Sunday, March 9, 2014—The Judgment Seat of Christ—The JSC: Scriptural Principles Regarding Rewards

## **Introduction**

- In our last study we looked at some basic things regarding reward and loss at the JSC in I Corinthians 3:14-15.
- I Corinthians 3:14—a believer whose workmanship in building upon Paul's foundation that "abides" (to remain or endure) the trial by fire in verse 15 will be rewarded here in verse 14. According to *Webster's 1828 Dictionary* the English word "reward" carries the following meaning: recompense, or equivalent return for good done, for kindness, for services and the like. Rewards may consist of money, goods or any return of kindness or happiness. Of the six "sorts" or qualities of workmanship mentioned in verse 12 only three will "abide" a trial by fire: gold, silver, and precious stones.
- I Corinthians 3:15—a believer whose workmanship in building upon Paul's foundation that is "burned" (consumed with fire) by the trial by fire at the JSC will "suffer loss." It is loss of reward that is suffered here at the JSC not loss of salvation. Of the six "sorts" or qualities of workmanship mentioned in verse 12 three would be "burned:" wood, hay, and stubble.
- There are two possible outcomes of the JSC:
  - Loss of Reward
  - Reward Bestowed
- At the end of last week's message we discussed the possibility that believers can in the here and now determine the outcome that will be revealed by fire at the JSC by choosing to function by faith in God's Word on the basis of a renewed mind now. We did this by comparing Romans 12:1-2 and I Corinthians 3:15.
- Romans 12:1—Paul beseeches the Romans to present their bodies a living sacrifice holy and acceptable unto God.
  - II Corinthians 5:9-10—Paul instructs the Corinthians to labour in such a way so as to be "accepted of him." The reason we labor so as to be "accepted of him" is because we will all "appear before the JSC" and receive the things done in our bodies whether it be good or bad.
- Romans 12:2—the Romans are told to be transformed by the renewing of their minds that they might prove "what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." The Greek word translated "prove" in verse 2 is the same Greek work translated "try" in I Corinthians 3:13. The fire tries the believer's work of what "sort" it is.

- Try (I Cor. 3:13)—2) to **prove by a test**; as, to try weights and measures by a standard; to try one's opinions by the divine oracles. (*Webster's 1828 Dictionary*)
- Prove (Rom. 12:2)—1) to try; to ascertain some unknown quality or truth by an experiment, or by a test or standard. Thus we prove the strength of gunpowder by experiment; we prove the strength or solidity of cannon by experiment. (*Webster's 1828 Dictionary*)
- The fire at the JSC tries the "sort" of a man's work: gold, silver, precious stones. A renewed mind is capable of discerning between the good, acceptable, and perfect. Could it be that believes are able to determine the "sort" of work that will revealed by the fire at the JSC by choosing to function with a renewed mind now?
  - Gold—the good
  - Silver—the acceptable
  - Precious Stones—the perfect

## **Scriptural Principles Regarding Rewards**

- <u>Important Note</u>: Paul always uses the term "reward" (singular) and never the term "rewards" (plural). The plural form sounds more natural to the ear so I will often say "rewards" but please keep in mind that Paul uses only the singular form of the word.
- *Principle 1*—there is a difference between inheritance and reward. In earthly terms, an inheritance is received based upon two factors: 1) who your parents are, 2) their wealth not what you do. Rewards are handed out any one meeting the conditions or requirements regardless of who your parents are.
  - Inheritance—An estate derived from an ancestor to an heir by succession or in course of law; or an estate which the law casts on a child or other person, as the representative of the deceased ancestor. 1) The reception of an estate by hereditary right, or the descent by which an estate or title is cast on the heir; as, the heir received the estate by inheritance.
    2) The estate or possession which may descend to an heir, though it has not descended. (*Webster's 1828 Dictionary*)
    - Ephesians 1:11-14—all believers have obtained an inheritance and have been given the indwelling Holy Spirit as the "earnest" or down payment of "our inheritance."
    - Romans 8:17—the current controversy over this verse stems from confusing the issue of inheritance and reward.
  - Reward—To give in return, either good or evil. Hence, when good is returned for good, reward signifies to repay, to recompense, to compensate. When evil or suffering is return

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for injury or wickedness, reward signifies to punish with just retribution, to take vengeance on, according to the nature of the case. (*Webster's 1828 Dictionary*)

- I Corinthians 3:14
- *Principle 2*—a man reaps what he sows.
  - Galatians 6:7-9—if saints could get away with bad behavior, the justice of God would be mocked.
- *Principle 3*—rewards are simply payment or recompense for a man's labor.
  - 1Corinthians 3:8—rewards are given in response to a man's labor
  - o 1Timothy 5:18—rewards are given in response to a man's labor
- *Principle 4*—rewards are reckoned as a matter of debt.
  - Romans 4:4—rewards are reckoned not of grace but debt they are earned. One can be entitled to a reward. A man determines what his reward will be because he chooses his work.
    - Romans 11:6—grace and works are opposites
  - Romans 4:4—rewards are not reckoned of grace—rewards must be reckoned according to works. This helps explain how a belier can "be saved yet so as by fire" at the JSC. Justification is a free gift of God's grace no of works whereas reward at the JSC is based upon one's workmanship in building upon Paul's foundation.
- *Principle 5*—rewards are given for bad works.
  - Luke 23:41—punishment for evil deeds is a reward.
  - II Timothy 4:14—a reward can be a bad thing
    - I Timothy 1:19-20—Alexander is a saint
- *Principle 6*—rewards are reckoned on the basis of works.
  - I Corinthians 3:13—"Every man's work shall be made manifest"
  - I Corinthians 3:14—"If any man's work abide"
  - I Corinthians 3:15—"If any man's work shall be burned"
- *Principle 7*—a believer's good works are fruit for which they will receive a reward.
  - Titus 3:14—maintain good works so that you are not unfruitful
  - Colossians 1:10—be fruitful in every good work