

A Rewarding Life, Lesson 4, April 19, 2020

- We are going to be focusing that day of judgment and I'm going to be painting you a picture of what that day will be like.
- How disappointed would you be to come to the end of your life and realize that you had not lived it right or according to what Jesus wanted?
- This is a legitimate concern; we find even such a committed individual as the Apostle Paul concerned for himself on this issue: **I Cor. 9:26-27**
- Before we take a critical look at how we are currently running the race we need to look ahead and get view of the awards ceremony at the end of the race: **Begin with the end in view.**

1. What will it be like?

- "That Day" as it is called in Scripture will be, according to the Bible, much like the awards ceremony at the end of a race in the ancient Greek culture.
- First of all, the ancient awards ceremony had a judge
 - Likewise, our rewards ceremony will have a **Judge**---who will it be? **Jn. 5:22**
- Secondly, the Greek awards ceremony had a seat called the bema it was where the judge sat.
- **Rom. 14:10, 12**
- A Third thing we need to see is that just as the individual runner would stand before the bema at the end of a race, so will we stand individually and give a report for all the things we've done in this life. **II Cor. 5:10**

2. Paul speaks of that event, the most thoroughly in I Cor. 3:10-15, here he likens the work we have done in this life to a building.

- **V. 10-11**
- **V. 12-13** -- First purpose of the bema is to **show** → key words: "become clear, declare, revealed"
- **V. 13b-15** -- Second purpose is to **test**
- Another thing: **you** aren't being tested, neither is your destination, only your works.
- Your works will endure like gold, silver, and precious stones
- Or Your works will be burned up like straw and none will remain no matter how sensible, enjoyable, or religious those works may have seemed to you while you were alive.

3. Let's take a moment to really get a grasp of what that day will be like by comparing two believers' experiences on that day.

- One is a high ranking church official (pastor, someone over many churches or a large ministry)
- Second is a blue collar worker with a high school education.
- All their works are piled up and put the fire test --- **Which one will receive the most reward?**
- **The answer**: there is no way to completely know before that day! **I Cor. 4:5**
- Only after the fire test will we really know how a person's life has added up for eternity.

4. So what will cause a work, our work to either endure or be burned at the bema seat?

- First of all, we must understand that Jesus will not only judge what we do, but also how and why we did it.
- Don't be fooled into thinking that if we fix the "what" part of what we do we're O.K.

5. There are 3 tests that for our purposes we'll call the "Gold Standard" that will help us evaluate whether the work we do for God will endure.

1. The Test of Relationship --- **Jn. 15:5, I Jn. 2:28** The Christian life is not so much what you do as it is whose you are.
 - Bottom line for the reason Jesus saved you is so that you could be HIS.
2. The Test of Motives --- **Mt. 6:1** Notice, even "religious" activity is worthless if our motive is to build up our egos or reputations.
3. The Test of Love --- **Lk. 6:35, I Cor. 13:3** True good works are focused on improving the wellbeing of another.

These Tests reveal that we simply cannot judge others lives, but we can and should evaluate our own.