

“...walk worthily...” from the Book of Philipians

Scripture Block: Pp 1:1-11

Theme: GOD’S EXPECTATION OF FRUITFUL SERVICE

Life verse: Pp 1:9-11

Today’s passage: Pp 1:10

Notes Comments

Verse 10 brings up the concept of “the day of Christ” , and so our goal for today is to briefly develop this concept.

1. The “day of Christ” is a reference to the future evaluation of every believer (Rm 14:12, 2Cr 5:10). Making use of the terminology in these verses, this future evaluation is often referred to as the “Judgment Seat of Christ.”

2. The time of this judgment is most likely after the rapture of the Church and before the 2nd Coming of Christ.¹

3. What’s at stake for the believer at the Judgment Seat of Christ? It is not condemnation for sin, for there is now no condemnation for the child of God (Rm 8:1). Instead, as 1 Cor 3:11-f makes clear, at stake for the believer is the issue of eternal rewards—and these dependent upon the type of life that is built upon the foundation of Jesus Christ’s saving work. Stated another way by combining the truths in 1Cr 3:14-15 and Mt 25:21, some believers are going to hear “Well done my good and faithful servant”, and some are not!

4. Although we are not going to go any deeper into this concept at the moment, the Biblical truths associated with rewards are very important, and help us to rightly understand the tension that exists between the ease with which a person can enter the family of God, and the demands of the Christian Way of Life.

- For some make a fruitful life the test of salvation; and yet the concepts of 1 Cr 3:15, the many warning passages throughout Scripture², and the truth of eternal security all combine to make this approach untenable, as it is really a salvation by works.

¹ The purpose of this judgment is related to rewards. We know from Rv 19:8 that believers have received a garment commensurate with rewards by the time of the Wedding Feast of the Lamb, just before Christ’s return, and thus the assumption the Judgment Seat of Christ occurs right after the rapture.

² Eph 4:17 is just one example of the many “warning passages” found throughout the Scriptures. These passages are clearly directed towards believers and warn them not to do something—in fact in the Eph 4:17 passage, the grammar is actually indicating this is something believer’s should stop doing. These passages have no real meaning unless the threat of failure to live uprightly is real!

- On the other hand, a justification without works is a negative testimony (Jas 2), a squandering of what God has done and provided, and will lead to consequences at the Judgment Seat of Christ.
- The Biblical truth of rewards can help us to make sense out of this and tie the two together. In short, we have a secure salvation, but how we live matters, and will have consequences both in time (with respect to our relationship with God) and at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

5. I would like to conclude with what you might find to be a surprising comment: the concept of Biblical rewards, rightly understood, will lead to the reinforcement of grace! Perhaps your immediate response is, “That’s not true, because I am working for rewards.” If you don’t see grace in the concept of rewards, then it is because you think of rewards as getting what you deserve. Lk 17: 7-10 is a very interesting parable, which makes it clear that “what we deserve” for a life of obedience is—nothing. After all, God is the Sovereign of the universe, and we are his subjects—obedience is what we should do—nothing more, nothing less. However, that is not the way God has set up his plan for his children. Consider just a few things: God has given each of us a spiritual gift(s)(Eph 4:7), he has planned deeds for us to do (Eph 2:10), he then enables us with His Spirit (Rm 8:4), and then has decided to reward us for doing the those things which he has planned, gifted and enabled us to do (2Tm 4:7-8)—that’s grace! He makes all the provision and we receive the blessing. We are loved by a truly awesome God!