

## **Rev12 – Judgment, Rewards & Loss 1Corinthians 3:8-15**

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Open your Bibles. Title of the message, “Judgment, Rewards, and Loss.” Is that like peaks and valleys? We are turning, because of Revelation Chapter 4, to 1 Corinthians 3:8-15. That’s our text today. Yes we are still in Revelation and yes we are still teaching Revelation. We are just teaching it out of 1 Corinthians Chapter 3 and other references today.

Last message, we were in the throne room of God in heaven and we saw the twenty four elders that represented the church, they represent us. And those twenty four elders were caught up in this incredible worship around the throne room in heaven. And in verse 10 of Revelation 4 they cast their crowns before the throne. We didn’t talk about those crowns but we are this message. We are going to look at believer’s (hear me when I say believer’s) judgment, rewards and loss. Partly to understand what those crowns are about that we saw in Revelation Chapter 4, but more to talk about this critically important, yet most often ignored New Testament truth of the Judgment Seat of Christ. *The Judgment Seat of Christ.*

Have you heard of the Judgment or the Bema Seat of Christ? This is an important subject for you to know. It is important for you to know within the study of Revelation. The Judgment Seat of Christ, sometimes for us called the Bema Seat because it is an easy and fun Greek word to say (that’s why we say them when we can.) The Bema Seat Judgment or the Judgment Seat of Christ occurs after the Rapture and probably during the tribulation at some point. We don’t know exactly when. Apparently it happens, it’s not perfectly chronological, but the crowns that we saw the elders cast before the throne last message in Revelation 4; those crowns are given to us at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Last message we saw the elders with those crowns, and so we put two and two together and say maybe, probably, this has already taken place.

Here’s what I need you to hear. This judgment is for believers only. *This judgment is for believers only.* If you’ve been born again, if you have truly put your faith in Jesus Christ, and received him into your life as your Savior and your Lord, you will be at this judgment. You have a guaranteed appointment at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Now, if you choose to reject Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, you don’t have to be at this judgment. But you are going to wish you were because you have a judgment coming too. It’s in Revelation Chapter 20; it’s called the Great White Throne Judgment. That judgment is reserved for unbelievers only. I need you to hear me today. You have a choice of which judgment seat you will stand in front of Jesus Christ at. You want this one. *You want this one.* You want to be at the Judgment Seat, the Bema Seat of Christ with the believers, not at the Great White Throne Judgment for the unbelievers.

Let's pray. *Heavenly Father, we love you! We love prayer. We love communion with you. We just love to just connect with you Lord. We love to just be caught up in your presence and to commune with you Lord. And we pray as we do that in worship and in prayer that now as we commune with you and your Word that you would speak to us. That we would hear your voice. That our hearts would be open. That your Word would pierce us Lord. That it would do its job, Lord. That it would drain the poison of the sin out of our lives, Lord. That it would instill in us your new life. We just pray you would do what you plan and purpose in this place and for each of us today. Do it now Lord, in Jesus' name, amen.*

Again, if Jesus Christ is your Lord and Savior today, then all of your sins – all of your sin – past, present, future, they have all been paid for. They have been paid for – Testelestai. It is paid in full, it's a finished work. The judgment of God, the wrath of God that has to fall upon sin has fallen on Jesus Christ in your place, if you have received him as your Lord and Savior. And that payment that Jesus Christ paid, it's a theological word call "propitiation," it means that it was sufficient to pay for your sins. All of them. It was a sufficient price to pay for your sin, once and for all, completely.

**Romans 8:1 (esv)**

***1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. - -***

If your version adds a little section there it is just a descriptive section, it is not a conditional section. Most of the manuscripts stop right here. ***There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.***

Let me say again, it is important for us to understand that the Judgment Seat of Christ is not about salvation. Have I hammered that? So when we go on you realize you are not going to lose your salvation. I am going to keep telling you the Judgment Seat of Christ is not about salvation. Your salvation issue is settled, it's finished. The Judgment Seat is not about determining your righteousness or lack of righteousness.

HOWEVER, the Bible very clearly says (this is what you need to hear as a believer today) *we will be judged on how we have lived our life here.* The place that occurs is the Judgment Seat of Christ. And in this judgment there are both rewards and loss. Judgment, rewards, loss. It all happens at the Judgment Seat of Christ. One of the types of rewards that you and I will either receive or lose at the Judgment Seat, is represented (important word) by crowns. These crowns are the crowns we saw cast before the throne in Revelation 4 verses 4 and 10.

So that is why we are connecting right here. And my commitment to the Lord is (there is so much in the Bible, not just New Testament, but really more Old Testament) there is so much that explains, and expands and expounds Revelation that my commitment to the

Lord is whenever we come across one of these things is that I will pause the verse-by-verse in Revelation and expand that truth. That is what we are doing this message.

In Revelation 4:4 there is actually three types of rewards listed. It's not just crowns, but we sit on thrones. The twenty four elders sit on thrones, that is representative of a reward and the twenty four elders are clothed in white. That is representative of a reward. And the crowns are representative of a reward.

Let's study the Judgment Seat of Christ. Guys the Judgment Seat of Christ should impact your life every day. Every day, *every day*, you should live in the light of one day facing Jesus Christ. And we've made the gospel so palatable. It's good on one hand, but on the other hand it's a bit deceptive because maybe there are believers who think "It doesn't matter. I'm saved. I'm good to go! I have an easy erase white board and it doesn't matter what I do because it is going to get erased."

Let's start in 2 Corinthians Chapter 5. Paul is talking about heaven in 2 Corinthians 5. It's a wonderful chapter about heaven. It is where we get that famous verse 8 where it says *to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord*. That's not exactly our point today, but I want you to know we are talking about heaven in 2 Corinthians Chapter 5. We are talking about heaven in Revelation. This is the connection.

### **2 Corinthians 5:9–10 (esv)**

***9 So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. 10 For 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 evil.***

That is a really big verse and we need to really, really grasp it. Again, Paul is talking about us going to heaven and Paul says when you get there you have an appointment with *THE* Judge. You saved, sanctified, set apart, glorified at that point in the righteousness of Christ; you have an appointment with a Judge. His name is Jesus Christ. He is sitting on a seat known as the Bema Seat. The purpose of this meeting, this appointment you have with the judge is so that you can get exactly what you are due in exchange for how you have lived your life here.

Do you see where some of the cults get all the "you're cooler by your works" kind of doctrines. The more doors you knock on, or this or that you do. Because they pull stuff like this out of the Bible and they just recreate it to facilitate growth of their concept. This is what I am trying to get at here. What you do here significantly impacts what will happen to you in heaven. That's true.

The Greek word here that we are using is BEMA. It is a high place, the Judgment Seat, built in an open and a public square so everyone can see. That is important. And a Roman magistrate, whatever level of magistrate there is in that area, would sit on this high place. You can easily find a picture of the Bema Seat in Corinth that has been excavated. They

would sit on the high place and they would judge, they would administer justice to those who would come to them. They would also reward athletes from this high place, from this Bema Seat; they would hand out the STEFANOS, the crowns of victory.

So Paul says “You know how you see those Bema Seats all over the Roman Empire?” He says “You know there is one of those just like that in heaven. There is a judgment seat just like that in heaven and every single believer is going to stand before that judgment seat.”

And 2 Corinthians 5:10 says at that place we are going to rightly receive exact compensation for how we have lived our lives here for the Lord. We are going to receive in direct compensation, either worth or worthlessness. Either value or worthlessness. The Greek words used here in verse 10 – the ESV says *good or evil* – if you have the NKJ it says *good or bad*. These are not the Greek words that would be used for righteousness or sin. 2 different words. These words would be better used for fruit.

Have you guys got a lot of tomatoes? I mean, there are so many tomatoes growing around here right now. We have some tomatoes. More than we can eat. I eat them like apples but we still have more. And so I’ll pick up two tomatoes and one is good and one is bad. It’s mushy and there are flies all over it. It means it is bad to eat. It is inedible, worthless. That is these words. Good fruit, edible, bad fruit, worthless. That is these words.

Everyone is going *to receive what is due for what is done in the body, whether good or evil*. Good or worthless. Again, it is not penalty for sin. Listen. You’re a sinner. Every one of us. Those sins have been paid for and washed clean. We stand there in the righteousness of Christ. In fact if we didn’t have the righteousness of Christ we wouldn’t be able to stand there. Your sin is paid for, but still, *still*, you are going to stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ and there is going to be a direct response to how you lived here.

Let’s turn to 1 Corinthians 3 and see how it pans out. Paul is talking again about another really important subject for the church. He is talking about himself and Apollos as church leaders. And he is talking about, listen carefully, the foolishness of you and I following one church leader over another. He is talking about the utter foolishness of being connected to a church leader. How foolish is that? If you have been around for awhile, maybe you have been connected to a church leader that you felt like you were connected to them right up until they fell miserably and horribly into sin. Learn not to get connected to a church leader. Connect to Jesus Christ. That is Paul’s point here.

So in 1 Corinthians 3:5 Paul says he and Apollos are only servants, they are only instruments for the Lord. And Paul says one of us plants, one of us water but neither of us are anything. Please, hear the Apostle Paul. No servant of God that is serving God correctly is *ANYTHING*. Period. And if there is a servant of God who is becoming something, then back away. Because you don’t know how big the strike zone is for God. No one who is serving God correctly is anything.

Why? Because only God is anything. Only God is everything. Only God gives life. Only God causes growth. And anyone else that is serving him is nothing but an empty vessel.

**1 Corinthians 3:8 (esv)**

***8 He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor.***

Paul says look, all of us who serve the Lord are one. We're of one body. But ***each of us will receive his wages according to his labor.*** Each of us will receive his own wages. The ESV uses the word wages, some people don't like that. The most literal Greek word is "recompense." Each will receive their own recompense. It is their "just due." Most translations put here "reward." There is a little bit of a problem with that word "reward." The Greek word most literally translated "recompense" has equal positive and negative uses. And so reward isn't exactly right, or isn't most right because it's "just due recompense" for something you have done. For your labors, as Paul says. So that means as Paul is talking about the good and bad, when he says "wages" as the ESV says, it means whether they are of value or whether they are worthless, you are going to get back exactly what you are due when we stand before Jesus Christ.

Let me just start telling you, and I am going to make this point really clear as we go on, though we will receive correct compensation for our effort, it is not quantity of effort. It is also not quantity of results. It's not. We are going to develop that more and more as we go, but I want you to know right now that whether your service to the Lord is good or worthless has nothing to do with how you or man or the world measures success.

One of the most horrible things in my opinion that we as a church culture do is give accolades when a whole bunch of people follow someone. If that is our criteria then Oprah Winfrey should get our biggest accolades, because she has the most people tied to her online church as any church in the world. And God doesn't measure what your worth is compared to someone else's. And I am telling you right now, I know missionaries in the field who will give their lives for the hope of one salvation in the bush somewhere.

So what if a guy has enough people that he can fly around in a Lear jet. God doesn't measure it that way. God measures how *you serve the Lord* where he put you. It is not quantity, it is quality. It is the *way* we serve. We are going to get into that in a little bit.

I want you to know before we move on, that you can receive all the rewards that are available to you right where you're at. In the station of life that you find yourself. Right in that place, you can receive all the rewards that God has for you. As he has given you the grace you can receive all that he has in that grace right where you are at. *Right where you're at.* Because it's not measured as we measure. It's not about quantity, it's about quality. You'll see it as we go on.

Continuing. Paul says,

### **1 Corinthians 3:9-10 (esv)**

***9 For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building. 10 According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it.***

This is a very interesting set of verses. Paul is talking about labor for the Lord and he is talking about he and Apollos and so this is used a lot for those who serve, you might say, professionally. But then Paul switches metaphors, some say he mixes metaphors, but most say he switches metaphors. If you'll look real close in verse 9. He says you are God's field and then he just switches abruptly to you are God's building. So most scholars believe that Paul is switching from focusing on those who labor for the Lord, as in instructing God's people, to the responsibility of those that they have laid the foundation for, meaning us, all believers. So he switches the metaphor there from field to building and then he says listen, I laid the foundation. Now, let each one of you take care how you build on it. Be careful.

And again, a text that is used for ministers to incite the correct fear of God in how we minister to people. But also, equally important, broadly more important, it is how you are building your life in Christ on *the* foundation. And there is only one foundation.

Verse 11 of 1 Corinthians Chapter 3, the only foundation there is to be laid has been laid in your life if you're a believer today.

### **1 Corinthians 3:11 (esv)**

***11 For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.***

So every person who stands at the judgment seat will have the foundation of Jesus Christ in their life. If you are saved today you have an eternal foundation of Jesus Christ in your life and your salvation in him is secure. Because he finished the work. And he will finish it in you. But your righteousness is done where Christ is if he is truly your Lord. But what you build on that foundation of Jesus Christ matters. It matters significantly to God and one day it will matter significantly to us. The day we stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ. Here it is in 1 Corinthians 3:12-13.

### **1 Corinthians 3:12-13 (esv) -**

***12 Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw - 13 each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done.***

That is two huge verses there. Absolutely massive. Verse 11 says that the foundation is Jesus Christ, he and he alone. Verse 12 says what we build on that foundation is, listen

carefully; it is **gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw.** Notice, there is no “or.” There is only one dynamic translation that puts the word “or” in there, it shouldn’t because there is no “or” in there because this is not an either/or deal. Listen. Get over yourself okay? You’re not going to have all gold, silver, precious stones. If you think you do that just proves your total building is made of straw. I can just tell you right now. Every single one of us, every believer that comes here will be dragging some wood, hay and stubble with us. Okay? Every one of us. That is why there is no “or” there. Because God knows it is all of it. Prayerfully it is all of it. I guarantee you have wood, hay and straw. The question is do you have gold, silver, and precious stones?

Here’s the short answer. Do you want to know the short answer for which is which? Short answer, for what is gold, silver and precious stones and what is wood, hay and straw. Everything done in the flesh is wood, hay and straw. Everything. *Everything.* I don’t care if you have the biggest church in the world. If it is done in the flesh, that’s going to be a bonfire. Everything done in the spirit is gold, silver and precious jewels. Everything done in the spirit is gold, silver and precious stones. Everything done in the flesh is wood, hay and straw. That is the short summary answer.

Verse 13 says everyone’s work, each person’s work will be made known, will be manifest, will be revealed. Remember the Bema Seat? It is set in an open and public place. And it demonstrates the openness and the public environment in which Jesus Christ judges our lives. Everyone’s work will be made known for that Day. It is literally *THE DAY*. It is a certain Day. It is the Day the Judgment Seat of Christ will disclose it, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. So, gold silver jewels, wood, hay, straw. All it takes is a little fire to tell the difference, right?

I know it’s a little bit shaking to say “What? Do you mean there is actually benefit if I live for Christ and there is loss if I don’t?”

Yeah. Better to hear it now than then. Because you’re going to be wanting to go back and do it over.

The NLT says here in verse 13 ***The fire will show if a person’s work has any value.*** Not how much work, not if you did work, not how busy you were. Does it have any value? Does it have an eternal value? It is what “sort,” meaning what “quality,” what “type” of work. We are going to define that sort (quality) of work in a minute. But first I need you to understand it is not busyness. Sometimes the people that do the most in the church are mostly in the flesh. And it’s terrible that church leaders say “Well, at least they are doing something.” That’s wrong. The fire will test what sort of work, what type of work.

Let’s see what happens on the other side of the pizza oven first. Have you ever seen these pizza ovens where they put a raw pizza in at one end and then six feet away a finished pizza comes out? That is how I see the judgment seat. It’s like, “Okay, I’m up. I’m up.

There's all my works going into the pizza oven." And then I run over to the other side and I'm like "Come on; come on, something besides ash come out!"

1Corinthians 3:14.

### **1 Corinthians 3:14 (esv)**

***14 If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward.***

So everything you've done for Christ gets put in the pizza oven. And what comes out the other side, if it survives, it's your reward. Now here is the interesting thing that just proves how well God knows us. The details of these rewards are never given. Isn't that good of God? Because our flesh would just go wild with those. It would just be ugly. And so God never gives us the details of these rewards. He never really tells us. So in general, he tells us there will be rewards and you have to trust him for what that means.

So let's talk a little bit about the rewards that are coming.

#1) There are crowns.

That's what brought us here to this point. Numerous crowns mentioned in the Bible. Here's this about the type of reward that is represented by crowns. I am using those words carefully because I don't want you to think all you get is a "tiara" for serving the Lord. It's represented by the crown. The word STEFANOS is actually a wreath, a live wreath. It represents the reward.

Here's the thing about all the crown rewards. They are all similar in this manner. They all represent faithful, unending commitment to Jesus Christ. Every one of the crowns is given for those who have given faithful, unending, never-say-die service to the Lord.

There are five types of crowns in scripture. Write them down, read them later.

**1Cor 9:25ff** - The **VICTOR'S** Crown - (for running strong and well)

**1Thes 2:19** - The Crown of **REJOICING** - (*are* the people we serve)

**2Tim 4:8** - The Crown of **RIGHTEOUSNESS** - (looking for His return)

**Jas 1:12, Rev 2:10** - The Crown of **LIFE** - (for enduring hardship) Listen, I don't care where you're at. If God has you in a hard place, you can bring glory. You can give him honor, you can push through that in the spirit and crucify the flesh and you can prepare for yourself rewards in heaven for eternity, right where you are at. Don't let anyone ever tell you that if you're in hardship it is because God is not blessing you. What if it is the greatest blessing?

**1Pet 5:4** - The Crown of **GLORY** - (faithfulness in serving the Lord)

So each of those are great truths, great rewards. And you can dig into them later. In fact, here's what I would really love. I would love for one of you to say, "Man, I want to dig



into this. I want to learn about our rewards, about the judgment seat of Christ. I want to be prepared to get rewards and not loss.” And maybe the Holy Spirit would inspire one of you to start a little study group on that. We call those discipleship groups; I would love for you to do that. Here are my two favorite books on the subject.

**Your Eternal Reward** - Erwin Lutzer (Pastor, Moody Church)

**Facing Your Final Job Review** - Woodrow Kroll (Back to the Bible)

Both great books, just really well done. Those are great books for you.

Here’s the thing about casting crowns before the throne. I need to tell you this. The rewards the Bible talks about are eternal. A lot of people say the only reason we are getting a crown is to throw it at Jesus’ feet. Yeah, well, they just don’t get it.

First of all, the fact that you are there should cause you to throw everything at his feet today. Amen! I mean that is a really big deal. But the crown is representative of a reward.

Just in the last week or so, I saw an Olympic gymnast take a gold medal off her neck and put it on her coach’s neck. Did anybody see this? It was really, really touching. And she was recognizing her coach’s role in her gold medal. Now listen, the fact that she took her gold medal off and put it on her coach’s neck doesn’t mean he is the gold medal winner. He didn’t just win the women’s balance beam. He is just wearing the medal because it was given to him by the one who earned it. Do you get the picture?

So when we cast our crowns before the throne it doesn’t mean we lose that reward. It is representative of the reward. You would look silly running around heaven with a crown on anyway.

The crowns are only one type of reward mentioned in the Bible. There are five types of rewards we see in scripture. Write these down, study them later.

The **five crowns**, which we just saw.

**Mat 6:19ff** - Heavenly **TREASURE** (that we can send forward *NOW*) Jesus says where you store your treasure is where your heart will go. Read it. Send it into the world, that is where your heart will be. Send it into heaven that is where your heart will be.

**Mat 25:21, Luke 19:17** - **COMMENDATION** from the Lord (*well done*) I believe these are the greatest rewards, personally. And maybe the last ones too.

**Rev 2** (4 times) - Rewards to the **OVERCOMER** (*who holds fast*) Four times in Revelation Chapter 2 to the different churches a reward is promised to the overcomer. Those who are victorious. Those who just hold on to Christ in the midst of their circumstances and their situations and they never turn from him and they never turn to their flesh and they never turn to the world. They are overcomers.

**Mat 19, 24, 25, Rev 2** - Special **RESPONSIBILITY** and **AUTHORITY** **given** to believers **based** on **HOW** they handled things **HERE**.

So, all these rewards, the crowns, the treasure, the commendations, the overcomer rewards, the responsibility and authority ruling and reigning with Jesus – they are all real. They are all real! They are more real than what you experience today. You're saying "God bless me." Why? What if tomorrow is your last day on earth? "God show me how I can store up rewards in heaven in case tomorrow is my last day on earth."

The next time you say "God please bless me in this life," think about it. Eternity or blink of an eye. Vapor or eternity. And choose where you want your blessing. These are the rewards for that.

Alright, there is another side. We stopped at 1 Corinthians 3:14 to talk about the rewards. So, we paused, talked about the rewards and you would like to think that is enough. But no, there is another verse. And you have to hear what is in verse 15.

**1 Corinthians 3:15 says (esv)**

***15 If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.***

If what we present to Christ on that day, at this Judgment Seat of Christ, is burned up, we will suffer loss. Listen, we are going to suffer loss. We are still going to be saved, but only as through fire. Let me remind you again we are not talking about salvation. Let me remind you again we are not talking about punishment for sin. That is not the loss that we are going to suffer.

So, what kind of loss is there? Listen, you are going to be alert and a person. You are going to have emotion. Look at God. God has emotion. And so just imagine yourself standing before the glorified Christ on the judgment seat and all of your life for him goes into one end of the pizza oven. And then at the middle of the oven there is such a big explosion you are standing there looking like a chimney sweep in Mary Poppins. And you are covered with ash and soot. And there is nothing coming out the other side. I promise you at that point, you are going to feel loss. You are going to feel loss. You are going to suffer loss. You will still be saved. But if you get to that point and realize "I've got nothing but ash and soot to offer my Savior and King of King and Lord of Lords and realize you have nothing to offer but ash and soot from my life." There will be a negative response inside of you, I promise. That's what the Bible says.

So it's not that we are suffering loss at the hands of Jesus, but we will suffer loss. Can you just imagine the angels calling for a supertanker to put out your out of control fire? The good news is that your loss isn't permanent. We know that. Because by the time we get to Revelation 21, (although in both Revelation 7 and in Revelation 21 there are tears to be wiped away by the Lord – he will wipe away their tears) verse 4 there is no more crying, no more grieving, no mourning. So this is temporary loss, but none the less.

So let's talk about how to build our lives with more gold, silver, jewels and less wood, hay and stubble.

**1 John 2:28 (esv)**

***28 And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming.***

Is it possible to shrink from Jesus Christ in shame at his coming? Apparently it is. If you would say "Lord, I do not want to do that." Then he would say "Abide in me."

Abide in him so that you will have confidence and you won't shrink from him in shame at his coming. So for starters, listen, you have to learn to abide in Christ. *You've got to learn to abide in Christ.*

We have a ten part series called Abiding in Christ. Get it. Practice it. Begin to live it.

So, let me just give you the major summary of building your life with materials that will be rewards at the judgment seat of Christ. If you don't remember anything else, remember this. Anything you do for Jesus in your own strength is fodder for the bonfire. Anything you do for Jesus in your flesh or for your own glory is fodder for the bonfire. It is. Contrasting, only things that are Christ in you, that God is doing in you and through you by his power, only those things will survive this judgment and become rewards for you. Anything you do without God in your own flesh and your own strength is going to burn and only what you allow Christ in you to do, whether he is doing it in you or through you, it's called the "Christ in you" principle. And as far as Christ is in you and what Christ is doing in you and through you, those are the things that are going to turn into rewards. *Those are the things that are going to turn into rewards.*

John 15:5. Our rewards are not based on our activity or our effort. They are based on the "Christ in us" principle. Hear me please; our rewards are based on what Christ is doing in us and through us. Jesus says in John 15:5,

**John 15:5 (esv)**

***5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.***

**apart from me you can do nothing** – meaning nothing of eternal value. You can do apart from the life of Christ in you. All of your own religious efforts, all of your own good works, it's just going to vaporize in front of Christ.

So, first and foremost, let me share and you hear – it's Christ in you. So get Christ in you. Get him in you. *Get him in you.* Crucify your flesh. Allow Jesus Christ to live in you so that you can actually have something to show for your life here when you stand in front of him.

As Paul says in Galatians 2:20,

**Galatians 2:20 (esv)**

***20 I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.***

This is the Christ in you principle.

We have another series on this called The Fundamentals. It talks about how do you get the “Christ in you” principle. Now here’s the problem. You want a practical list. Listen that is what you want. And if I were to give you that I would just be feeding your flesh. I would be selling you straw to fuel the bonfire at your judgment day if I were to tell you “You just go do this, and go do this and go do this.” And you would say you could do it. You would think you were winning a reward. And then I have to answer to God. The answer is Christ in you. You get Christ in you, and he will do what he chooses. And when he does what he chooses in your life, then it glorifies him. And when your life glorifies him, you have rewards in heaven. You get Christ in you, he will work it out. He completes it.

Listen. You are his POIEMA.

**Ephesians 2:10 (esv)**

***10 For we are his workmanship (Poiema), created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.***

You want rewards in heaven? Then you get Christ in you and you do what he has made you to do. You allow him to do in you and through you what he has made you to do. And he gets the glory and you get the reward. This is an all-good deal. This is a win/win deal.

What has God called you to do today? You can serve him right there where you are at. Who has he made you to be today? You are his work of art. You are his POIEMA. He wants to do a work in you, and if you will allow him right where you are at, then he will be glorified and you will get the reward in heaven. It is as simple as that. You can serve him right where you are at. You can walk by faith. You can walk in the spirit and crucify the lusts of the flesh right where you are at. You can glorify Jesus in your life today. You don’t have to move, you don’t have to get a new spouse, and you don’t need to get a new job. You can glorify Jesus Christ right now, today. And every time you do, you’re storing up something in heaven. Is it bad motivation? Take it up with God. He’s the one who gave it to you.

Glorify Christ in your life and know that it is worth it. And so whether you are in a concentration camp, whether you are in a jail cell, whether you are on top of the world,

wherever God has allowed you to be, you can glorify him. And as you glorify him, you will be setting aside reward in heaven.

**Colossians 3:23–24 (ESV)**

***23 Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men,  
24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.***

Let's pray. *Oh Lord, if we will just surrender, and if we won't mix our flesh and if we won't love the world and try to love you, if we will just go all in with you Lord, it is all win/win. It's all win. You give us peace and strength. You lead us and you guide us. You use us. We are allowed to manifest your glory, your nature, your character in this life. And then when we get to heaven you give us rewards based on what you did through us. Lord, there is nothing in it about us. We are absolutely nothing in this whole picture except that we surrender to you. And so Lord, today, we take self off that throne and we put you there. And we say Jesus we want you in us. We want you to live in us and through us. We want to glorify you and Lord we want something left on the other end of the pizza oven. Convict us.*

Right now I just want you to pray. You need to deal with God right now, right where you are at. You can glorify God, you can serve him. You can allow him to live in you and through you right in your situation today. You decide right now if you are going to do it. And if you are, tell him. Just tell him.

*Lord Jesus, may we be all in, sold out, surrendered to you. And if there is one person listening that doesn't know you, use this message to drive them to the cross for good. In Jesus' name, amen.*