

# The Judgment Seat of Christ

## I. Introduction & Definition

- A. Two terms for the Final Temporal-Life Examination that Members of the Church will face:
1. Judgment Seat of Christ (2<sup>nd</sup> Cor. 5:10). βῆμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ. βῆμα <sup>#968</sup>: *a step, stepped dais, tribunal*.
  2. Judgment Seat of God (Rom. 14:10). βῆμα τοῦ θεοῦ. Many mss. have βῆμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ here.
  3. Most conservative scholars equate the βῆμα τοῦ θεοῦ with the βῆμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ since God the Father has given all judgment to the Son (Jn. 5:22).
- B. Final Temporal-Life Examinations that Members of the Church will not face:
1. The Sheep & Goat Judgment (Matt. 25:31-46) judges believing Gentiles who live through the Tribulation and enter into the Millennial Kingdom of Jesus Christ.
  2. Wilderness Judgment of Israel (Ezek. 20:33-44; Mal. 3:2-6) judges believing Jews who live through the Tribulation and enter into the Millennial Kingdom of Jesus Christ.
  3. The First Resurrection “Resurrection of Life” Judgment (Rev. 20:4-6; Jn. 5:25-29) judges resurrected believers from the Dispensations of Gentiles, and Hebrews.
  4. Great White Throne Judgment “Resurrection of Judgment” (Rev. 20:11-15; Jn. 5:29) judges resurrected unbelievers from every Dispensation: Cain to the end of the Millennium.
- C. There is no Final Temporal-Life Examination which determines the salvation of any individual.
1. The Judgment Seat of Christ will not determine whether the person goes to heaven or hell. Appearance before the Judgment Seat of Christ automatically presumes that person’s eternal life in Christ (Rom. 8:1).
  2. The Great White Throne will not determine whether the person goes to heaven or hell. Appearance before the Great White Throne automatically presumes that person’s eternal condemnation (Jn. 3:18,36).
  3. Everybody born “in Adam” is already slated to appear on the court docket for the Great White Throne.
  4. When a person places their faith in Christ, they are removed from the Great White Throne court docket and remanded to another court for their Final Temporal-Life Examination. For Members of the Church, their court docket is the Judgment Seat of Christ.

## II. Development & Application

- A. “Fruit” is a term which the Lord applies to the external evidence of the internal heart reality (Matt. 12:33-37). “Treasure” is a term the Lord applies to the heart itself (Matt. 6:21).
1. Being precedes doing. Good trees bear good fruit, and bad trees bear bad fruit.
  2. Deeds—especially words—are fully rewarded.
- B. The Judgment Seat of Christ is the venue wherein the Church will be pleased to bend the knee and confess Righteousness and Strength in the Lord (Rom. 14:10-12; Phil. 3:10,11; Isa. 45:23,24).
1. The believer who has the Doctrine of the Judgment Seat of Christ implanted within their soul is equipped to maintain a relaxed mental attitude concerning other believers (Rom. 14:1-4).
  2. Each believer lives for the Lord, and each believer is accountable as such (Rom. 14:7,8).
  3. Each believer will stand and “give a word” to God (Rom. 14:12).
- C. In the Church’s Final Temporal-Life Examination, each believer’s reward—or loss of reward—is established by the kind, quality, or nature of the building materials that each believer uses in edifying their fellow believers (1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 3:12,13).
1. This Judgment is clearly an evaluation of work (ἔργον <sup>#2041</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 3:13<sub>x2</sub>,14,15) and has no bearing on the believer’s salvation (1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 3:15).
  2. Although the work is broken down into six particular building materials (1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 3:12), the consequences of the fire evaluation results in two absolute results.



The Bema “Judgment Seat” of Corinth

- a. Each believer's work will become evident (φανερὸς #5318), shown (δηλώω #1213), revealed (ἀποκαλύπτω #601), and quality tested (ὁποῖος #3697 & δοκιμάζω #1381) (1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 3:13).
  - b. Some believers will have work which remains after the fire evaluation is applied (1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 3:14). Such fire-tested work results in reward (μισθός #3408).
  - c. Some believers will have work which is consumed by the fire evaluation (1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 3:15). Such fire-consumed work results in loss (v.3s.fut.pass.ind. ζημιόω #2210).
  - d. The two absolute results therefore make gold, silver, & precious stones rewardable building materials, and wood, hay, & stubble losable building materials.
3. The two absolute results will be manifest according to the desires of believers' hearts (τὰς βουλὰς τῶν καρδιῶν) when they were undertaking the work of edification (1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 4:4,5).
- D. The Church's Final Temporal-Life Examination places all of our bodily deeds into two absolute categories (2<sup>nd</sup> Cor. 5:6-10).
- 1. The Judgment Seat of Christ culminates the Christian Way of Life for believers who strive to be pleasing to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (2<sup>nd</sup> Cor. 5:9).
  - 2. The Judgment Seat of Christ is a judgment of recompense. κομίζω #2865: *to receive* freq. of recompense (2<sup>nd</sup> Cor. 5:10; Eph. 6:5-9; Col. 3:22-25; Heb. 10:35-39).
  - 3. The standard for reward is an absolute standard of good or bad (2<sup>nd</sup> Cor. 5:10). (ἀγαθός #18 / φαῦλος #5337)
- E. The desires of the heart (1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 4:5) must be understood in light of the contrast between sparingly versus bountifully and grudgingly versus cheerfully (2<sup>nd</sup> Cor. 9:6-8).
- III. Summary & Conclusion—Believers will stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ in one of two different conditions (1<sup>st</sup> Jn. 2:28).
- A. Confidence (παρρησία #3954) brought about through a life of abiding in the Word of God and practicing the abundant life of His righteousness.
  - B. Shame (αἰσχύνω #153) brought about through a life of not abiding in the Word of God and not practicing the abundant life of His righteousness.
  - C. Each believer should desire παρρησία at the παρουσία of Jesus Christ.