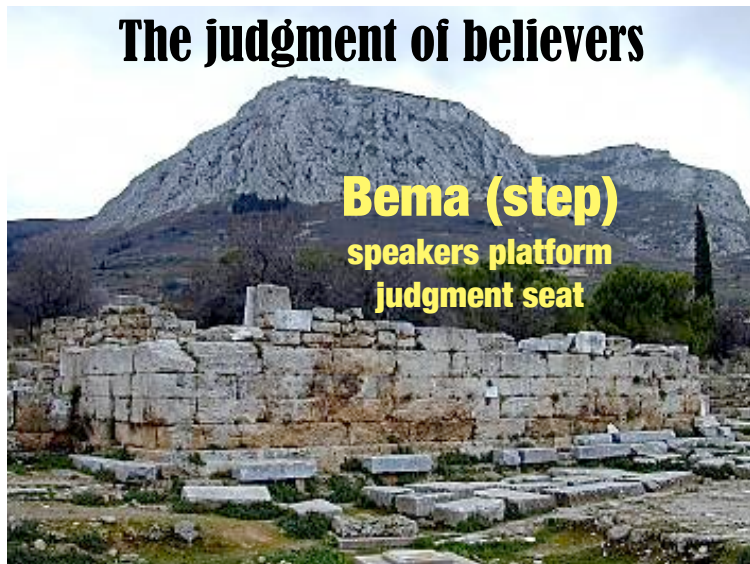


# The judgment of believers



**Eternal judgment is among the elementary foundations of Christian faith.**

## *Hebrews 6*

“<sup>1</sup> Therefore leaving the **elementary teaching** about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, <sup>2</sup> of instruction about washings, and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead, and **eternal judgment.**”

## *Romans 14*

“<sup>10</sup> But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For **we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God.** <sup>11</sup> For it is written, “As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall give praise to God.” <sup>12</sup> So then **each one of us shall give account of himself to God.**”

## *2 Corinthians 5:10*

“For **we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ**, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”

## ***But aren't believers exempt?***

### *John 5:24*

“truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and **does not come into judgment**, but has passed out of death into life.”

### *1 Corinthians 1:18*

“For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved **it is the power of God.**”

## ***Yes, but what about***

### *Romans 2*

“<sup>6</sup> **who will render to each person according to his deeds:** <sup>7</sup> to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life, <sup>8</sup> but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation.”

“<sup>13</sup> for it is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but **the doers of the Law will be justified.**”

## ***But in the next chapter Paul says:***

### *Romans 3*

“<sup>26</sup> for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and **the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.**”

“<sup>28</sup> For we maintain that **a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.**”

### *Romans 4:5*

“But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him **who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness,**”



## But then again in ch.8 we read

### Romans 8

“<sup>5</sup> . . . He condemned sin in the flesh, <sup>4</sup> in order that **the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us**, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.”

“<sup>12</sup> So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh – <sup>13</sup> for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but **if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.**”

## Three observations

1. **Paul is clear that Christians are justified by faith apart from works.**
2. **The Bible also teaches that all (including Christians) will be judged by works.**
3. **The Holy Spirit empowers us to live a godly life.**

## Three different explanations

1. **Both observations are true & constitute a paradox.**
2. **True faith will produce the works required.**
3. **The judgment texts are misunderstood.**
  - Some of them are a part of a hypothetical argument.
  - Some of them refer to rewards other than eternal life.

## Three sources of hope at the final judgment

1. **Dismissal** - Remove the standard of holiness so that there is no offense.
  - A loving God would never condemn anyone.
2. **Empowerment** - Enable believers to meet the standard by the power of the Holy Spirit.
  - The Holy Spirit empowers true believers to fulfill the Law.
3. **Redemption** - Fulfill the requirements **FOR** the believer (outside their personal behavior).
  - Jesus redeemed us from the curse of the Law.

**Our hope is not in the Law or the Holy Spirit but in the Cross and Resurrection of Christ.**

### Hebrews 7:18-19

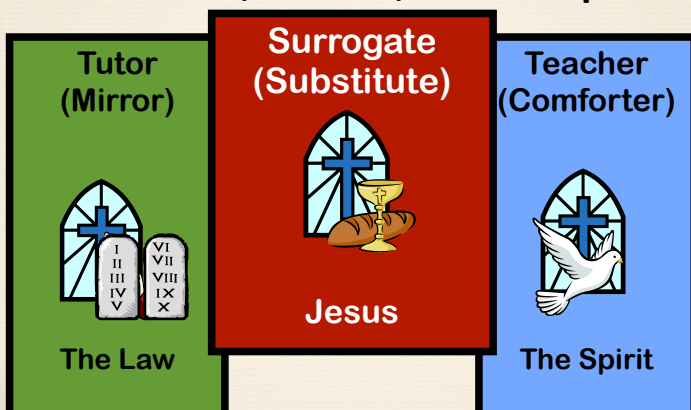
“For, on the one hand, there is a setting aside of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness (for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of **a better hope**, through which we draw near to God.”

## Contrast

**Our better hope is in Jesus' life and death FOR us not in the Law fulfilled THROUGH us by the Holy Spirit.**



**Don't confuse the ministries of the Law, the Son, and the Spirit.**



**Seven reasons why the texts concerning the judgment of Christians are misunderstood.**

### Logical reasons

1. **Who can stand before the perfect standard of God's holy nature, even in the power of the Spirit?**
2. **How good must a person be and for how long?**
3. **In what sense is the Gospel good news if we are on parole?**
4. **How is this different from Judaism, or Roman Catholicism?**

### Theological reasons

5. **Our Redeemer is Christ not the Holy Spirit?**
6. **In what sense did Christ fulfill the Law and we die to the Law?**
7. **How do we explain Paul's teaching of faith apart from works, and grace apart from personal merit?**



## Four common mistakes

*If we are not practicing a perfectly holy life we do not go to heaven.*



*Because we are saved by grace it makes no difference how we live.*

*If we strive to be holy, God will accept us.*

*Because God is merciful He will not judge anyone.*

## Divine Judgments

**Discipline**  
(of believers before death)

**Destruction**  
(of non believers before death)

**Disclosure**  
(of believers after death)

**Damnation**  
(of non believers after death)

### 1 Corinthians 4

<sup>3</sup> But to me it is a very small thing that I should be examined by you, or by any human court; in fact, I do not even examine myself. <sup>4</sup> I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not by this acquitted; but the one who examines me is the Lord. <sup>5</sup> Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and **disclose the motives of men's hearts**; and then each man's praise will come to him from God."

**Disclosure of what was hidden is a part of the final judgment.**

### Revelation 21:4

"and **He will wipe away every tear from their eyes**; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."

**In the end there will be tears but they will be wiped away.**

### Luke 19:11-27

<sup>24</sup> Then he said to the bystanders, "**Take the mina away from him and give it to the one who has the ten minas.**"

<sup>27</sup> **But these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them in my presence.**"

1. **There are two groups in this story - slaves who serve the master (to varying degrees) & enemies.**
2. **The "worthless slave" loses his reward but is not destroyed with the "enemies" of the master.**

### 1 Corinthians 3

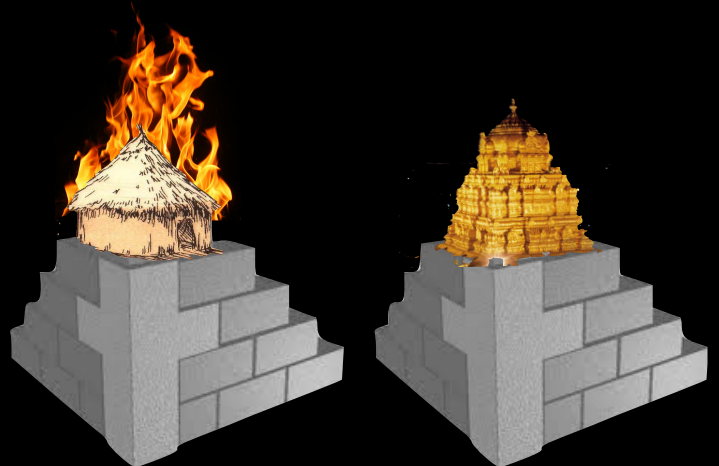
<sup>10</sup> According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. <sup>11</sup> For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. <sup>12</sup> Now if any man **builds upon the foundation** with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, <sup>13</sup> each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work."

**How we build on our saving faith is the issue.**

<sup>14</sup> If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall **receive a reward**. <sup>15</sup> If any man's work is burned up, he shall **suffer loss**; but **he himself shall be saved**, yet so as through fire."

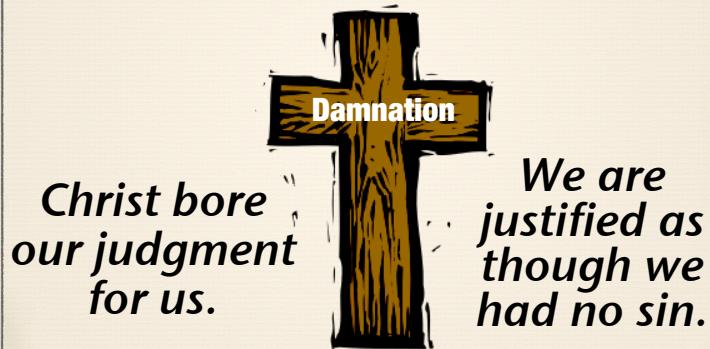
**Reward and loss (not salvation) is the result of the believer's judgment.**

## The images of 1 Cor.3

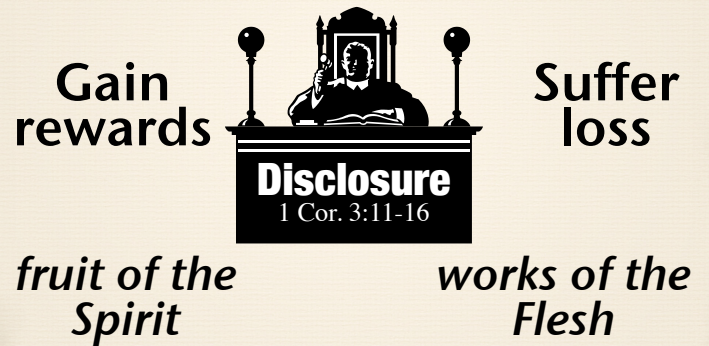




## The Biblical Judgment of believers for their sins at the cross.



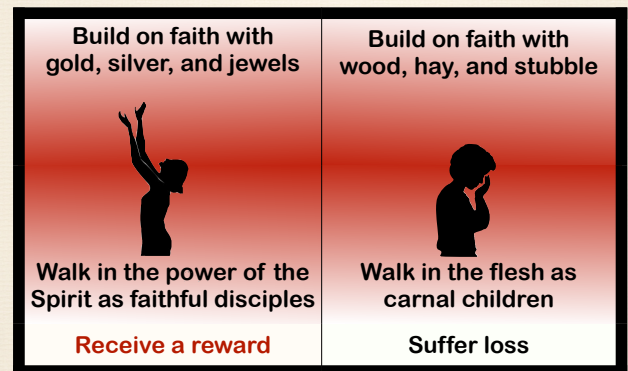
## The Biblical Judgment of believers for their sins at the Judgment seat of Christ.



## General Judgment of every person



## Bema Judgment of every believer



## Bema Judgment Suffer the loss of what?



## Bema Judgment of every believer

