Sunday, January 26, 2014—The Judgment Seat of Christ—The JSC: The Core Pauline Texts, II Corinthians 5:9-11

## **Introduction/Review**

- In the previous study we continued our series on the JSC by beginning to study the Pauline texts where the JSC is specifically mentioned. Following the order these references appear in Scripture we considered Romans 14:10-12 first.
- After a study of the context we noted the following key points regarding the JSC in Romans 14.
- Romans 14:10—since the weak believer and the strong believer are both brothers in Christ, Paul addresses one question to each group. According to verse 10, this type of behavior within the body of Christ is inappropriate because all believers will stand before the JSC.
- Romans 14:11—Paul quotes Isaiah 45:23 to solidify the general principle that God holds men accountable for their actions.
- Romans 14:12—the expression "so then" indicates the consequence of what was just said. Every one of us will have to give account of himself to God because we will all appear before the JSC. Please not the following important aspects of this verse:
  - Every believer will have the responsibility of giving an account regarding him or herself.
  - This account will be about and represent the individual believer and no one else.
  - The English word "account" carries the following relevant meaning according to *Webster's 1828 Dictionary*: an assignment of reasons; explanation by a recital of particular transactions, given by a person in an employment, or to a superior, often implying responsibility.
  - This account will be made before the Lord Jesus Christ.
- With these points in mind we want to shift our focus and consider the other Pauline text where the JSC is specifically mentioned, II Corinthians 5:9-11.

## II Corinthians 5:10

- II Corinthians 5:1-8—in the context Paul is discussing some things regarding the glorified body that has been promised to all members of the body of Christ.
- II Corinthians 5:1—the believers in Corinth knew that when their earthly tabernacle (body) gave out they have a house not made with hands (glorified body) that is eternal in the heavens waiting for them.
  - I Corinthians 15:51-53

- II Corinthians 5:2—while we are present in our current body we desire to be in "our house which is from heaven."
- II Corinthians 5:3-4—the reason we desire to be clothed with "our house which is from heaven" is so that we are not found "naked." As a believer would you rather walk through the halls of death or live to see the catching up of the church? If death should come before the church is caught up to meet the Lord in the air, believers are found naked in the sense that our soul and spirit do not have a body to inhabit. Our body is placed in the grave and our soul and spirit go to be with the Lord. We would all prefer be in the category of "those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord."
  - Genesis 35:18—the Bible defines death as the soul departing the body.
- II Corinthians 5:5—the Holy Spirit has been given to the believer as a security deposit (earnest deposit) of these truths.
  - Ephesians 1:13-14—the sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit is the "earnest of our inheritance."
- II Corinthians 5:6—our confidence that God will do what he said, stems from having been given the "earnest of the Spirit" at the end of verse 5. What are we confident of? That while we are present in this body we are absent from the Lord.
- II Corinthians 5:8—while we would rather not be found naked, we are confident and willing to be found in such a state because if we are absent from our body we will be present with the Lord.
- II Corinthians 5:9—"wherefore we labour" i.e., on the basis of all that has gone before. Why do we labor? So that whether we are "present" or "absent" we may be "accepted of him." Notice that this verse is not speaking about being accepted "in him" but "of him."
- The English word "accepted" means: "kindly received; regarded; agreed to; understood; received as a bill of exchange," according to *Webster's 1828 Dictionary*. The underlying Greek word appears 9 times in the New Testament and means well pleasing or acceptable.
  - Romans 12:1-2—"acceptable" 2x
  - Romans 14:18—"acceptable"
  - Ephesians 5:10—"acceptable"
  - Philippians 4:18—"well pleasing"
  - Colossians 3:20—"well pleasing"
- II Corinthians 5:9—whether "present" with Christ or "absent" and at home in our bodies believers are supposed to be following after thoughts, attitudes, and actions that are "acceptable" and "well pleasing" unto the Lord. Why?

- II Corinthians 5:10—the reason we labor to be "accepted of him" in verse 9 is because "we all must appear before the judgment seat of Christ," in verse 10. Please note once again that every believer must do this.
  - Romans 14:10—"... for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ."
- Appear—the same Greek word is translated "manifest" twice in verse 11. We need to understand the meaning of these words in order to understand what is being taught in II Cor. 5:10.
  - <u>Appear</u>—comes from the Latin word *appareo* which means "to appear, or be manifest." *Webster's 1828 Dictionary* presents the following relevant meanings: 1) To come or be in sight; to be in view; to be visible. 3) To stand in presence of, as parties or advocates before a court, or as persons to be tried.
  - <u>Manifest</u>—"plain, open, clearly visible to the eye or obvious to the understanding; apparent; not obscure or difficult to be seen or understood." (*Webster's 1828*)
    - Romans 16:26
    - I Corinthians 4:5
    - Colossians 1:26
- The idea here is that every believer will be laid bare, disclosed, or made fully known. This will be a time when the totality of our life and service for Christ will be made manifest and thoroughly evaluated by Christ. Once again this will take place at the JSC before which all believers must appear.
- Receive—why must we all appear before the JSC? So that "every one may receive the things done in his body." In this context, the word "receive" means to collect compensation, wages, or proper reward for the things done in the body. The idea of receiving here in verse 11 harkens back to verse 9 where Paul tells the Corinthians to "labor" so as to be "accepted of him." The second definition of "receive" according to *Webster's 1828 Dictionary* is "to take as due or as a reward. He received the money on the day it was payable. He received ample compensation."
- According to—the compensation we receive will be "according to" what we have done in our bodies. This applies to the good we have done as well as the bad. The body is the agent or instrument through which the doing takes place. In other words, the inception and source of what one does through the body is initiated in the mind.
  - Ephesians 6:8
  - Colossians 3:25
- II Corinthians 5:11—this is a hard verse for a lot of people to grasp, especially grace people because it doesn't seem to fit with our understanding of the Grace Message. The Greek word

translated "terror" in this verse occurs 47 times in the New Testament. It is translated "fear" 41 times and "terror" 3 times.

- Luke 2:9—"were sore afraid"
- Romans 13:3—"For rulers are not a terror"
- Ephesians 5:21—"in the fear of God"
- Ephesians 6:5—" with fear and trembling"
- Philippians 2:12—"work out your own salvation with fear and trembling"
- *Webster's 1828 Dictionary* defines "terror" as: 1) extreme fear; violent dread; fright; fear that agitates the body and mind. 2) that which may excite dread; the cause of extreme fear. The basic meaning to the word "terror" found in II Cor. 5:11 to be afraid or that which makes afraid.
- II Corinthians 5:11—did Paul know the "terror" of the Lord? Paul knew firsthand the fear that being in the presence of Christ produced?
  - Acts 9:1-8—the word translated "trembling" in verse 6 is translated "afraid" in II Peter 2:10.
- Psalm 111:10; Proverbs 1:7, 9:10—"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom. . ." Even as believers we are often full of pride, self-confidence, and sometimes arrogance. The notion of being laid bare before our savior at the JSC ought to make us appreciate our own nothingness and the greatness of God and produce a realization that what we do now in the flesh as believers matters in eternity.
- II Corinthians 5:11—Paul is using his firsthand knowledge of having been afraid in the presence of Christ as well as the fact that all believers will "appear" before the JSC, to persuade the Corinthians to labor so that we may be accepted of Christ.
- Pastor C.R. Stam uses the illustration of being invited to the White House for a State dinner. The fear and trembling that would occupancy such an occasion would not spring from fear over what the president might do to you but from an appropriate respect given the grandeur of the situation.
- Thus far we have observed the following four truths regarding the JSC. All believers will:
  - Stand before the JSC(Rom. 14:10)
  - Appear before the JSC (II Cor. 5:10)
  - Give account of themselves (Rom. 14:12)
  - Receive for the things done in the body (II Cor. 5:10)