

## **Biblical Doctrine of The Judgment Seat of Christ**

This is one of the most neglected doctrines of Scripture. For too long the church has labored under a misconception that God's judgment is reserved for the lost alone. The Bible clearly teaches us about the Judgment Seat of Christ in Romans 14:10 and 2 Corinthians 5:10 along with 1 Corinthians 3:11-13. The judgment seat was a raised platform called in Greek a *bema*. It was a judicial bench mentioned in Acts 18:12 of Paul before Gallio and in Matthew 27:19 of Christ before Pilate. There are at least three purposes for the Judgment Seat of Christ regarding believers.

1. **The judgment seat is not** to decide about a person's salvation nor is it to punish believers for sins. Salvation and forgiveness of sins is decided by receiving Jesus as one's personal Savior, as in John 3:16, 18; 1 John 2:12; Mt 6:12.
2. **The judgment seat is about** rewarding believers for being good stewards as servants of Christ, see Mt 16:27; Mk 9:41; 1 Cor 3:8. When we are lost God deals with us as sinners, see Eph 2:1-3; 1 Cor 6:9. When we are saved He deals with us as sons, see Rom 8:14; Heb 12:5-11; 1 Jn 3:1-2. At the judgment seat he will deal with us as stewards, Rom 14:10; 1 Cor 4:1-5; 1 Pet 4:10.
3. **The judgment seat also is about** evaluating the character of every believer's works done for Christ, see 1 Cor 3:11-15. Christ must be our foundation and on it there are two kinds of works; those that are eternal and those that are temporary, see Mt 5:19-21; 2 Pet 3:10-13.

In addition 2 Cor 5:10 "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body ... whether they be good or bad" reveals four significant facts about the judgment seat. **First**, it is a certainty, "we must" appear, Rom 14:10; Heb 9:27. This is an inescapable appointment. **Second**, "we must all," tells us this appointment is universal. No one will be excluded or exempt, Rom 14:11. **Third**, this appointment is personal, "that each one," is a reminder that we will give account for ourselves directly to Christ, 1 Cor 4:12 and not about others, Jn 21:21. **Fourth**, this is the final tribunal. There is no court of appeals or place of dispute. The judgment rendered before Christ will be complete, final, indiscriminate, and eternal.

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