line the course the Lord has given you? Are you?
- E. The Example to the Flock who faithfully shepherds gets the Crown of Glory in I Peter 5:3-4.
  - 1. This is for ministering to the flock of the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - 2. It is for living the life as men and women in I Tim 3:1-13 and I Peter 3:1-5.

## II. Conclusion

- A. Are you saved? Do you have the crown of life?
- B. Are you winning and discipling people? Will you get this crown of rejoicing?
- C. Are you Spirit controlled? Will you get the unfading crown?
- D. Are you looking for Jesus? Will you get the crown of righteousness?
- E. Are you serving Christ's church, His sheep? Will you get the crown of glory?

Sing with me Crown Him with many crowns.

A.

Join me at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Verses 9 and 10 give us two perspectives we must all heed.

### I. An Ambition that is Consuming [9]

- A. Philotimeomai is a word not often used but rich in meaning. It means 'actuated by honor alone'. This involves not only actions but also motivations. All must be seeking Christ's honor.
- B. All of the metaphors Paul uses for the Christian life allude to opposing forces we struggle [agonidzomai] against. Hence his word pictures of warfare, races, struggles, and building. So all of life is a struggle [agony] to please Christ. Listen

to Eric Sauer<sup>1</sup> in his helpful book *The Arena of Faith* “Is not the whole an astonishing, many-sided picture of the race and completion of the spiritual life? The arena of faith, the training, the self-control, the ruthless denial of self, the herald, the entrance to the racecourse, the different kinds of contests, the racing to the goal, the boxing, the wrestling, the rules of the combats, Christ the umpire, the danger of being disqualified, the appearance of the victor before the exalted throne of the divine Judge on the great day of the distribution of prizes. It is out of His hands the victors will receive the wreath and the palm. The list of the victors ‘the book of life’, the triumphal entry in the homeland, the banquet, the festival, the gifts, the place of honor-- in fact, scarcely one essential feature of the whole course of the games has escaped the writers of the New Testament and not employed in their figure of speech.”

In the British Museum of London there is an inscription from the city of Ephesus second century AD. “He fought [agonistato] three fights [agonas] and was twice crowned with wreaths [stepho].” This type of inscription was common in Paul’s day and may have influenced his mind as he said he finished his course [dromos] “I have fought [agona] the good fight [agonismai] henceforth there is laid up for me the wreath [stephanos] of righteousness.” II Tim 4:7.

- C. This struggle is so important that life becomes “a mere trifle<sup>2</sup>”, for we labor whether at home or absent, living or dying. Remember the Puritans who spoke of the refiner who held the gold in the fire and pulled off the sludge until his face was clearly reflected in the molten gold. So our Lord tries us until He can be seen reflected from us!

So with a life that is to have such a consuming ambition Paul calls our attention to v. 10 and our. . .

## II. An Appointment that is Constraining v. 10

- A. The Time is the Day of Christ. This is mentioned six times in the New Testament [I Corinthians 1:8; 5:5; II Corinthians 1:14; Phil 1:6, 10; 2:16]. This is the judgment of the church, one of three last day judgments.
1. This event is not to be confused with the final Great White Throne judgment of Revelation. 20:11 after all the old universe is destroyed.
  2. There is also the judgment upon the nations before the Millennial Kingdom starts in Matthew 25:31-46; Revelation. 20:4.
- B. The Judge is Christ Himself as explained in II Tim. 4:8, John 5:22, II Corinthians 5:10 and Romans. 14:10.
- C. The Intensity of evaluation by the Heavenly Judge is very great. It is:
1. A day of FIRE [I Corinthians 3:13].
  2. A day of Terror [II Corinthians 5:10-11]. Good or evil.
  3. A day of Damage and loss [I Corinthians 3:15; II John 8]. Loss or Gain.
  4. A day of Shrinking from His presence in shame [I John 2:28]. Shame or Honor.
  5. A day of the burning up of a life’s work [I Corinthians 3:13-15]. Burn or remain.

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<sup>1</sup> p. 61

<sup>2</sup> MacLaran, II Corinthians 5, p. 369.

6. A day of being Saved but only by fire I Corinthians 3:15].
  7. A day of being Judged by God Himself [Hebrews 10:30]. High or Low in Heaven Mt. 5:19
- D. The Basis of Evaluation by the Heavenly Judge is FAITHFULNESS.
1. Faithfulness is what God requires as the sum total of our life, deeds and opportunities [I Corinthians. 4:1].
  2. Faithfulness is obeying God in all we know that is good and right [James 4:17].
  3. Faithfulness means that God desires sacrifice [Mark 12:42-44].
  4. Faithfulness means God is watching for selfless love in our attitude [I Corinthians 13].
  5. Faithfulness means God will someday reveal motives [I Corinthians 4:5].
  6. Faithfulness means God wants us ready when the Master comes [Matthew 25].
  7. Faithfulness to God demands that we let Him search and know our hearts [Ps 139].
- E. The nature of the Rewards is that they are IMPERISHABLE!
1. Luke 19:17 Great vs. Nothing
  2. First Corinthians 3:12-15 contrasts:
    - a) Permanent vs. Temporary
    - b) Gain vs. Loss
    - c) Fireproof vs. Ashes
  3. First Corinthians 9:27 Approved vs. Disqualified
  4. First John 4:17 Boldness vs. Shame [cf. I J 2.28]
  5. Revelation. 3:17 Rich vs. Poor
  6. As Sons and daughters we get Christ's life. As His servants we get His reward and He is coming quickly Revelation 22:12.
- F. The crowns are offered to:
1. The Steadfast Racer that resists all Disqualifiers gets the Unfading Crown in I Corinthians. 9:25-27.
  2. The unselfish Worker who faithfully wins souls gets the Crown of Honor in I Thessalonians 2:19; Phil 4:1.
  3. The Victorious Warrior who faithfully watches for Christ gets the Crown of Righteousness in II Tim. 4:8.
  4. The Example to the Flock who faithfully shepherds gets the Crown of Glory in I Peter 5:3-4.
  5. The Faithful Witness who is loyal unto death gets the Crown of Life in Revelation. 2:10; James 1:12.
- III. So, its going to be
- A. Public
1. phanerothenai which means more than just to appear, it means to make manifest. Before the God of the universe and all of creation, we will be made known before all.
  2. bema is the judgment seat of the rulers of old. It is raised for all to see. That is the place all will appear one by one.
- B. Personal
1. All [plural] must appear in order that each one individually which is the literal meaning of 'may receive'.

2. phaulon translated bad does not speak of evil but 'good for nothingness'<sup>3</sup>  
The believer is either going to have to answer for the good things done faithfully for the Master, or for the rest which was good for nothingness. This is 'light, unstable, blown about by every wind'. Oh, to stand before all in that day and to answer to Him.

How about it? Our appointment at the seat of our judge is coming. What will you walk away with?

1. The Steadfast Racer that resists all Disqualifiers gets the Unfading Crown in I Corinthians. 9:25-27. As one who keeps the flesh down and lives under the control of the Spirit.
2. The unselfish Worker who faithfully wins souls gets the Crown of Honor in I Thessalonians 2:19; Phil 4:1. As he faithfully goes into his world, wisely wins souls and disciples them for Christ.
3. The Victorious Warrior who faithfully watches for Christ gets the Crown of Righteousness in II Tim. 4:8. One who looks and lives like they expect Jesus at any time.
4. The Example to the Flock who faithfully shepherds gets the Crown of Glory in I Peter 5:3-4. One who leads
5. The Faithful Witness who is loyal unto death gets the Crown of Life in Revelation. 2:10; James 1:12. Are we willing to suffer for Christ to the death whether life long or momentarily?

## Conclusion

1. Works are important because the Lord said that our works reveal what is at the root of our life.
2. Quality is imperative because God will examine not only what we have done but why. The Spirit of God is the incredible secret to a life that counts, because apart from Him we can do nothing

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<sup>3</sup> Trench, 296-97.