

April 21, 2024

## *The Bema seat.. 2 Cor. 5:10*

Last week we learned that there is just ONE fundamental deed that distinguishes ...the sheep... from ...the goats...

*...as many as received [Jesus], to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His Name...>>***John 1:12**

The result of this ONE deed is explained in 1 John 5:12  
He who has the Son has Life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have Life... **Rom. 8:1**

This morning we will begin to parse **2 Corinthians 5:10**  
*...we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or bad.*

*...we must all appear...>>*

The certainty of this day is proven by the resurrection of Jesus  
Therefore, we read Paul's instruction in 1 Thess 5:6>> ...let us be alert and sober...before the judgment seat of Christ...

When we read ...the judgment seat of Christ... in the Greek we read ...Tou bemos tou Christou... The words ...judgment seat... are the English translation of the Greek word bema.

What was the bema in Paul's day? The bema was a raised platform upon which a judge sat to render a judgment concerning the case before him.

For instance, both Jesus and Paul were brought before a bema

John 19:13 Therefore when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out, and sat down on the judgment seat...

Acts 18:12 But while Gallio was proconsul... the Jews ...brought [Paul] before the [bema] judgment seat...

These were judicial proceedings. But this was not the only function of the bema. The bema was also the place for judging athletic events.

When Paul used bema, how would the Greek and Roman believers understand his reference.

By the time of these epistles, the Olympic games were being held every four years in honor of the god Zeus.

At the end of the games, the athletes came before the bema to receive the reward of his crown [wreath] from the judge.

The ultimate goal of these games was the honor that Zeus received through the rewards given to the athletics.

With this in mind, in 2 Cor. 5:10, Paul reminds us that Jesus, ...the Righteous Judge [2 Tim.4:8]..., will gather us at the heavenly bema to evaluate our ...deeds... as the evidence of how we ran the ...race... for the purpose of giving out rewards

Listen to Paul's attitude about this heavenly event.

**2 Tim. 4:7-8** *...I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course [...race...], I have kept the faith; 8 in the future there is laid up 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 loved His appearing...*

Let's notice a couple of things Paul says in these two verses.

1st Paul says that he has *...fought the good fight, [and has] finished the course [...race...], I have kept the faith...*

How can Paul be so confident? When I think of standing before Jesus, I am nervous. I know me too well...

Let's look at two passages to understand Paul's confidence.

The Source of Paul's confidence:

**2 Cor 3:4-6** *Such confidence we have through Christ toward God. 5 Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God, 6 Who also made us adequate [in Christ] as servants of a new covenant...*

The result of Paul's confidence in Christ:

**Phil. 3:7-15** ...I have counted things as loss for the sake of Christ. 8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, 9 and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; 11 in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. 12 Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Next week we will be looking at the identify and purpose of our Divine Judge and at why our deeds are so important to Him>>