

Parson to Person
2 Corinthians 5 – Part 4
(The Judgment Seat of Christ)

“For we must all appear before the [bema] judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad” (2 Corinthians 5:10 NKJV).

Many Christians have been taught that in the nearing future, every Church-Age believer will *“appear before the judgment seat of Christ”* (*“bema”*) in order to experience an evaluation of the *“good”* or *“bad”* he or she has done. I get it! For as we see in the text above, the position could make perfect sense. However, I have taught that whenever *“the plain sense makes the most sense, we should seek no other sense,”* but in this case, I believe, a closer look is required.

It makes no sense that the believer should be anticipating any *“bad”* being remembered. Moreover, condemnation—no way!

No Future Condemnatory Judgment

It is my position that there will be no God-inflicted remembrance of sin, shame, punishment, or any kind of punitive damage suffered by believers, whether it be after death, after the Rapture, or at any other time in the post-mortal future. Therefore, I intend to take a little time to address this critical subject.

On the Judgment Seat of Christ

In an effort to help define the particulars, the following questions must be answered:

- 1) Does the *“bema”* (judgment seat) occur just after the Rapture?
- 2) Is the *“bema”* a believer-only judgment?

- 3) Should the “bema” be thought to be exclusively a place of rewards?
- 4) Will punitive judgment be experienced by believers who receive a condemnatory evaluation at the “bema”?
- 5) Is the “bema” exclusive to Church Age believers?
- 6) Why would the “bema” exclude Old Testament, Tribulation, and/or Millennial-Age saints?
- 7) Are believers who have previously died during the Church Age waiting for their “day in court”?
- 8) Is the “bema” strictly non-condemnatory?
- 9) Should the threat of an evaluatory judgment motivate a believer’s personal performance?
- 10) Will the believer’s works will be “tried by fire” at the “bema”?
- 11) Will the believer’s works merit reward?
- 12) Will believers appear at “The Great White Throne Judgment”?
- 13) Will believers be compared to one another and shamed for earthly shortcoming and error?
- 14) Is a “bema” needed in order to expose the believer to shortcoming and error?
- 15) Are believers accountable to the Lord?
- 16) Does God chasten those He loves?
- 17) If Jesus declares the forgiveness of the believer’s sin and declares that He will remember those sins no more, should we think that we have a future evaluation of the “*bad*” we have done?
- 18) Does the thought of standing before the Lord for an evaluation of “*good*” and “*bad*” generate comfort in the believer?
- 19) Was Paul afraid to go to heaven—because of the “*bema*”?
- 20) Should believers be excited about seeing Jesus face to face?

It is my goal to answer these and many other questions. I trust the fruit of this study will change your life!

“Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. We love Him because He first loved us” (1 John 4:17–19).

I love you all,
Pastor Paul