

Sunday, February 16, 2014—The Judgment Seat of Christ—The JSC: I Corinthians 3, The Wise Masterbuilder

Introduction/Review

- Thus far we have observed the following four truths regarding the JSC. All believers will:
 - Stand before the JSC (Rom. 14:10)
 - Appear before the JSC (II Cor. 5:10)
 - Give account of themselves (Rom. 14:12)
 - Receive for the things done in the body (II Cor. 5:10)
- I Corinthians 3:9-15—is another Pauline text that describes what will occur at the JSC even though the term is not specifically mentioned. This passage gives us insight into how rewards will be determined at the JSC.
- Last week we considered the context by studying verses 1 through 9. In these verses Paul was addressing the carnality of the Corinthians over the divisions within their midst. The Corinthians were dividing into groups on account of the preference of, or loyalty to one teacher over another: “I am of Paul” and “I am of Apollos.” Paul addresses this division by using the imagery of “husbandry” and the “planting” and “watering” process. In verse 8, Paul concludes that both “he that planteth” and “he that watereth are one” and introduces a new principal concerning rewards and labor.
 - Every person participating in the planting and watering process will be rewarded based upon the actual energy they expend. In other words, when rewards are handed out there is no discrimination based upon who a person is. Equal labor output results in equal pay.
- Paul ended verse 9 by introducing a new image by calling the Corinthians “God’s building.” It is to this image of a building that we will now turn our attention as we move on with our study of the passage.

I Corinthians 1:10

- With the respect to the edifice God was building with the saints in Corinth, Paul says that he laid the foundation and “another buildeth thereon.” Following from the context of the passage I take this to mean that Apollos was building upon the foundation laid by Paul. Notice in verse 6 that Paul “planted” and Apollos “watered.”
- The thing that is critical to understand here is that the foundation Paul laid for this building within the saints in Corinth was not arbitrary but it was “according to” something. It was according to “the grace of God that was given” unto Paul. It is important to remember that Paul received his gospel by direct revelation from the Lord Jesus Christ.

- Galatians 1:6-9—notice how Paul uses the terms “the grace of Christ” and the “gospel of Christ” interchangeably in verses 6 and 7. The Gospel that Paul preached was related to the subject matter of the grace of Christ.
- Galatians 5:1-4—by seeking to place themselves back under the performance based acceptance system of the Law, Paul tells the Galatians that they fell from grace by doing this.
- Galatians 1:11-12—the gospel of Christ that Paul preached in Galatia he received by direct revelation from Jesus Christ. Paul was instructed in the “grace of Christ” the resurrected, glorified, and ascended Christ himself.
- Romans 16:25—the first thing that someone needs to understand in order to be “stablished” is what Paul calls “my gospel.” Note again the expression “according to” in verse 25.
- I Corinthians 3:10—according to the grace given unto him, Paul was serving the function of “a wise masterbuilder” with respect to laying the foundation for this building. The Greek word translated “masterbuilder” only occurs one time in the New Testament and means: an architect, the superintendant in the erection of buildings, according to *Strong’s Concordance*.
 - Hebrews 8:5—Moses was the “masterbuilder” of the tabernacle in the wilderness. Moses like Paul, got his information directly from God and then delivered it to the people and built accordingly.
- I Corinthians 3:10—Paul explicitly states “I have laid the foundation.” Paul was not building upon anyone else’s foundation rather he was laying a new one. A new dispensation was ushered in through the salvation and revelation committed to the Apostle Paul. Paul using the message of the grace of Christ which he received from Christ to lay the foundation for an entirely new building as a “wise masterbuilder.”
- Therefore, someone like Apollos was building upon the foundation that had been laid by the masterbuilder Paul.
- Note the shift at the end of verse 10. First, the word “but” at the beginning of the second sentence establishes a contrast, Paul is going to begin shifting our focus away from him and Apollos and onto ourselves. This is evident by the expression “every man.” The Greek word in this case occurs 83 times in the text of the New Testament and is most often translated as follows in the KJB: every man (39x), every one (20x), and every (17x). So in the second sentence Paul is speaking to all members of God’s building (v. 9) i.e., all member of the body of Christ.
- “Every man” is then instructed to “take heed.” The English word “heed” carries the following meanings according to *Webster’s 1828 Dictionary*: To mind; to regard with care; to take notice of; to attend to; to observe. 1) Caution; care; watch for danger; notice; circumspection; **usually preceded by take**. The basic meaning of the expression “take heed” means to proceed with caution or care i.e., to beware of.

- I Corinthians 10:12—“take heed”
 - Galatians 5:15—“take heed”
 - Philippians 3:2—“beware of”
 - Colossians 2:8—“beware”
- What are we supposed to be taking heed of? How we build upon the foundation laid by Paul.
 - The expression “take heed” is in the present tense which means that each individual believer is to be continually and carefully watching how he or she builds upon the foundation laid by Paul.
 - It seems apparent that Paul’s main focus in this verse is on one’s doctrine and how they build upon the doctrinal foundation laid by Paul.

I Corinthians 3:11

- The main idea in this verse is that it is impossible for any man to lay a different foundation than the one put down by Paul.
 - Galatians 1:6-9—not even an angel much less another man is capable substituting Paul’s foundation for a different one. However, this does not mean that men will not attempt to do so as the book of Galatians makes plain. This is why the warning is given in I Cor. 3:10 to “take heed.”
- Paul emphatically states that the foundation that he laid was Christ and his finished work.
 - I Corinthians 15:3-4—Christ died for our sins.
 - Romans 1:16—Paul preached the gospel of Christ.
 - Romans 4:25—Christ was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification.
 - Colossians 1:14—we have redemption and forgiveness of sins through the blood of his cross.
 - Colossians 1:20—all things in heaven and earth are reconciled back to God through the blood of his cross.
 - Romans 16:25—we are to preach Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery.
- Ephesians 2:20-21—Jesus Christ is the cornerstone in whom the whole building is fitly framed together.
- Now that we know what the foundation is, next week we can begin talking about how to build upon it.