

The Reckoning before the Reward

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[0 : 00] All right, you ready to get into the scriptures now?

I hope so. Find two places, please. Romans 14 and 2 Corinthians 5. Last two Sundays, we were in Psalm 34, considering that the Lord is good.

Taste and see that the Lord is good. And in trying to describe from the passage the goodness of God, there was five categories that we discovered that and studied.

And last week, we considered some thoughts about the judgment and about his rewards at the judgment being more than equal in comparison to the actual work performed.

And the thought is that what God distributes to the believer in the sense of reward in that day is not paper money. It's whatever the currency is.

[1 : 05] It's an eternal heavenly currency, if we can even call it that. And I believe there's nothing that we can relate to this or imagine truly.

Remember, we read that, He told us to set our affection on things above. And in Matthew 6, And where thieves don't break through and steal.

And Peter describes an eternal inheritance. He says that it's an inheritance undefiled, eternal, as you say, reserved in heaven for you.

And so we've got something that I believe is incomparable and incomprehensible awaiting us that deserve what God decides to give out. And the work is earthly, but the currency is heavenly.

But having said that, and I believe that's true, and it stirs my heart a bit to think on that and to believe that and to realize there's something better waiting on the other side and that the Lord is good and is good in His giving, I'd like to give some more detail or some more insight into that day of judgment.

[2 : 23] And in doing so, my motive is to be fair and is to be, I don't know, realistic and not to overemphasize the blessing and the reward as if God's just waiting to get up here so I can just dump this blessing upon you.

And I don't want to overemphasize the goodness of God and make you think of Him as that kind of God. And so what I'd like to convey to you is that before the reward is a reckoning, it's a judgment.

And so the reward isn't necessarily guaranteed in a way of speaking. And so we can anticipate some good things and I believe that there will be some wonderful things that has never even entered into our hearts or minds.

But before that, let's make sure that we have a balance on this. And so this morning I want to go through some scriptures, some passages that kind of give you the before that reward and deal with the judgment seat of Christ.

And I want to warn you about some things if I can and just give you what the scripture says and I want to prepare you for that day. I want us all to be prepared as best as we can for that day because that day is coming.

- [3 : 36] If you've taken Jesus Christ as your Savior, you've been baptized into the body of Jesus Christ, spiritually speaking, you're in Him and you're not getting out.
- You're His for eternity and He is yours for eternity. And there's some wonders that come along with that of being justified by faith and having received His righteousness in place of your sin and guilt.
- And while all of that is so much to be thankful for and to consider, we have to remember there's a judgment coming and you ought to be prepared. You're going to stand before the judgment seat of Christ.
- So let's look at Romans 14 and I'm going to read a few verses here. Really just the one verse I'll read for now is verse 10.
- And it says, But why dost thou judge thy brother? Or why dost thou set it not thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.
- [4 : 36] Now turn over to 2 Corinthians 5 and this is where the phrase shows up a second time in verse number 10. 2 Corinthians 5 verse 10 says, For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.
- Let's pray. God, please give us understanding. Please bring conviction. Please move in every single heart in this place.
- And make this sober. Make the seriousness of this day come to light. May each of us focus in on the scripture, on the words that you've placed in this book for us to read and to consider and to get prepared for.
- And God, help me to expose these things and to declare them with certainty and with faithfulness and with authority.
- And I pray that you'll give ears to hear. And God, may we not be distracted by anything in this life that's temporal, anything that's going to burn up and vanish away.
- [5 : 55] And please set our hearts this morning on this judgment, on this day that is awaiting us, probably sooner than we believe. And I pray that you'll be glorified in what's said and how it's responded to.
- And I pray this in Christ's wonderful name. And for his sake, this is all for his sake, we pray in his name. Amen. All right, so you saw the term. You saw it in the Bible twice.
- The judgment seat of Christ. That's not something that preachers make up. It's not something that religions make up to hold over you, to make you be good people. It's the word of God.
- And he made this comment to you that believe. If you're born again, this is for you. If you've never been saved, you'll never see this judgment seat. Or at least in the thought of you won't stand in front of it.
- You've got another throne to stand in front of. From what I understand, it's called the great white throne. And some people on hell are going to be brought up in front of that throne and condemned to a lake of fire for all of eternity.
- [6 : 54] And that's the word of God as well. So I don't care what you think about that. That's what God said. He doesn't care what you think about that. That's what he said. That's what he's going to do. He's God. He's going to do it.
- Now what you need to consider is the judgment seat of Christ if you're saved. And we want to consider that today. I want to say three things this morning and about this judgment. One is the place of judgment.
- Number two is the process of this judgment. And then thirdly is some principles of this judgment. And you'll understand as we get through this. Now number one, the place of judgment.

It's called the judgment seat of Christ. There are several mentions to a judgment seat in the Bible. There are several of them. One is where Paul stands before what's called Caesar's judgment seat.

He was judged. It's like a courtroom. That's the very scene. And there's a man that's an authority that sits on a seat. It's the judgment seat. And he passes judgment upon the individual that's called before him.

[7 : 53] He hears the story. He hears the sides. And then declares and passes the judgment. Caesar had a judgment seat. Jesus Christ stood before Pilate in what was called as the...

He says Pilate sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the pavement. And so Pilate, as the governor of that region, sat down to judge Jesus Christ.

And some accused him. And Jesus spoke for himself, or didn't rather. And therefore, Pilate had the authority to pass judgment sitting in that seat.

The Bible says that Moses sat in a seat of judgment. And Christ even in his day referred to that seat of judgment where he said the scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. And he went on to talk about them.

But this seat that we looked at in these two places, this seat belongs to Jesus Christ. This is not Moses' seat. He's not going to judge somebody according to if they got into a confrontation.

[8 : 53] This is something bigger. This is the Lord of glory, the creator, judging his children. This seat belongs to Jesus Christ. This judgment seat, it's not on the earth.

As important as this event seems to be, it's not a lot of scripture that I understand or can find that really describes the details of it. It appears that it follows what we call the rapture of the church or the catching away in 1 Corinthians 14, 1 Thessalonians 4.

What am I talking about? 1 Thessalonians 4 describes that we which are alive and remain shall be caught up with them, those that were dead in Christ, that rise first, will be caught up with them to meet the Lord in the air.

So there's a meeting of the Lord in the air. Now some speculate that that is where the judgment seat takes place. And that's speculation because there's no, I can see no real definitive statement of the location.

Others suggest that it's in heaven. Others suggest it's in the quote unquote heavenlies. And one thought is from Ephesians chapter 5 that Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might present it to himself, a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blame before him.

[10 : 13] That's the church that Jesus Christ sanctifies and cleanses with the washing of the water of the word and presents it to himself. And so some speculate or try to understand that he catches this body of his away, he catches them up and meets them in the air and at some point presents it to himself, a glorious church.

And maybe between the meeting and the catching or the catching and the presenting is the meeting and the judgment. Now I don't know, I truly don't know the location of it, but what I know, what we'll call the place of judgment is where we stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

The exact locality of this seat and where this proceedings take place, I'm not positive. But I know there's a place of judgment. And I know there's a seat that's called the judgment seat.

And I know this one belongs to Jesus Christ where he'll sit on this seat to judge. Now let's look at then the process of judgment. That would be the procedure or in the courtroom the proceedings.

How is this going to take place? We've got these two passages before us still and we're going to go through them a little bit. In Romans chapter 14, you can find your way back to Romans chapter 14. I want to notice some thoughts from this chapter because this is where it first shows up.

[11 : 34] And it's interesting that Paul is telling us not to judge our brother. In verse 10, Why dost thou judge thy brother? Why dost thou set it not, thy brother?

The man is, one is judging his brother in the sense that he's, and he's even setting him at naught. He's shunning him. He's putting him away saying, no, we're breaking fellowship.

And Paul's saying, why are you doing that? We're all going to stand before the judgment seat of Christ. And he's the judge. And then he goes on to say, after verse 10, or sorry, verse 13, let us not therefore judge one another anymore, but judge this rather.

But I have to give you this context. This has to be really clearly understood what's going on in this chapter when Paul's talking about judging one another. Because I could just stop right there and say, judge not, and throw that at you and say, God's my judge and you're not.

But that's not entirely true. There's context. There's always context. And in the chapter, you've got a weak brother in verse 1. Him that is weak in the faith. So he's, we might call him a young or baby Christian.

[12 : 46] He doesn't have knowledge. He doesn't have understanding, spiritual things. He's weak in the faith. And there's one that's supposed to be stronger. He's, in this description, he talks about what he's eating.

One will eat meat and one will not. And the one that's weak is the one that doesn't eat. He eats only herbs in verse 2. And then the teaching is, you're not to despise him.

And you're not to judge him. Another case in this chapter, in verse 5, talks about a man esteeming one day above another. And another esteeming every day alike.

And it's talking about a day where one will worship God, will set apart for God. And somebody will judge him and say, that's not the day you're supposed to do it. Or we don't do it on that day. And then Paul says, why are you judging your brother?

And he's going to tell you some things from this chapter that we want to get the context of clearly. The two things that Paul uses to illustrate, before he talks about judging, is diet, what you're eating, diet, and days.

[13 : 54] Diet and days of worship. What's important that we understand is, this is not doctrines. This is not sins. If a brother's at fault, there's other scriptures that tell you how to handle that.

You're not supposed to just act like everything's fine. If somebody's got their doctrine wrong, you're supposed to deal with that as well. But when it comes to these things, Paul's like, hey, this is not stuff that you judge your brother, or put him away, or set him at naught, over.

And notice this also. This is important. Come to verse number, well, let's read 5 and 6. One man esteemeth one day above another, another esteemeth every day alike.

Notice this phrase, let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. And what he's telling you is that it is everyone's duty to understand what God's will is for them, and how they're to obey, that he's doing right in the eyes of God, in these areas.

We call them convictions. We call them, some people call them gray areas or things. But you have a duty to seek the Lord, and understand that what you're doing, and what you allow, and what you participate in, is if you don't have scripture on it to tell you it's right or wrong, you need to seek the Lord, and your relationship with the Lord.

[15 : 14] This is what I'm getting at. Your relationship with the Lord, to understand whether it's right or wrong, or if he allows it. Look at verse 6. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord.

He that regardeth not the day, to the Lord, he doth not regard it. Now back to the diet. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks. And he that eateth not, he's not saying one's right or one's wrong, he's saying to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself, whether we live or whether we are the Lord's, whether we die or we lie unto the Lord. We are the Lord's. In these areas, Paul is pointing out, this is in between a man and his God, it is about his personal relationship with the Lord.

And if he thinks that this is the way to go, and it's right, and there's no scripture stopping him, it's between him and God. And it's not your business to judge him. And if you think this is the right way to go, that's between you and God, and it's not his job to judge you.

And then Paul says, we're all going to stand before the judgment seat of Christ and be judged according to what? According to that light that God gave you, according to that relationship that you had with the Lord.

[16 : 29] Let's read this passage now. Verse 10, But why dost thou judge thy brother? Or why hast thou said it not of thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

It's written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God, so that every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Let us not therefore judge one another anymore, but judge this rather, and he's going to say that you be innocent when it comes to your brother.

That no man put a stumbling block or in occasion a fall on his brother's way. And he goes on to say some things that we don't have time to cover. But here's a point I want to draw out of this first mention of the judgment seat of Christ.

It's not about sins and doctrines in this first mention. It's about a man's actions and his relationship to Jesus Christ. What he's doing unto the Lord. And whether it's this or that, it's to the Lord and it's giving God thanks.

It's about a personal relationship. It's an individual judgment based upon your personal relationship with the Lord. Like we read in verse 6, what's between you and God?

[17 : 38] How God dealt with you? What God laid upon your heart to do? Somebody say, I think God's calling me to Bible school. Then you better get your butt in Bible school.

But that may not be for anybody else in the building. That's between you and God, right? It's not me to judge that and say, well, I think you should be doing that. If the Lord lays on your heart that you ought to be doing this in this life, then you better do that in this life.

And you will stand before the judgment seat of Christ and give an answer of whether you did or didn't do that. It's a personal relationship with God. If you don't have a personal relationship with God, you better open your eyes.

You better get right. You better understand that he wants to walk with you and guide you and he has some expectations for you in this life. And it's your duty to find out what that is and to seek him and to obey his voice.

It is not my job. It's never been the pastor's job for you to come in here and he tells you what you're supposed to do with your life. It's your job. My job is to point you to the word of God and preach it, to declare the truth of the Bible.

[18 : 47] It's my job to rebuke sin in the world and try to steer you to a relationship with Jesus Christ. And I'll declare it right now. The most important thing in this life is your personal relationship with Jesus Christ, the God of this book right here.

That's your job, to know him, to seek him, to follow his word. Your duty is to walk with him and hear his voice. Your duty is to please him.

Your job is to do it. I might preach what the Bible says. Your job is to do it, to take the scripture and to walk.

Now, in the first mention in Romans 14, in the first angle of looking at the judgment seat of Christ, I want to say this is about your walk with God. This is about you personally giving account of yourself.

Verse 12, Every one of us shall give account of himself to God about your walk with God, about your relationship with him, about when he laid something on your heart, when he gave you light, when he instructed you, whether you obeyed it or not.

[19 : 57] You're going to give account for that. You're going to give account for your life and your walk with God. Now flip over to 2 Corinthians 5, and here's a little different angle of this same day, the same judgment.

And what I'd say from this is this has to do with your work for God. In verse number 9, it says, Wherefore we labor, we work, we do something for Jesus Christ, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted to him.

We want his favor. We want his blessing. We want his reward. Wherefore we labor. We get to work knowing what's right. And we've already discussed it in this pulpit many times about you've been, where his workmanship created in Christ Jesus, unto good works, which God hath before a day, and that we should walk in them.

You're called to good works. You're to be careful to maintain good works. You're to do well and to do righteousness. And so therefore, fruits, you're to bring forth fruits unto righteousness.

Wherefore we labor. And then he says in verse 10, For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. And notice now, that everyone, everyone, again, singular, individual, everyone may receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

[21 : 23] So the process of judgment, number one, this is an individual judgment where you, as Romans says, will stand before, or as 2 Corinthians says here in verse 10, you will appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

Process, point one, is you're going to stand or appear. You're going to be in front of the judgment seat by yourself. You. Secondly, you will give account.

According to Romans, there'll be stand or appear, give account, and then receive. That's verse 10. We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in his body.

According to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. So the process is an appearance, is giving account, and then receiving. Now, that's a little interesting to me.

Typically, this is taught from 1 Corinthians 3, and Rich mentioned it the other night. I concur that it doesn't say judgment in that passage at all. And regardless of that, it's typically taught that you'll receive a reward, or you won't receive a reward.

[22 : 32] You'll suffer loss. And so they, most people take this thing where it says whether good or bad, and say, well, the good is getting a reward, the bad is not getting a reward. And it doesn't say that in your Bible, though.

It says you'll receive the things done, whether it be good or bad. You'll receive. And I want to be careful with that. I don't have a good doctrine to teach on this, and I'm not going to.

But I will take it to two places. Let's compare some Scripture. Look at Ephesians 6 and Colossians 3. And this is in the context of our labor.

That's important. I'm going to keep the Scripture where it belongs, and not reach for something vague and obscure to try to tie it in. Two places now.

You can leave the other ones behind. We'll start in Ephesians 5 and Colossians 3. And remember, we're looking at that thought that you'll stand before, you'll give account, and you'll receive.

[23 : 38] You'll receive the things done in the body according to you that done, whether it be good or bad. What does that mean, good or bad? Well, let's compare these passages. Get them both so we can flip back and forth a few times here.

Starting in Ephesians 5, I'm going to point out that Paul is dealing to this church at Ephesus, and he says very much the same, similar things to the church at Colossae. And he starts in verse 22 by addressing wives.

See that? Wives, comma. Verse 25, husbands, comma. And then to the next chapter, children, comma. And then five, servants. And then verse 9, and ye masters.

So there's the list, and you're going to find in Colossians, now flip over, it's identical. Colossians 3, verse 18, wives, 19, husbands, children, fathers, servants, and in chapter 4, verse 1, masters.

And it's like we're in a parallel passage, we're almost in identical terms here. All right, so come back, just to see that. Now come back to Ephesians, and let's look closely at something to do with labor, and receiving something.

[24 : 57] So as he's speaking to servants, in chapter 6 of Ephesians, verse 5, he says, servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ, not with eyes, service, as men pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with good will, doing service as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, not just servants anymore, but any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.

So he's not just addressing that thought to servants only, but it kind of then opens up to anybody if you're a free man. You're going to receive, or whatever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord.

Well, that's good. Those are good things. That's receiving of the Lord for the good things, just like we read in 2 Corinthians, whether good or bad. He says you're going to receive for the good things.

And so the point here, there's the good things mentioned in Ephesians. And he's taking this beyond just servants. I hope you see that. In verse 8. All right, now flip over to Colossians chapter 3.

And here's the servants passage in verse 22. Obey in all things your masters, according to the flesh, not with high servants, men pleasers, but with singleness, a heart-fearing God. And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord, not unto men.

[26 : 20] Knowing, verse 24, knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance, for ye serve the Lord Christ. He said in Ephesians, that's your servants of Christ.

And now verse 25. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done. And notice this, there's no respect of persons.

This goes beyond servants. It doesn't matter if you're free or bond, like it says in Ephesians. There's no respect of persons. He that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong.

Now there's, I believe that this judgment seat, that the process is stand before or appear before, give account, and then receive.

He says you'll receive for the good. Everybody's good with that. You'll receive a reward. And then most just say, well then you're going to suffer loss and watch it burn up. But again in Colossians, he said he shall receive for the wrong.

[27 : 31] Just like he said in 2 Corinthians 5. There's something else going on there. It appears. I believe it implies more than just losing out on what you could have had when it says you'll receive for the wrong.

Now I cannot speculate with confidence at all on this statement. There's some thoughts I have, maybe even some scriptures running thoughts about the judgment seat and where else, but I'm not going to, I'd rather not suggest something that's wrong and have that in your mind because it's in mine.

And so I'm going to be, leave it at that, but to declare to you at this much, the process, again, is appear, give account, and then receive. Whether it be good or bad.

And you can study that out and see if something's there or not. I don't know. But let's now move on to the third and final thought, the principles of judgment. There's other mentions of people being judged by God in the Bible.

There's other mentions of different judgments at different times in the past and in the future. And even though there's certain details that differ and certain expectations that differ, it's the same God, and I believe there's certain principles that are constant in all judgment.

[28 : 46] And I assure you I'm going to tread lightly, doctrinally, as we go to other passages. I'm not going to try to put something on you that applies elsewhere. But take your Bible and go back to Matthew chapter 11 and let's read about another judgment that's coming that Christ warned Jews about in his ministry.

And let's just extract some principles from it and not cross any doctrinal lines. But let's see if we can make some application to this judgment seat of Christ that will apply to you by what we'll call principles of judgment.

So let's begin reading in verse 20. Matthew 11 verse 20. Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done because they repented not.

Woe unto thee, Curzon! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in thee had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at that day of judgment than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shall be brought down to hell.

[30 : 11] For if the mighty works which had been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained unto this day. But I say unto you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee.

This is not the judgment seat of Christ. So I understand that. This is not you standing before Jesus Christ and getting cast down to hell. This is cities.

This is cities in Israel. He mentioned where most of his mighty works were done and they didn't repent. They rejected him. I think there's some principles.

So what is Jesus Christ driving at in these few verses here? The cities that heard with their ears the word of God, that witnessed with their eyes the works of God, had no excuse, but rejected him and said, get out of our coasts.

Get lost. You will not be our Messiah. You will not reign over us. You are nobody to us. You faker, you son of Belial, you're of your father the devil.

[31 : 21] Get out of here. Those cities will find themselves cast down to hell. They experienced God in the flesh in their own streets of their cities in their lifetimes and so many others never saw it.

So many never experienced it. He says in Matthew 13 how the prophets would just have longed to hear the things you've heard and to see the things you've seen and have not.

And he says, the ones that have and have rejected it is going to be bad for you. It's going to be real bad for you. They're going to be held accountable for what they rejected.

For the great opportunity that God had presented and put into their laps and they rejected it and they will be held accountable for it. Does that part make sense to you? They'll be held accountable for what they said no to God about when God offered it to them.

Sodom is mentioned here in the latter part. Sodom was, the men of Sodom were sinners and wicked exceedingly before the Lord. Wicked and sinners exceedingly before the Lord.

[32 : 34] So much so that God did a new thing in that day in raining down fire and brimstone and destroying Sodom and Gomorrah and the two other towns around there. Just utterly wiping them off the earth.

I mean, that's ugly. That's judgment. But those men and those women of that town, they're still awaiting a future judgment and they're going to stand before God and they're going to actually find it more tolerable.

Those filthy, wicked sinners, they're going to find more tolerance of God in their judgment than these cities of Israel who had the Messiah standing in front of them offering them rest, offering them the kingdom of heaven and they would not.

Now you need to understand this is a principle here. This reminds me of modern day American Christians that won't give up their comfortable lifestyles to follow Jesus Christ and they won't open their mouth for Him and they love their money and their riches and their pleasures and their comforts and they don't want anything to interfere with that.

As long as everything's good, we'll keep coming to church but if there's, I guarantee, if the persecution shows up in America and the believers, it's going to change the look of things.

[33 : 53] Now anyway, there's two things worthy to note here from this passage. I want to point out, number one, Christ informed them ahead of time that there's a day of judgment. They were not going to be ignorant that they're going to stand judgment and they're going to stand before Him just like you are hearing here today that before it ever happens, you've been warned and you see it in the scripture, there's a judgment coming for you.

Secondly, they were expected to repent. Their response to understanding the judgment coming and their response to what Jesus Christ had offered to them in His appearances, they were expected to receive Him and to repent of their wicked works and to receive Him as their King and Messiah.

God expected repentance. The judgment that they're going to receive was actually avoidable. Had they received Him? Had they believed on Him? Had they followed Him?

And so what they have coming, being cast down to hell, doesn't have to be. And so there's some principles here. Some principles are, one, you're going to face judgment.

It's coming. And number two, God expects you with knowledge of that to repent of things that are wrong, that you're, He doesn't have to judge you for those things then if you'd get them right now.

[35 : 13] Paul says, if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. And we can get some things cleaned up right now knowing that I'm going to give account of myself to God. And that's a blessing to know.

And we can see that in this passage that we have an opportunity to get some things prepared, to get some things right before the day of judgment. And then on top of that, the first thing I mentioned is that you'll be held accountable for what you know and for what you rejected and for what was offered to you to the opportunities that you had.

Let me back this up with another one. Look at Luke chapter 12. We're getting to the end here. Luke chapter 12. And here's another judgment, another reference.

And again, this is not a reference to a Christian standing before the judgment seat of Christ. That's not what's happening here. But there are some principles that we can pull out of this.

And you can see the mind of God. The Lord said, verse 42, The Lord said, Who then is this faithful and wise steward whom his Lord shall make ruler over his household to give them their portion of meat in due season?

[36 : 26] Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you that he will make him ruler over all that he hath. But if, but and if that servant say in his heart, The Lord delayeth his coming and shall begin to beat the men servants and maidens to eat and to drink and to be drunk in, the Lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him and at an hour when he is not aware and will cut him in sunder and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

And that servant which knew his Lord's will and prepared not himself neither did according to his will shall be beaten with many stripes.

But he that knew not and did commit things worthy of stripes shall be beaten with few stripes. And here's a statement for unto whomsoever much is given of him shall be much required and to whom men have committed much of him they will ask the more.

Now the principle is those who have been given opportunity have been given truth have been given knowledge I believe much will be required.

There will be a reckoning. There will be an appearance before the judgment seat of Christ and there will be an account given. I think the principle is plain.

[37 : 52] The Lord is righteous in his judgment. The Lord is fair even in verse 48 he's fair. If somebody didn't know even though he was guilty he doesn't get as much.

It's not laid on him the expectation wasn't there. The Lord is perfect and balanced. And God doesn't judge a man according to what he couldn't do or what he didn't have opportunity to do.

In Philippians there's a case where that church was giving we read this last week actually where they were supporting Paul in his ministry and he said at one point he said ye lacked opportunity.

They're not going to be judged when they didn't have opportunity. But there's another case where he said but your care of me having flourished again. When they had opportunity they jumped on it and seized it and did it for Jesus Christ and what happened out of that?

Fruit abounded to their account. And when they're judged for their actions it's going to come through and they're going to receive for the good. But where they lacked opportunity they're not accountable for that.

[38 : 58] Another case in 2 Corinthians chapter 8 there's reference to that church giving and they're giving and supporting others and in some cases they couldn't. They didn't have it but they had a ready mind.

A willing mind and Paul commends them for that and he says that God's not going to judge you for what a man hath not. If you don't have the money to give he's not going to expect you to give it.

If you don't have the talent to serve Christ he's not going to expect that of you. And so you won't be judged according to what you have not. But what you do have and the opportunities you've been given you absolutely will be judged for and give account of and be warned and be prepared.

So the Lord is going to judge in a perfect and just way. He doesn't demand or expect more than what's possible.

Remember the Lord knows our frame he remembers that we're dust he pities us he knows us but at the same time he has given us much. And you won't be judged as if you didn't have access to the Holy Scriptures.

[40 : 11] You won't be judged as if you just didn't know or couldn't know. What did you do with my book he might ask. You won't be judged as one that didn't have access to truth or didn't have access to sinners or didn't have knowledge of eternity in heaven and hell.

You won't be judged as one who's never heard sound words and good doctrine. And I believe of the Bible believing congregations in this world much will be required.

Much. We must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. And I told you in the beginning I want to warn you and I want to prepare you for that day. First realize this is you.

This is coming close. This is coming quick. And don't think to yourself well take this attitude like well I read my Bible two days last week. That's pretty good.

That's better than nothing right? Don't deceive yourself and admit that you didn't read it five days. And I'm not going to bury you with just Bible reading but look at it that way.

[41 : 22] Look at it that way. Realize you're going to have a one-on-one meeting with the Lord Jesus Christ. And don't deceive yourself to saying well I can't memorize scripture or learn doctrine or I can't witness or I wasn't called to preach so God doesn't expect me to do anything.

Remember the first thought in Romans 14 it's about your personal relationship with Jesus Christ and he will make you give account of that and he will make you give account of what you did for him.

Jesus Christ bled and shed his blood and died to keep you out of hell. You're not going to spend one minute. The flame's not going to touch you.

You're not going to go there. You're not going to hear the screams. You're not going to be with the devil and his angels. That's not your future. He's redeemed you from that. He's rescued and delivered you from that.

And I don't think we, I think you can hear it. I think you can understand it to a degree but I don't think until we get there will we see it for what it is and see eternity for what it is and see damnation for the whore that it is.

[42 : 40] And in that day maybe we will do exactly what they're doing in the Bible falling on our faces and saying oh God oh thank you God I didn't know how close I was to going to hell.

And in that light you'll say I wish I'd have taken this thing more serious. I wish now I'd have done more. I wish I'd have labored.

I wish I'd have cared. I wish I'd have considered this meeting. This judgment. I believe Jesus Christ having paid for our sins with his own blood I think he has the right to expect some things from you and I.

Do you? Do you think he has the right to expect some things from you? Does your life say that? Does your life say yes I think God owns me.

I believe I'm bought with a price. I believe my duty is to glorify him in my body and my spirit. I believe these ears are his this mouth is his these eyes are his. He owns me.

[43 : 52] The day is coming believer it's closer than it was yesterday. Amen. It's one day closer.

It's not going away. It's like it's like that death is coming and after this the judgment. Do you believe the message today about the judgment seat of Christ and if so are you ready and are you living about are you thinking on it because there it is that the Bible is staring right at you right there in those passages that we read.

If I were you and this has dealt with my heart and it does any time I think on it I ask God and I would ask God to impress upon your heart how you can be better prepared for that day.

Let's bow our heads together. Let's bow our heads and in a moment we'll have a time to sing and have an invitation and I'd like you to before that I'd like you to think I'd like to recommend with your heads bowed and your eyes closed just for a moment I'd like to recommend a few things to you this morning.

Preparing for that judgment seat melody and say it would be wise to make neededzogen to