

The Judgment Seat of Christ

How Will I Be Judged as a Christian?

When you became a Christian and entered the family of God, you also assumed a role and responsibility in his mission. God has provided you with resources such as the Holy Spirit, the word of God and the local church to grow and participate in his work to expand his kingdom. One day, God will judge your Christian life, using the Bible as his “law book”. You should constantly be preparing for that day where you will be held accountable to Jesus Christ who gave himself for you. This lesson is designed to keep your focus on eternity by detailing your final accountability to Jesus Christ as his servant.

- I One of God’s primary roles and attributes is as the judge of all things.
 - A Every person in history will be judged by God.
Hebrews 9:27, 12:22-23, Proverbs 29:26
 - B God’s judgment of human beings can be classified in two groups: saved and lost.
John 5:25-30, II Timothy 4:1
 - C The lost will be judged for their sin, and will fail this judgment to face an eternity in hell. This event is often called the “Great White Throne Judgment”.
Revelation 20:11-15, Daniel 7:9-10, Matthew 25:41
 - D God judged sin at Calvary when Jesus Christ bore it for mankind. By trusting Jesus as your Saviour, your sins were paid for, and you cannot be judged for them.
Galatians 3:13, I Peter 2:24, II Corinthians 5:21
 - E Your judgment will be for your service to Jesus Christ AFTER you were saved. The Bible refers to this event as “The Judgment Seat of Christ”.
II Corinthians 5:10, Romans 14:10
- II Your WORK will be judged as a servant of Jesus Christ.
 - A The only foundation of life is faith in Jesus Christ.
I Corinthians 3:11

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.
2 Corinthians 5:10

- B God will judge what you build on this foundation by a “fiery trial”. Some works will result in a reward. They are pictured by gold, silver and precious stones, which are purified when passed through a fire. Other works will be destroyed. They are pictured by wood, hay and stubble, which are consumed when passed through a fire.
I Corinthians 3:12-13
- C It is God who does the work through your life. Your service means to yield yourself to his control and leadership and let Jesus live through you.
Philippians 2:13, Galatians 2:20
- D Do not be deceived by appearances. Many people only APPEAR to be servants of Jesus Christ, but the true motives of the heart will be made clear when God judges.
Luke 16:15, Matthew 7:15-20, I Corinthians 4:1-5

THE KEY POINT OF THIS LESSON:

*Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.
1 Corinthians 3:13*

*God will judge your Christian life and the MOTIVE of your service to Jesus Christ. He will “...try every man's work of what SORT (kind) it is”. God is concerned with the purity of your heart attitude first, then your actual “works”. Quality is more important than quantity, and love for Jesus Christ will produce the right kind of actions.
I Corinthians 3:13*

- III There are rewards to be obtained at the Judgment Seat of Christ, evidenced by five crowns mentioned in the New Testament.
I Corinthians 3:14
- A The Crown of Righteousness - II Timothy 4:7-8
The servant's crown - For those who love the appearing of Jesus Christ.
- 1 The Bible closes with, “*Even so, come Lord Jesus.*”
Revelation 22:20
 - 2 Those who serve Jesus Christ should be eagerly awaiting his return. Your overriding desire at all times should be to be with the Lord. But while you wait, stay active in working for him.
Philippians 1:21-24, Matthew 24:42-47, Luke 19:13
- B The Crown of Life - Revelation 2:10
The martyr's crown - For those who give their life for Jesus Christ.
- 1 This is a special crown and reward given to those who lose their lives in direct service to Jesus Christ.
Matthew 16:25, Hebrews 11:35-40

- 2 However, this crown is available to any believer even if they are not martyred for their faith. This same crown is given to those who endure temptation because it requires you to “die to self” to gain victory over sin.
James 1:12, Romans 6:6-11

C The Incorruptible Crown - I Corinthians 9:25

The athlete’s crown - For those who are temperate or balanced in life.

- 1 The context of the passage deals with temperance in physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional matters to be a testimony to others. If athletes train their bodies to master their profession, you should “train” to serve Jesus Christ.
I Corinthians 9:18-27, II Timothy 2:5
- 2 Temperance is a component of the fruit of the Spirit. By walking daily with God, you can allow the Holy Spirit to balance your life.
Galatians 5:22-23, Ephesians 4:22-24
- 3 This is balanced by remembering that some people have infirmities for the purpose of bringing glory to God, and this crown is still available to them.
II Corinthians 12:7-10, John 9:1-7

D The Crown of Rejoicing - I Thessalonians 2:19-20

The soul winner’s crown - For those who lead the lost to Jesus Christ.

- 1 The greatest joy in life is leading others to Jesus Christ. This is called the crown of rejoicing because heaven rejoices when someone gets saved.
Luke 15:7, Philippians 4:1, John 15:8
- 2 It requires wisdom to bring others to the “tree of life” on which Jesus died.
Proverbs 11:30, I Peter 2:24

*For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy.
1 Thessalonians 2:19-20*

E The Crown of Glory - I Peter 5:1-4

The shepherd’s crown - For those who pastor believers in the word of God.

- 1 This is also a special crown; available to those who faithfully occupy the pastoral role in the local church and lead the spiritual lives of God’s people.
Hebrews 13:7, 17

- 2 However, all crowns are available to every believer whether ordained or not. The Bible is clear that all saved people are to be actively ministering the word of God and leading other believers in the faith.
Ephesians 4:11-16, Proverbs 4:5-9

IV There will be negative consequences at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

- A Loss of works. Things you do that do not contribute to God's plan for your life will not abide the fire of his judgment.
I Corinthians 3:15
- B Opportunity loss. Rewards you could have had but lost because of sin or missed opportunities will be revealed. Receiving a FULL reward at the Judgment Seat of Christ should be your goal.
II John 8
- C Personal loss. Some Christians will suffer shame at the Judgment Seat of Christ because they will finally realize just what Jesus Christ did for them, and what they did in return. Disappointing Jesus Christ is perhaps the greatest loss of all.
I John 2:28, Revelation 16:15

V The final result of the Judgment Seat of Christ:

After all the crowns and rewards are obtained, you will have the privilege of presenting them to Jesus Christ. It is his work in your life that enables you to earn the rewards as you yield yourself to his service. Although those rewards are yours, to offer them back will be the ultimate expression of love for him.
Revelation 4:10-11

*The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.
Revelation 4:10-11*

Basic questions you may be asking:

Why should I be concerned about the Judgment Seat of Christ? After all, it is out in the future, and I will be going to heaven anyway. Can't I just take my chances then?

After what Jesus has done for you, how could you disappoint him?

The focus on the return of Jesus Christ is one of the most practical doctrines for everyday living in the Bible. An eternal focus produces earthly benefits. Notice in the following verses how many practical daily character qualities are produced by focusing on the return of Jesus Christ:

- 1 Patience - James 5:7-8, II Thessalonians 3:5
- 2 Peace - I Thessalonians 4:13-18
- 3 Joy - I Thessalonians 2:19
- 4 Holiness - I Thessalonians 3:13, I John 3:1-3
- 5 Confidence - I John 2:28, Philippians 1:6
- 6 Diligence in service - II Timothy 4:1-8
- 7 Righteous living - Titus 2:11-14
- 8 Faith even in difficult times - I Peter 1:5-7

The rewards you receive on earth are all temporal and will go to the grave with you. Rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ are eternal and will never perish.
II Corinthians 4:17-5:4

Do you have any other questions about this subject?

