

Series: "The Crowns"

"What Will I Be Judged On?"

Ephesians 2:8-10

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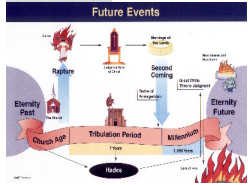
When we started our series two-weeks ago on "The Crowns" we began by talking about this future event that every one of us who are Christians will one day be a part of called:

SLIDE –

- The Believers Judgment
- The Judgment Seat of Christ
- The 'Bema Seat' Judgment

Now this future event will take place in heaven following the rapture (when Christians will be taken up into heaven and given our 'glorified body') as we see by this chart...

SLIDE – End Times Sequence



(I will talk about the chart a little bit...)

We are calling our series **The Crowns**...

...because we are going to find out when we are raptured and get to heaven and stand before Jesus Christ who is the one who will judge us and are participating in this "Believers Judgment" that it is actually like an "Awards Ceremony" where we who have 'run the race' on earth receive our awards/rewards from Jesus Christ for doing so and the Scriptures refer to our awards/rewards as '**CROWNS**'! Can you just imagine...(I will talk about it for a little bit!!!!).

We have noted a few facts about the Judgment Seat of Christ...

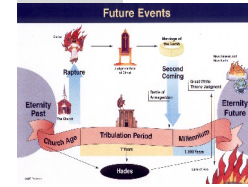
SLIDE –Some FACTS

1. It is for believers only

The UN-believers will be at a different judgment ("The Great White Throne Judgment") that comes at a later date.

Let's take a minute and compare these two different judgments so you can see the difference between them...

SLIDE – End Times Sequence



Let me bring us back to our End Times Sequence map so we can see that they occur at two different times in history.

(I will explain...)

At least 1000 years time difference as to when they will take place.

SLIDE – Some Differences To Be Aware Of

Okay, so the first difference between the **Judgment Seat of Christ** and the **Great White Throne Judgment** is...

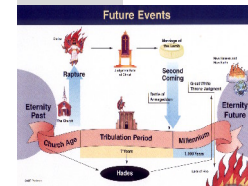
SLIDE – For Believers - For Unbelievers

SLIDE – After the Rapture - After the Millennium

SLIDE – Before the 2nd Coming - After the 2nd Coming

Okay, so you can by way of 'time' see that these two events are different. Let me go back one more time to our End Times map so you can see what we just said...

SLIDE – End Times Sequence



(I will talk about the chart a little bit...)

The last difference we see between these two judgments is...

SLIDE – Determines rewards/ crowns for services done for Christ while on earth - Determines degrees of punishment in Lake of Fire for life-style lived for self while on earth.

The other facts that go along with the Believers Judgment/Bema Seat Judgment are...

SLIDE –

2. It does not determine our entrance into heaven

What we decide to do with Christ while on THIS side of heaven is what determines our entrance into heaven.

SLIDE –

3. It has **NOTHING** to do with punishment for our sins

Our sins have been dealt with by Christ's death on the cross and we will no longer have to pay any punishment for them.

SLIDE –

4. It is for the Lord to evaluate the ministries or services that we have done for Him and give us awards/rewards! CROWNS

Let me also bring this in so you are not led down any false paths in regards to this future event...

When we talk about receiving rewards/awards/crowns many Christians get a bit nervous and squeamish. They say, "*Salvation is by grace through faith. That is what brings salvation. We shouldn't be concerned about works. In fact, when we talk about works we jumble up good theology and steer people in a wrong direction!*"

I understand the concern because we never want to give the impression that works or the amount of works done while we are on earth SAVES us from our sins...but for lack of a better phrase let me use it here so you can get the idea, "*We shouldn't throw out the baby with the bath water.*" I.e. - Both theologies are taught in the scriptures and should also be taught by us. **We just can't over-emphasize one over the other.** They are perfectly balanced.

We are saved by grace alone through faith alone in that God provided Jesus Christ as the substitute and atonement for our sin. In faith, I trust Christ's sacrifice to remove my sin. Now...because God wants other people to see how glorious He is...He constructs situations for every believer to allow us to 'do' a good work which will turn heads to God and bring other people to wonder about this God of ours and hopefully they will want to / they will crave for their sins to be forgiven so they can know Christ as their Savior and bring Him glory too!

Let me see if I can explain it this way...

SLIDE –Scales

We get saved by grace alone through faith alone = Salvation!
But...

SLIDE –2nd Scales

...when I do get saved by grace alone through faith alone God creates ways for my salvation to be displayed = works!

Please note:

SLIDE –Scales

Salvation always comes first!

SLIDE –2nd Scales

...then works that display that I am saved.
It is never reversed. It is always...

SLIDE –Scales

Salvation by grace alone through faith alone! Then...

SLIDE –2nd Scales

...works that display that I am saved.
And they always keep in perfect balance with each other!

One additional point here that we all must understand in order to stay humble through all of this...and let me illustrate it by using this verse...Ephesians 2:8-10

SLIDE – Pew Bible Pg. 1157

Take your Bibles, please and open them to the New Testament book of Ephesians 2. If you didn't bring your Bible with you today I would encourage you to reach forward and grab that burgundy colored Bible and turn to page 1157. (1st Service – Video Café – Raise hands for a Bible and someone will come by and hand you one! Keep it up!)

It is here that we see the Apostle Paul teaching us this balance between salvation and works yet always teaching us that salvation is the core element with works simply following and displaying that I have received salvation. Look at it with me...

SLIDE –Ephesians 2:8-10

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Salvation first! No doubts about it! Then works...which we really can't take credit for anyways because it is God that prepared them in advance so we could do them! Do you get it?

Here is another verse to explain it...

SLIDE –Philippians 2:12-13

Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose.

The salvation comes first...then God works in us by creating both a desire and a work for us to do...then we do it...then we accomplish His purpose!

Let me give you a diagram as to how this works...

SLIDE –Diagram with arrows

- Saved by grace
- God creates the good works for me to do
- I do the good works He created for me to do
- People see them and glorify Him
- People get saved....repeats....

Let me put it together for you in a verse from Matthew...

SLIDE –Matthew 5:16

Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

So the next time you do something for the Lord...stop to see if you can figure out how He set it all up so you could do it.

- Did He have to move the person you got to do a good deed for from California? And how long ago did He do that? And what circumstances did He use to get the person to move here?
- Or did He have to move you here?

- Or did He have to get you laid off of your last job so you could witness so someone on this job?
- Or did He...get the picture?

It is God who works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure which He set up beforehand so we could even do it and that people would see Jesus Christ and trust Him as their Savior!

Nothing of which to boast of! All of which to just do!

Okay, so the day appears! The rapture happens and I am going up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air! The next event to take place will be the Judgment Seat of Christ!

SLIDE – What Materials Will I Be Judged On At The Judgment Seat Of Christ?

- What type of works, things, actions, or attitudes will I be held accountable for when I see Jesus Christ face-to-face?
- When at the Bema Judgment - what can I be doing here on earth so as to know that I will get some crowns when I get to heaven?
- Just what should I be focusing on while I have the opportunity here on earth so I know I will receive some crowns when I get to heaven?

I have a dozen to share with you today...and we will go rather fast as I give them to you. They are not difficult to understand and I have given you Bible verses to take home and look up if you would like to see some elaboration on them.

Material #1 -

SLIDE – Material #1 -

How we treat other believers

James 3:9-10 says, “With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be.”

SLIDE – Hebrews 6:10

God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them.

SLIDE – Material #2 -

How accurately we teach the Scriptures

James 3:1 says, “Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.”

SLIDE – Material #3 -

How we exercise our authority over others

Colossians 4:1 says, “Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven.”

SLIDE – Material #4 -

How we follow those in authority over us

Colossians 3:23 says, “Servants, whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward.”

SLIDE – Material #5 -

How we use our money

SLIDE –

I Timothy 6:17-19 says, “Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.”

SLIDE – Material #6 -

How we use our time

Psalms 90:12 says, “Teach us to number our days aright.”

SLIDE – Material #7 -

How well we endure trials

James 1:12 says, “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.”

SLIDE – Material #8 -

How well we run our race

Hebrews 12:1 says, “Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.”

SLIDE – Material #9 -

How effectively we discipline our flesh

I Corinthians 9:25 says, “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.”

SLIDE – Material #10 -

How many we share the gospel with

I Thessalonians 2:19-20 says, “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?”

SLIDE – Material #11 -

How long we stay at it

SLIDE –

II Timothy 4:7-8 says, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 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 his appearing.”

SLIDE – Material #12 -

How we use our God-given abilities & gifts

Recall the story Christ told in Matthew 25 of the 3 men He gave ‘talents’ to? He went away and came back and two had invested their talents and one had not invested. This is what He said to the two...

SLIDE –

Matthew 25:21 says, “His 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!’”

You see, the question isn't "Will we really appear before Christ one day to receive awards/rewards/crowns for how we have managed our life while we are on earth?"

The question is, "Am I aware of what it is I will be judged on as I stand before Christ one day? And will I strive while I am on earth to live for Jesus Christ as He asks me to so that I will glorify Him and be use to turn others to a personal relationship with Him?"

How are you doing? It really is a fair question to ask. In fact, as we go into communion just following this message it seemed to be a question the people of Biblical times asked each time they served communion with each other. Check this out...

SLIDE –

Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself.

SLIDE –

That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment. When we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world.

Folks, we are supposed to be examining ourselves on a regular basis so we will have those CROWNS given to us at the Judgment Seat of Christ and will be able to turn around as we learned in Revelation 4:10 and cast our crowns as a manner of worship before Jesus Christ our Lord!

Now...go earn the rewards!

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