

Intro: Continue our series today titled “Not My Home” where we are looking at Things To Come! We have been talking about what to expect in our future, and have looked at both the Return of Christ for the church and the Judgment Seat of Christ. This morning I am going to hit the pause button and stay with the Judgment theme for another week because I feel like this is an area many people are unfamiliar with.

Today I want to talk with you about the Doctrine of Rewards. More specifically...when we are rewarded at the Judgment Seat of Christ...WHAT rewards do we get? Last week we talked about “Crowns” and we said that the bible mentions 5 different kinds of Crowns that we might possibly receive...So today we are going to look at each of them.

As we do that, lets look together at a complete understanding of the Doctrine of Rewards in the bible...To begin, remember what we are talking about as we look at the Judgement Seat of Christ:

- **Bema Seat:** 2 Cor 5:9-10 *The judgment of NT believers in Jesus Christ concerning their works. NOT about Salvation. The Bema seat has nothing to do with salvation. For you and I that issue is settled. The Bema Seat is a judgment of REWARDS...not a Judgment of SALVATION.* During the Tribulation (Diagram) And In heaven
- **Great White Throne Judgment:** Rev 20:11-12 *Judgment of everyone that is not a NT Believer or OT faithful follower of God. This IS a judgment of Salvation. All those that do not have a relationship with Christ go here. This is the final judgment, and those not having that relationship are separated from God forever.*

So, now that we know WHERE we are...and WHAT is going to happen, lets take a minute and get an overview.

1. One Goal: To Hear: “Well done, Good and Faithful Servant!”

Every follower of Jesus that I know is hoping...praying...living...for exactly the same thing. We all want to hear it!

In 1 Cor Paul talks about that goal we all have Our Goal; Our Hope!

1 Cor 4:5 *“Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.”*

Matt 25:21: *The master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'*

2. Two Kinds of Works:

When Paul is describing our works being judged by Jesus he talks about two different kinds of works.

1Co 3:13 *“It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work.”*

He talks about the judgement revealing the quality: Lit = Means...*of what kind or sort it is!*

- **Remain: Worthy:** Those that last and stand up to the evaluation that Jesus uses on that day
- **Consumed: Worthless:** Those that don't last...burned up...have no value

You see, it is possible to be working REALLY hard...with the wrong motive...or in the wrong direction...or for the wrong reason...and not be rewarded at all! That is why it is SO important to be in touch with God on a daily basis...am I doing what YOU want...or what I want...or what OTHERS want? Are my motives right...is my heart right...

3. Three Biblical Cautions We Need To Pay Attention To:

When you read the bible as a whole, and study the Doctrine of Rewards, there are three cautions that you find throughout the text of the Scriptures that are important to pay attention to. These are things the biblical authors warn us about as it relates to rewards. There are probably more than this...3 Specific Warnings

- **Partial Reward:** John is warning us to be careful that what we work for isn't lost so that partial reward
2Jo 1:8 *“Watch out that you do not lose what you have worked for, but that you may be rewarded fully.”*
I personally think this is a warning for those that try to live with a foot in both worlds! Not sold out to Jesus, but not sold out to the world either. Trying to walk the fence... Saturday night Party... Sunday Christian...
- **Set Aside:** This is a warning that Paul was concerned about. It speaks to being disqualified for the prize. Keep in mind, Paul isn't saying, I might do something that cost me my relationship with Jesus. That isn't the judgement we are talking about. He is saying...I might do something that disqualifies me to receive the reward! In the race analogy, I break the rules and get disqualified.

1Co 9:27 *“No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.” Lit = to be rejected for the prize*

Illus: You have probably seen the Olympics: Hammer toss, over line, race...handed baton too early or late! They run the race...they even are the first across the line, or throw the farthest...but disqualified: No prize!

- **Shrink Back:** Here Paul is warning us to live in such a way that we are READY For Jesus return, and so that we are excited to stand before Him for Judgment. Notice the way he describes this caution.
1Jo 2:28 *“And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming.”*
Heb 10:30 *“But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but those who believe and are saved.”*

In the context of Heb 10 Paul is talking about Judgment and reward...and he is saying...live so that your reward is ready for you...live so that you have nothing to be ashamed of! Live so you look up in anticipation...not draw back! Live so that your work is not consumed on the day of Judgment because it was about YOU, not HIM!

Illus: Granny Hedgepath was right again! Used to ask...*“Do you want to be doing that....there...if Jesus comes?”*

4. Four Measurements Used in Judgment of Our Works.

As we said last week, God’s judgment is not a random thing. We can easily see at least 4 criteria He will use. We talked about this then so I won’t spend too much time on it, but think in these terms.

- **Prayer:** Did I seek His direction, Guidance, and Help: Am I doing right thing? Have I asked!!!
- **Glory:** Who gets the glory? Am I drawing attention to me...or to Him?
- **Strength:** Who did the work...Did I do it in my own strength...or was my work Him working through me?
- **Motive:** Why do I do what I do? Am I serving God...Myself...Others?

J. Dwight Pentecost “Things To Come” Commentary on 1 Cor 3: and works we do says this....

The apostle is revealing the fact that the examination at the bema of Christ is to determine that which was done by God though the individual and that which the individual did in his own strength; that which was done for the glory of God and that which was done for the glory of the flesh. It can not be determined by outward observation into which class any “work” falls, so that work must be put into the crucible in order that its true character may be proved.”

5. Five Crowns We Could Receive:

With all of that as background...Let’s look at each of the “crowns” the bible talks about...so we grasp our goal! These are the rewards that will stand the test of Judgment...So that we receive the best God has for us...

- **The Incorruptible Crown:** For those that gain mastery over the “old man” (the flesh)
1Cor 9:24-27 *“Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.”*

This is the reward for those that learn to discipline the body...so that we glorify God with it! Speaks to the battles every one of us face with the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life! Some WIN! Rom 7-8

- **The Crown of Rejoicing:** For those that win souls to Jesus for salvation
1 Thess 4:19-20 *“For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you? Indeed, you are our glory and joy.”*

Can you imagine the crown someone like Billy Graham will get! But it’s not limited to people like that. Every single one of us have the opportunity to lead someone to Jesus, help them find their way to eternal life! Let me ask you...Have you ever done that? Have you ever prayed, prepared, shared, and walked with someone giving heart?

- **The Crown of Life:** For those who endure trials in this life beyond the norm
James 1:12 *“Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.”*

This is not just enduring trials. But it is joyfully walking through with God’s help...learning the lesson He has for you, leaning on Him for strength...Counting it all joy...because you KNOW He’s growing you! All have trials: Not same!!!

- **The Crown of Righteousness:** For those that love His appearing!
2Tim 4:8 *“Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day-- and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for (love) his appearing.”*

I think these are the people who live on earth with heaven in mind! The consistently, day by day make the choice to sacrifice the things of this world for the world to come! Opposite of Partial Reward people. They are not living one foot heaven and one earth. They are sold out to heaven! This world is NOT their home! They are passing through! Going all the back to where we began on that first day...they KNOW this place...is just a beach cottage...not home! They are living for eternity...and every day make the choice of righteous living in the eyes of God!

• **The Crown of Glory:** For those willing to feed the flock of God, preaching, teaching discipling others
1Peter 5:2-4 *“Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers-- not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.”*

Some people want to limit this only to Elders/Pastors and Teachers. I believe it is much larger than that. I believe a SS teacher, small group leader, deacon...Mom or a Dad: All of those and MORE are good shepherds to the people of God. Every one of them teaches...every one of them has the opportunity to shepherd. I think this reward is for many different people.

CONCL: So here is the burning question. If Jesus were to return today...and you were caught up to be WITH Him in clouds...knowing that the next item on the agenda is the Judgment Seat of Christ. What reward would you expect?

I can't speak for anyone but myself, but I can confidently say this. I'm not satisfied with where I am...and listen...It's not because I want more glory for myself. It's not because I want to be admired, to be respected, to be seen by others...No

You see...I'm not happy with what I'm going to GET...because I know what I'm going to do with my rewards! We talked about that last week...Along with the Elders in Rev 4, we are going to cast our crowns at the feet of Jesus! Just like the children did this morning...I will have the opportunity to bring my rewards to HIM, and to place them at His feet as an act of worship...and thanksgiving...and blessing. HE will get the glory!

When I pause to think what HE has done for me...The death He died that I might live, the price He paid for MY sin, the unending grace He extends to me every day, the peace He gives in the midst of the storms of life, the joy He pours out in my heart every single day...the blessings I can't even count...

I want to gather every reward possible so that I can cast them at His feet in worship and adoration!

I know people that LIVE for a trophy, that sacrifice for a ring, that give their all for a house or a car, or a boat or a vacation...How pointless is that...

I want to give MY life to something different...something that lasts...And I want that for you as well. I want you to have the opportunity to show Him how much you love Him, to demonstrate your thankfulness...to cast more and more glory at HIS feet...that is a goal worth living for!

So here is my challenge:

1. If you don't know Him...open your heart to Him today...start that relationship
2. If you know Him...are you looking forward to His return...or going to shrink back...not ready?
3. Are you satisfied with what you have to put at His feet....if not...Come to this altar...get on your knees before Him...and ask Him...to help you start storing up treasures in heaven...where thieves can't steal and moths and rust can't corrupt it!
4. Start laying up treasures in heaven.