

Today's Scripture

2 Corinthians 5:6-10

6 Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

9 Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

The past few Sundays we've addressed our commitment to Christ in a variety of ways – **notably 6hrs of MT Hebron time in Christ weekly**

Today's message provide some insight into the importance of the blessed time we're given and our relationship with God through Christ

In this life GOD will call us home

Hebrews 9:27

27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

The Bible describes two different and separate judgments. We will all be a part of one or the other. No one is exempt.

The judgment of believers in 2 Corinthians 5: 10.

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Paraphrased for today's message:

"We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ,

We must all take a final exam given by Rabbi Christ

so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body,

everyone's grade will be based on what they do in class

according to what he has done, whether good or bad" (v. 10).

whether you loved your neighbor or not, or loved God or not

The judgment of unbelievers in Revelation 20:11-13.

Revelation 20:11-13

11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

This is the Great White Throne Judgment where unbelievers whose names are not written in the book of life are judged according to their deeds. The result is eternal separation from God.

The Judgment of Believers – **The FINAL EXAM**

What can we expect at the judgment seat of Christ?

Let's look at this metaphorically – What can we expect for the Final Exam

First off are you signed up for the class. Everyone who is in this class has enrolled and your name is on the class roster or roll book

Only those who have trusted Christ as their Savior will be present for the Final Exam. Our meeting with Christ for this FINAL EXAM is a predestined event set by God Himself.

THE SECURITY OF SALVATION

How do you know if you've signed up for the class or not?

After a Christian has received the assurance that he is really saved, he may consider, "I know that I'm saved today, but how do I know that I will be saved tomorrow? IS it possible for me to lose my salvation?" For such a one it is no longer a question of **assurance**, but one of **security**.

A man or woman with millions in the bank has the assurance that the riches are his or hers. But if the bank insist on leaving their vault unlocked, our rich friend will have a real problem with the security of his or her riches. He or she knows they are rich today, but they does not know about tomorrow.

So, the question is – is our salvation like that? Is it something we have today but may lose at any moment? The answer is, unequivocally, NO! We can boldly say, **“I know that whatever God does, it will be forever” (Eccl 3:14)**

One wonderful fact regarding our salvation in Christ is that it is irreversible, that is, it cannot be undone. Once we are saved, we are saved forever because our salvation has as its basis the very nature and person of God Himself.

Syllabus – From the day of our salvation, we have been given a Syllabus. Once you sign up for class and have been enrolled, usually on the first day of class the professor will hand out a Syllabus. The syllabus lays out what the professor (RABBI) will teach, when it will be taught and what you the student are responsible for to successfully complete the course. The syllabus usually lays out everything you will need to pass the FINAL EXAM at the end of the course.

A syllabus can look/sound something like this:

Having been led as we believe my the Spirit of God...

What we must understand is in this course we will be evaluated for what we have done with the gifts, abilities, talent, skills, relationships, vocations, and finances we’ve been given and will be held accountable to Him for every word and deed.

You see it's God's desire that we pass the FINAL EXAM so he can reward us for how well we did on the FINAL EXAM, in other words how we have lived.

Jesus will grade the exam.

Because He is our Savior and has forgiven all our sins, this is not a judgment to decide whether we can enter heaven. We will already be in heaven when we stand before Him.

The purpose of the FINAL EXAM is to get credit or reward us for what we have done. Throughout our lives the Holy Spirit has convicted us when we have sinned, enabled us to obey, equipped us to serve, and shown us areas that need correction all the while reminding us that we will one day have a **FINAL EXAM** i.e. give an account of our lives to Christ.

The syllabus let's us know how the FINAL EXAM will be graded.

It will be according to our works. First Corinthians 3:14-15 says, **"If any man's work which he has built on it [the foundation of Christ] remains, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire."**

Although we may approach life casually sometimes, nothing in our lives is casual to God.

Our entrance into heaven cost GOD the death of His only begotten Son, even though we may treat it casually, trivially.

GOD has given us the Holy Spirit to empower us to do whatever He has required of us. When it is time for the FINAL EXAM graded by Christ, He will evaluate what we have done and grade it, determine whether it's worthless or worthy of His credit/reward.

However, be assured that you can lose credit/reward, our presence in heaven will remain secure.

Grading Curve – Yes or No

Methods that a teacher uses to adjust the scores her students received on a test in some way. In short it compares all FINAL EXAM scores with all the students and would possibly increase each student scores by a certain number of points.

We sorry to say, CHRIST is not going to use a Grading Curve. Some may like to think that if He grades each of us comparatively our grade might look better than others. We the class manual say He's a righteous Judge so He's not going to do that.

He student will be graded according to their own FINAL EXAM results.

The syllabus also provides the criteria which the RABBI will grade the FINAL EXAM

Some of you will love this part, class attendance will not be used as a criteria --- YEA!!

Don't shout yet – in bold letters the syllabus states, **ALL TEST MATERIAL WILL BE PRESENTED IN CLASS WHETHER YOU'RE IN CLASS OR NOT, THERE WILL BE ASSIGNMENTS WHERE YOU MUST WORK WITH ONE ANOTHER IN CLASS AND HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE GIVEN IN CLASS. YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL ASSIGNMENTS!**

The syllabus gives three criteria by which Christ will grade the FINAL EXAM us.

1. How much spiritual light we have had.

- a. When we are first saved, we know very little and will be judged accordingly.
- b. Class is held daily 24/7, so after spending a lifetime attending class or not, reading the manual (Word of God) or not, we will then be held responsible for the truth we now know.

2. The opportunities God has given us.

- a. As stated earlier there is no Grading Curve. There will be no comparisons between people during the FINAL EXAM because every person is uniquely created and gifted by God.
- b. Each one of us will give an account for what we've done with the opportunities He has given us. In whatever we do and however we're gifted, our ambition should be to live in a wise and godly manner that brings God glory and honor.

3. What have we done with what God entrusted to us?

- a. How we have responded to the light of truth and the opportunities He's given us.
- b. How have we spent our time? Christ will evaluate both our motives and our works.

We are either going to get credit / be rewarded or lose credit / reward in this FINAL EXAM.

Knowing that a FINAL EXAM is coming, **what's at stake eternally** should motivate us to live a life that's obedient and pleasing to God because we will be rewarded according to the way we have lived.

His judgment will be righteous and just, but we need not fear condemnation because Christ saved us from the penalty of sin.

Nor will there be any comparisons between us, but each person will be responsible for what God has uniquely given him or her.

Therefore, we must give serious thought to our future judgment / FINAL EXAM and choose each day to live for God's glory so we will not suffer regret when we stand before Him.

So just how do we prepare for the FINAL EXAM / judgment?

First of all, make sure you're in the class, we must receive the Lord Jesus as our personal Savior. Otherwise we will find ourselves at the Great White Throne Judgment suffering eternal loss rather than at the judgment seat of Christ receiving eternal rewards.

Second, we should review our lifestyle. We ought to consider the following questions:

- What am I living for?
- How do I spend my time?
- How do I employ my spiritual gifts?
- How do I give my resources?
- In what ways do I serve the Lord?
- In what ways do I honor Him?
- How often do I think about the Lord and thank Him during the day?
- Is my life pleasing to God?
- Are my relationships pleasing to Him?
- Then we should ask the Lord if there is anything He'd like us to change.

Third, we need to re-evaluate our priorities.

- Where is the Lord in the busyness of daily life?
- Do I make time for Him?
- What role does He play in my decision making process?
- Do I seek His perspective on issues?

Considering how good God has been to us, we don't want to squander the time or resources He's given us.

Fourth, we should renew our daily commitment to live a godly life and serve Him with our whole heart.

Mornings are a good time to focus on the fact that we are responsible to live for God throughout the coming day.

As a reminder, begin the day with **Proverbs 3:5-6**, "**Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.**"

I'll preach / teach rewards another day, but for now what does your FINAL EXAM grade look like right now? Should God continue to bless you with time, do you need to make some serious changes in your life?