

Why We Should All Care About the Kingdom

In His final forty days on earth before ascending to heaven, Jesus spoke to His disciples of “the things pertaining to the kingdom of God” (Acts 1:3). His future Messianic kingdom on earth was the burden of His heart from the very start of His public ministry – “repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” – and it was on His heart to the very end.

Yet, His focus was not merely on the fact of the millennial kingdom or the nature of it. Much had already been said by the Old Testament prophets concerning the coming kingdom. Repeatedly, through the synoptic gospels, we find Jesus honing in on the requirements for living the kingdom way of life here and now, which then qualifies one to inherit the coming millennial kingdom.

If Jesus cared so much about getting His disciples ready for the kingdom, how much more should we? Is the church of Jesus Christ really focused on the kingdom? If so, then why aren't more Christians motivated to prepare for the Judgment Seat of Christ and what follows? Could it be that many do not take the Judgment Seat seriously?

The apostle Paul's warning should be sobering to us all:

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. 2 Cor. 5:10

All children of God will appear (i.e., be made manifest) at the tribunal of Jesus. Every one will be recompensed according to how he lived on earth. The verdict will be good (“well done, good and faithful servant”) or bad (“thou wicked and slothful servant”) and will determine the extent of every man's reward or loss as he enters the Messianic kingdom of Christ on earth.

Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire. 1 Cor. 3:13-15

Work of an inferior nature (i.e., temporal and self-dependent) will be consumed in Christ's “testing” fire, and be considered a loss in the kingdom. That saint of God, though eternally secure, will be ashamed at the Judgment Seat, and will consciously regret his verdict throughout the Millennial kingdom, having no opportunity to rule and reign with Christ (the very

purpose of our millennial existence!). Only work of an abiding nature (eternal and Christ-dependent) will survive and be rewarded in the kingdom.

Because we fear our God Who is a consuming fire (Heb. 12:29), we should passionately convince fellow believers of their coming appointment.

Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. 2 Cor. 5:11

In other words, we should be actively engaged in warning saints of the awfulness of the Judgment Seat of Christ and helping them prepare to give a good account.

Unfortunately, I believe an error has crept into the church in modern times. Many assume because they are eternally secure the Judgment Seat of Christ will be merely an awards ceremony of sorts. They imagine shuddering momentarily at the Bema, perhaps receiving a mild rebuke, then continuing on into the millennial kingdom with all the honors and privileges supposedly conferred upon children of God. They expect a "happily-ever-after" millennial existence, complete with no tears or sorrow. Nothing could be further from the truth!

There are three problems with this mentality. First, it assumes no difference between the kingdom of heaven (millennial kingdom) and heaven. But there is a big difference! Second, it assumes all children of God are, by nature of their standing, automatically qualified to rule and reign as firstborn sons. But that is not what the Bible teaches. Third, it assumes the Judgment Seat of Christ will be a mere formality, no big deal. But this way of thinking is flippant and misinformed and will certainly be regretted in the future.

Out of a passion to help saints prepare for the coming kingdom, the author is offering this website to provide Biblical teaching on the coming Judgment Seat of Christ and the Millennial Kingdom of Jesus Christ to follow. Oh, may all saints of God prepare *now* to hear "well done" *then*, that they might glorify Christ by reigning together with Him in His coming kingdom.