**The Judgment Seat of Christ**

We have been told and read in the Word that everyone must appear before the judgment seat of Christ!

***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.*

No one is exempt. It sounds like an ominous event where each of us will have to openly display our lives before God. What we receive from Him will depend upon the quality of life that we have lived.

Maybe there is a different way to look at it. Take for instance the same passage from the Mirror Word.

***2 Corinthians 5:10 Mirror*** *Word For we have all been thoroughly (1) scrutinized in the footsteps (2) of Jesus;(not as an example for us but of us) and are taken(3) care of and restored to the life of our design, regardless of what happened to us in our individual lives, whatever amazing or meaningless things that we encountered in the body****.*** (The Word thoroughly(1) **phaneroo** means to render apparent, to openly declare, to manifest. Paul uses the aorist passive infinitive tense **phanerothenai,** not referring to a future event. The aorist tense is like a snapshot taken of an event that is already concluded. The word, footsteps(2)**bematos**, comes from **bayma** means footprint, also referring to a raised place mounted by steps, or a tribunal, the offician seat of a judge. The word taken(3)**komitzo,** comes from **Kilumbos,** meaning to tend, to take care of, to provide for, to carry off from harm. Paul’s reference was not how much abuse and affliction he suffered, neither was it the many good times he remembered that defined him; “I am what I am by the grace of God!” If we are still to be judged for good or bad deeds that we performed in the body, then the judgment seat that Jesus faced on humanity’s behalf seems irrelevant.)

In summary, we walk in the footprints of what Jesus has done for us. It is not a future event. It has already taken place. We are not judged in light of what we have done, but in light of what Jesus has done for us. Jesus restored us to our original position that we had with the Father.

 **Supporting evidence**

***Romans 14:10*** *But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.*

**Naught-** to make utterly nothing of, less esteemed

**Judgment seat**- a step, a rostrum, that is, tribunal [something that decides or determines]:

**Rostrom dictionary definition** An ancient Roman platform for public speaking

We will have no room to judge our brothers. We won’t be able to compare ourselves with one another in order to feel good about our judgment because everyone of us will have to personally face that judgment seat ourselves.

The definition for the word “judgment seat” takes us back to the Tower of Babel. The Strong’s Concordance definition of the word tower from **Genesis 11:4** means a platform where pleadings were made, a pulpit for public speaking. In Genesis, they were building a tower (a platform or way that they could present themselves before God to gain His approval.) Their platform **[tower]** or pulpit from which they approached God was the work of their own hands. The platform or what makes us look good before God in the New Covenant is the work of Jesus, what He has done to justify us-not what we or anyone else has done to justify themselves.

***Message Bible 2 Corinthians 5:14-15*** *Our firm decision is to work from this focused center. One man died for everyone. That puts everyone in the same boat. He included everyone in his death so that everyone could also be included in his life, a resurrection life, a far better life than people ever lived on their own.*

***2 Corinthians 5:16-20*** *Because of this decision we don’t evaluate people by what they have or how they look. We looked at the messiah that way once and got it all wrong, as you know. We certainly don’t look at him that way anymore. Now we look inside, and what we see is that anyone united with the Messiah gets a fresh start, is created new. The old life is gone, a new life burgeons! Look at it! All this comes from the god who settled the relationship between us and him, and then called us to settle our relationships with each other. God put the world square with himself through the Messiah, giving the world a fresh start by offering forgiveness of sins. God has given us the task of telling everyone what he is doing. We’re Christ’s representatives. God uses us to persuade men and women to drop their differences and enter into God’s work of making things right between them.*

The new creation is not subject to the laws of the flesh because they have “passed away!” We have been reconciled to God through Jesus. That eliminates the traditional view of the judgment seat. **2 Corinthians 5:14-21**

**Matthew 25:31-46** marks the famous passage that promotes the traditional view of the judgment seat of Christ. Jesus will come and sit upon his judgment seat. Here He will separate the sheep from the goats. The sheep inherit the kingdom, while the goats are cast into a state of eternal punishment. Traditionally this passage is interpreted to mean that the Christians are the ones who inherit eternal life, while the non Christians are sentenced to hell. And, even though we are Christians, God is going to look at our behavior and we will have to have an answer for all of our past actions and decisions because everything will be exposed before Him.

I found several interesting things that discounted some of my traditional thinking. It does not seem to be talking about believers and non-believers. The pivotal issue seems to be what one considers to be the work of the kingdom. The kingdom of God is about ministering to the needs of people. **John 15: 12-17** Both groups seemed to be occupied with God. Neither the sheep nor the goats totally understood the position that they occupied in the picture.

The sheep were invited to inherit the kingdom.

***Matthew 25:34*** *Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:*

God made us in His image to be his representation on earth. We were given dominion over everything. The kingdom was prepared for us. Kingdom work is involved with ministering to the needs of God’s people because that is what God is involved with.

The sheep were blessed because they were involved with the work of the kingdom.

***Matthew 25:35*** *For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:*

***36*** *Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.*

They did not fully understand this principle. They questioned Jesus, “when did we minister these things to you?” **Matthew 25:37-39**

***Matthew 25:40*** *And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*

**Hebrews 10:14-17** says that we have been perfected forever and that God does not remember our iniquities. Why would he judge us for something he does not remember or that Jesus already took care of? Secondly it says that He will write his commandments on our hearts. He is not talking about the law of commandments according to the old covenant. He is talking about the law of the new covenant which is to love one another the way that Jesus loved us. **John 15:12-17**

The goats were cursed because they were not doing kingdom work.

***Matthew 25:41*** *Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels*:

They did not understand how they missed it. They thought that they were serving God.

***Matthew 25:44*** *Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?*

***45*** *Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.*

They were occupied with the things of the law.

They were occupied with the things of their father the devil. **John 8:44** Anyone occupied with the things of the law will not see life because it shuts up the things of the kingdom. **Matthew 23:13**

***Matthew 25:46*** *And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.*

**2 Corinthians 3:14-15** When the law is the focus, one can’t see the true things of the kingdom because the law disqualifies everyone from receiving. **Matthew 23:4 ; Romans 3:23; 2 Corinthians 3:13-15**

Workers of the kingdom, or workers of iniquity?

**Matthew 7:21** Not everyone that says “Lord Lord” will enter into the kingdom of heaven but he that does the will of the Father

**Matthew 7:22-23** You can’t enter the kingdom unless you are occupied with the things of the kingdom. **V24** Depart from me you workers of iniquity!

**Work-**what one is occupied with

**Iniquity** violation of the law, unrighteousness

Workers of iniquity are those that are occupied with pointing out transgressions according to the law **[unrighteousness]**. The kingdom is within. The true things of the kingdom **[Romans 14:17-**righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost] can not be experienced when the law is the platform from which you approach God.

**All those that watch for iniquity will be cut off!**

***Isaiah 29:20*** *For the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off* ***[destroyed]****:*

***21*** *That make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought.*

The law produces death! It can not prosper. Everything born of the flesh or man’s effort will fail. **1 Peter 1:23-25**

Jesus did not come to judge the world**. John 12:46-50** He came to save the world. He came to set men free from the lie of the enemy that always points men to self effort.

***Isaiah 29:18*** *And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.*

***23*** *But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel.*

***24*** *They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.*

God desires that everyone come to the knowledge of the truth that will set them free. **John 8:32** The work of the hands of Jesus has set us free from the work of our hands. The problem is our understanding of what is truth and how we came to understand what we know. We have concepts of the law mixed in with grace **Galatians 3:3.** The mixture dilutes the truth in such a manner that it becomes ineffective. **Revelations 3:15-16**

The focus of the parable of the sheep and the goats is not about judging individual sins. It is instead focused on two approaches to “kingdom work.” The sheep were occupied with the things of the kingdom. They ministered to the needs of the people according to the new commandment. They received God’s blessing. The goats were not occupied with true kingdom work. They were occupied with the things of the law which kept them and those that they ministered to from entering into the kingdom. They received the curse of the law.

God's love and His favor is not hindered by your sin!

It is self-effort and mans ability, control and self-strength that hinders Gods grace! [quote from Arthur Meintjus]