***The Judgment Seat of Christ - PH88-01
Advanced Bible Doctrine - Philippians 4:14-19***

Once more, please open your Bibles to Philippians 4:14-19. We are looking at the second segment of financing the Lord's work. The apostle Paul, as we have pointed out, closes the Philippian letter by showing the direct relationship between personal happiness and the use of a Christian's money. While Paul himself possesses personal contentment, he does not disparage the very gracious gift which was sent to him by the Philippian Christians. Paul has been fondly recalling the fact that the Philippians, ten years prior to the time of his writing this letter, were helping him already at that time with their gifts for the ministry. So Paul said that the Philippians, in this way, elected to share in the pressures that were attendant to communicating divine viewpoint in Satan's spiritually hostile world. So the apostle Paul remembered that when he left Macedonia, only the Philippians set up an accounting between himself and them in order to carry on the Lord's work.

But then he thinks back, and he says, "You know, it was even better than that." A thought comes into his mind, which he expresses in verse 16, when he says, "For even in Thessalonica, you sent once and again unto my necessities." Here's the relationship of these churches. The province of Achaia may sometimes be referred to as Greece. Then there was the famed good-time city of the ancient world, Corinth. Then there was the intellectual center of the ancient world, Athens. But right above it is the province of Macedonia. It is from over in Asia Minor that the apostle Paul came over by ship as a result of the Macedonian call, and he came over here to the city which was near the coast called Philippi. That is where Christianity was first introduced into Europe. These are the people to whom he's writing. They were the first, and, by many respects, they were always the best. It is strange that the first believers that Paul ever won to the Lord in Europe, and the first church he ever founded in Europe – the first group was always the best group in his ministry.

From Philippi, he moved down the road a short distance to the second great city called Thessalonica in Macedonia. Thessalonica was an up-and-down situation. Finally, he was driven out, but the church was established. Then he went on to Berea, who, again, were one of those exemplary groups of people in the New Testament world.

So the apostle Paul, first of all, is recollecting that when he left Macedonia and went down into the province of Achaia, these Philippians back here near the coast set up an account with him. He uses regular business world terminology to describe that. But then another thought comes to mind. He says, "As a matter of fact, I had no sooner left Philippi and gotten over here to Thessalonica, than you people at Philippi, knowing what was taking place, because it was a short distance; knowing the satanic resistance that I was facing; knowing the critical need of establishing a church in that city; and, knowing how I was pressed, and the demands upon me to do that, sent me an offering even then. That's what he means in verse 16: "For even in Thessalonica (that is, when he was in Thessalonica ministering), they sent once and again unto my needs."

So let's see what he says here. The 16th verse begins with the word "for," and that's really the Greek word "hoti." This introduces the cause (the reason) that the Philippians were so unique in sharing in the Lord's work. We may even say "since" in translating that: "Since even in Thessalonica," locating the place – that particular city in Macedonia. You can read about that in Acts 17:1-9. He said, "Even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent." The Greek word for "sent" is "pempo." "Pempo" means "to convey to." It refers to another occasion when the Philippians opened a business account (so to speak) with Paul. The aorist tense indicates that it's the point where they sent money to Paul from Philippi to Thessalonica. Most of them were comparatively new Christians then. They had just entered the Christian life themselves. They had just been won to the Lord. The whole local church organization was new in Philippi.

Yet, that tells a lot about these Philippians. From the very first, they had moved to such positive response that it was the most natural thing in the world for them to use their money in the right way. That's why I'm stressing to you that it is the super grace Christian who has the most effective use of God's money with the greatest personal enjoyment. That is because it is that super grace quality that gives you the great capacity to give. Do not think that just because you are born again, you have the capacity to give. You do not.

That's what is so amazing about these Philippians who just recently entered the Christian life, and who did not have the time to have gone very far on up the road toward a spiritual maturity structure. Yet, on this issue, they've practically matured overnight. Immediately, this maturity, as always, when it comes into our lives, expressed itself in faithful giving. This was not giving because someone has kicked up your emotions. So these Philippians were really something else. In a short time, they had gotten control of their finances.

So Paul says, "On this occasion, when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me this collection. It is active voice. The Philippians did the sending. It's indicative. It's a statement of fact.

Now, there was something else about these people. Paul says in verse 16: "Even in Thessalonica, you sent once." "Once" is the Greek word "hapax." That means one time. Then he adds the word "kai," which means "and." Then he adds the word "dis" which means twice. This is indicating a second occasion. Paul says, "Once and even again, while I was at a short distance away from you at Thessalonica, you sent these gifts to me from Philippi – both once and twice; both once and again, unto my necessity. The reason for it was that Paul had what the Greek calls a "chreia." Here it was a financial necessity – the result of his seeking to make inroads into Thessalonica. While he was in this city, twice the Philippians sent to help remove this financial necessity.

It would have been a great tragedy had they not done that. Where would the work have gone in Thessalonica? How would it have dragged along? The Jews who were so opposed to Paul's ministry could tolerate him only so long in the town, and then they ran him out. How much time did he have before he could make enough forward progress to establish a functioning church? So these offerings were very critical so that Paul did not have to be sidetracked to raising funds. That is always the burden (the curse) upon communicators of the Word of God.

So these offerings from the Philippians helped Paul to minister to the Thessalonians because his need had been met by the Philippian money, and he did not have to sidetrack himself to run off raising funds. He could concentrate on the impact of winning the battle in Thessalonica, which he did. So verse 16 says, "For even in Thessalonica, you sent both once and again for my need."

Now verse 17 is a very critical verse in this study. So let's see again what it says. The first thing it says is, "No." It begins with the word "not," and it is our strongest Greek negative "ou." Paul says, "Not in any way (in no way) because." Again, this is this Greek particle "hoti." This is the reason.

And you must look back to verse 14 in order to get the connection, because Paul has sort of been sidetracking here with little recollections and reminiscences. And now he goes back to verse 14, where he said, "Notwithstanding, you have done well. You did the right thing that you did share with my affliction." Then in verse 17, he's actually picking up the fact that he's told them, "Now you did the right thing to send the money." But again, he says, "I want to make one thing very clear. Not in any way because I desire" ("epizeteo"). "Epizeteo" comes from this word "zeteo" which means to seek, and this little preposition "epi" here at the front of the word means "upon." But when it's combined in this way with a verb, it intensifies what the verb is saying. So it is saying here, "Not because I really was earnestly seeking."

He means, "It is not because I was trying to get something out of you here in the form of a gift. It's not because I was really pushing in the form of a desire to get some funds from you." It is present tense. This was never Paul's motivation. It is active. It was not his desire. "Not that I was earnestly desiring from you a gift." The word for "gift" is "doma." This is one of the words for gifts in the New Testament. This is the word that stresses the concrete reality.

It's interesting that Paul should use this here, because we would say "hard cash." Paul says, "Not because I was hustling with everything in me for the hard cash, and not because I wanted this realistic money gift." "Doma" looks at the reality. It doesn't look at the fact that it was a present. You can look at a gift in two ways. You can say, "Well, this was a presence. It expresses a kindness from somebody. Somebody has given me a present." And the thing that you appreciate is (as we would say) the thought – the sentiment which was expressed that you were given a gift.

The apostle Paul is zeroing in on the opposite side. You could take that present and you could look at the gift itself, and your attitude could be centering not on the fact that somebody was kind enough to give you a present, but the thing you were interested in was what they actually gave you. So Paul says, "I am not looking for the "doma." Furthermore, the Greek has the definite article "the." So he says, "Not because I'm looking for the gift, referring specifically to the money gift from the Philippians. Then he says, "But." We have several words for "but" in Greek. This one is "alla." It is stronger than another word we have for "but" that we started off with here – this word "de." "Alla" is a little stronger one. Actually, it stands opposite to this previous "ou" that the sentence began with. "Not on the one hand because I desire a gift, but on the other hand."

However, there's something else that's interesting about "alla." "Alla" negates. It gives you the negative, but it does not give the negative with a hard hammer blow like this "ou" does. "Alla" leaves the door open a little bit. We would say, "It isn't that I was seeking the actual hard cash gift so much." Why would he say it that way? Again because Paul is trying to balance things. Paul is not trying to say, "I don't need your hard cash gifts, because he does need their hard cash gifts. He's not trying to tell them that their money was not important. But what he is doing is to say to them that, "While it is important, that was not the thing that brought me great joy." And he's going to tell them what brought him great joy here in a moment.

So "alla" is a special Greek negative that says, "Not because of this so much, but it does leave the door open that, yes, that is important and that is in part the reason." Paul does desire the financial support of the Philippian Christians for his missionary work. But he wants their gifts for a greater reason. That's what he proceeds to tell us.

**Bear Fruit**

He says, "But I desire." The word "desire" looks like this in the Greek: "epizeteo." This is repeated for emphasis. We've had it twice. We had it a moment ago where he said, "Not because I desire a gift, but I desire something else," and he uses the same word that we just had, introducing the main thing that makes him happy about the Philippian giving. What is it? He said, "Because I want fruit." The Greek word for fruit is "karpos." This is a word which refers to some kind of production. Furthermore, it has the definite article before it. So it is the "karpos," so it's referring to a specific kind of production – the production that we refer to as divine good production. The Holy Spirit leads spiritual believers to finance the work of communicating bible doctrine. That act of financing is fruit-bearing on the part of God's people. This is what the Lord said to his disciples: "I'm going to leave you behind so that you'll bear fruit – more fruit, and much fruit." The whole point of the Christian life is to be productive of divine good.

Christians do not just naturally desire to give away their money to God's work. Have you ever noticed that about yourself? The truth of the matter is that you and I do not by nature like to give our money away – not to anything, including God's Word. The sooner you admit that to yourself, the easier it will be for you to be able to deal with the problem of maturity in that respect. Fruit bearing, therefore, is not a natural thing, because fruit bearing is based upon a spiritual maturity structure in the soul. Once doctrine has been taken into your life on a broad enough scale, you will discover that you have less and less taste for hoarding and hanging onto your money. You will be responsible with what God gives you, but you will discover that you have more and more desire to do what the Philippians did to finance the Lord's work.

So the apostle Paul says that a spiritual maturity structure under the control of God the Holy Spirit will cause you to be fruit-bearing believers. The point in this context is that when you give your money to God's work, you are bearing fruit. For every bit of grace giving that you do, it is fruit which is being born as the result of the life of Jesus Christ that is in you. Remember the principle: you in me, and I in you. What makes you go forward in the Christian life? The fact that Jesus Christ is living His life through you. So when we talk about fruit-bearing, we're talking about what God the Holy Spirit can do with a Christian that has the capacity to do it. And you will not have the capacity to bear fruit by giving your money until you have developed this base of spiritual maturity. I desire fruit.

Now, why, Paul? Well, so we can pay the bills in the local church. Why? So we can help the missionaries. Why? "Well, Paul, so that you won't be pressed and strapped for funds. You won't have any worries. There's going to be ample money while you're in prison. We're going to take care of things." None of those reasons are given. Verse 17 is one of those critical passages in the Scripture that you will thank God for all eternity if you understand it. The understanding of this passage will have eternal returns to you as few passages in Scripture do. If you miss this one, you probably will miss tremendously every place else down the line.

That is because the apostle Paul makes it clear now why he wants to see Christians in the status of fruit-bearing. That is, "But I desire fruit that may abound." The word "abound" is "plenazo." The word "plenazo" means "accumulate." The first part of the word, "plen," is what we call the comparative degree in the Greek, just like we have in English. That means we have much, we have more, and then we have most. The comparative degree here of this word "plen" is the comparative degree in the Greek language, which means "more" or "greater." That is, it has a super abundance. So what this word can be translated as also is "to super accumulate" or "super abound."

**Storing Treasures in Heaven**

Now, the apostle Paul is saying that he wants these Christians to bear fruit so that they will accumulate something in a super abounding way. It's in the present tense, which means that he wants to see Christians continually accumulating this particular thing. It is active. The Christians themselves will have this accumulation credited to their account. Furthermore, it's a participle, which is a principle of the Christian life being stated here, namely how you store treasures in heaven. "For (he explains what it is that we are going to have accumulated) in order that you may have in a super abounding way, accumulated to (here's the direction) your account." Again, it's that word "logos" which here is used as it was in verse 15, as it was concerning an account.

The idea here is to their credit. When we say, "To your account" or "To your credit," Paul is referring to something that the Christians will receive to their credit. "It is not because I desire the hard cash, but because I want to see you bearing fruit, which is what you will do when you give your money on grace principles to the Lord's work for the purpose that you may super aboundingly accumulate to your account." What is it they're going to super aboundingly accumulate to their account? What they're going to accumulate, we find in Scripture, is described as rewards – spiritual, but realistic, actual rewards.

What this passage tells us is this. Paul is happy with the financial giving of the Philippians to God's work because it meant eternal treasures in heaven for the Philippians. Paul is not commending their giving just because he needed the funds. Grace giving is putting points up on the scoreboard for one's eternal enjoyment.

So verse 17 says, "Not because I earnestly seek the gift itself, but I am after the fruit of divine good production which is accumulating in super abundance to your account. What is he referring to that is going to be accumulated to the Christians account?

**The Judgment Seat of Christ**

Turn to 2 Corinthians 5:10 where the apostle Paul says, "For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ that everyone may receive the things done in his body according to that he has done, whether it be good or bad." This Scripture tells us that someday every one of us is going to face a certain judgment. This is a passage which is spoken to Christians. If you run your eye over 2 Corinthians 5:1-9, you will see that there are constant references to things which could only apply to Christians. So all through this passage, it's evident he's speaking to Christians.

Then he gets to verse 10, and he tells us that we're going to stand before a judgment which he calls here, the Judgment Seat of Christ. What is this judgment about? First of all, get it out of your mind that this has anything to do with judging relative to your salvation. When you received Jesus Christ as Savior, that issue was settled. God will never again judge you relative to whether your soul goes to heaven or hell.

The context shows that Paul is speaking to people who are already destined for heaven. This is a judgment for somebody who is already in heaven in a glorified body. It takes place after you go to heaven. So this is strictly to believers. Nor is this to do with sins that a Christian has committed after salvation. Sometimes people think, "Yes, you are born again, and all those sins at the time you're born again are wiped off, but all the sins you commit after salvation, that's what you're going to be judged for in heaven." But again, that has no justification in Scripture.

I remind you that the Bible is very clear that the past, the present, and the future have all been taken care of relative to sin in what God has provided. It is put behind Him. All sin was judged at the cross. Your evil will never be publicly portrayed and paraded in heaven. Your sins have been covered. Nor is it for the fact that you, as a Christian, go to heaven with unconfessed sins. Sometimes that question is asked: "What happens if I die and I have someone unconfessed sins. Some people like to make a great deal of that. This is another technique to try to scare Christians to behave themselves. But this again is covered by the death of Christ. If a Christian persists in sin and out of fellowship, as we shall see in a moment, the loss that comes to him is the loss in terms of reward. He is not a fruit-bearing person. Therefore, he is not storing treasures in heaven. But the issue of sin is not what is involved here.

What we're talking about looks like this in the Greek: It's called the "bema." That is the Judgment Seat. The word "Judgment Seat" in the Greek is "bema". It actually means a platform. It's a place where an official (a judge) resides. Today we call it the bench. It's a place in ancient Greece where the athletes would come to be awarded. They had played by the rules; they had won; and, they were awarded at the "bema" – at the judge's platform with a laurel wreath placed on their head as a sign of victory. What we're told here in this passage in 2 Corinthians 5:10 is that each of us is going to stand before just such a Judgment Seat. So what he's saying is, "For it is necessary." The word "must" is the Greek word "dei," and this word means "it is necessary." You have no option in the matter. You must stand there.

So it says, "We must all appear." The word "appear" is the Greek word "phaneroo." "Phaneroo" means more than just to be there. This is the Greek word that means that when you're there, you'll be revealed in your true character. "Phaneroo" doesn't mean that you just have to show up at the Judgment Seat of Christ. It means that when you're there, you will see yourself as you really are relative to what you did with your life. It's in the aorist tense – when the judgment comes. It's passive. You have no choice. You're going to be there. It's infinitive. It expresses God's purpose.

It says that the reason we are going to appear before this Judgment Seat is, "That everyone (that is, every single individual Christian) may receive." The word "may receive" in the Greek is "komizo," meaning "to recompense;" that is, to get what's coming to you. "Komizo" means you're going to stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ to receive what's coming to you. It's the aorist tense. It's the point that you stand before this Judgment Seat. It's middle. You yourself will receive the results of this judgment. It's subjunctive. It's potential. It's something that is ahead.

What is the basis of the judgment? For the things done in his body? It is according to the things that you have done in your body. What does that mean? It means what you did with your life as a Christian, whether it be good or bad. The idea is that you're going to be judged in proportion to what you did with the body, "Whether it be good." That's the Greek word "agathos." "Agathos" means "good" in the sense that it's beneficial to others. "Whether it be good or bad," and the word for "bad" is "phaulos." "Phaulos" means worthless.

So you're going to stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ, and all of your life is going to be viewed and evaluated by the Lord Jesus Christ as to whether it has been beneficial in its effects ("agathos"), or whether it has been worthless in its effects ("phaulos"). He is saying, "It is necessary for all of us to be revealed as we really are before the Judgment Seat of Christ, so that each one may receive recompense in proportion to the things done through the body, whether good or bad." That is the general principle. Paul has this in the back of his mind when he talks about wanting to see the Philippians bear fruit to accumulate to their accounts. To accumulate what to their account? What is going to be judged as being to their account or not to their account at this "bema" judgment?

The fuller details we find in 1 Corinthians 3:10-15. The apostle Paul says, "According to the grace of God which is given unto me as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let every man take heed how he builds upon it." Paul has laid the foundation in the lives of these Corinthian Christians because he brought them salvation. Now they must build upon this foundation. He warns them to be aware how they build on it.

Verse 11: "For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." There's no other foundation for spiritual life or relationship to God except the person of Jesus Christ first.

Verse 12: "Now if any man build upon this foundation (that is, your salvation) gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble." Here we have a combination. "Now if." This is a first-class condition "if." We could say, "Since," because it is true. Christians actually are building something during their lifetime. You notice that there are two kinds of things that you will build. You may build indestructible things called gold, silver, or precious stones which fire will not destroy. That stands for divine good production. Or you may build destructible things like hay, wood, and stubble that fire will burn up. That's describing human good.

**The Logistics of the Judgment Seat of Christ**

Verse 13: "Every man's work shall be made manifest." Again, we have the stress made on every man, which is the Greek word "hekastos," and it means everyone. It comes right there at the very start of the sentence, just like it does in English, in order to stress that you're going to stand there by yourself. Some Christians are hoping that all the believers are going to stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ at the same time, and that you can scooch yourself down behind somebody. But they're not going to do it that way. They're going to have all of you sitting out here on the cloud, and one at a time they're going to call your name. You're going to walk over there because you'll just walk through space like nobody's business. And you're going to stand there before the platform. And there is actually going to be Jesus Christ, the son of God, the almighty God-man looking down on you.

He will look over at the angel; the angel will open the book; and, he will start listing your works. Now, the thing that he's going to list will fall into these two categories. Your works will be listed, and they will either be indestructible, or they will be destructible. So every one of us stands there individually. Then again, "Our work is manifest;" that is, it is shown in its true value. When will this be done? "In that day," referring to the Judgment Seat of Christ that we just looked at in 2 Corinthians 5:10. It says, "That day is going to declare it." The word "declare" is the Greek word "deloo," and "deloo" means to make plain. The Judgment Seat of Christ is going to clarify what part of your works were human good, and what part were divine good. This is future in its meaning – something that is yet ahead of you. It's an active evaluation.

Then it says that this judgment of the value of your works is going to be revealed as the result of fire. The analogy here is testing building materials by fire. This is symbolic, speaking of the fire of God's judgment. It is God's judgment of what we have done, namely the judgment of Jesus Christ, that's going to determine whether we've got divine good that brings rewards, or human good that is total loss.

It says that, "It's going to be revealed." This is the Greek word "apokalupto." "Apokalupto" means "to uncover" or "to unveil". It's in the present tense, but it's used as the future here. This in Greek is called a futuristic present. It's actually out in the future that we are going to be uncovered relative to our works in this way, but it is so certain, that when the Greek wants to make it clear to you that there's no escape, it will talk about a future event with the present tense, as if it were already happening. It's in the future, but it's viewed as being a settled issue. It's passive. You will not be able to divert God's attention. You will not be able to cover your tracks. You will not be able to do anything but stand there and receive the results of this judgment. It is subjunctive, so it is potential – a day which is coming.

"The fire will test." That is the Greek word "dokimazo." "Dokimazo" is the Greek word for testing that has a particular kind of testing. This is the kind of testing that looks to find what is good. There is another Greek word, "perazo," which is testing just to determine whether something is good or evil. It mainly brings to light what is evil. But "dokimazo" is a testing with the specific purpose that God is trying to find the divine good. Now, again, that's pretty gracious of God. He even says, "When I test you, what is the purpose of my test? It's not so I can find all the human good; so I can make a fool of you in heaven; so I can parade you before all the other Bereans; so I can show what a clown you were with your life; so I can show how you squandered it; or, so I can show how you bloated yourself with human good production." No, that isn't it. That's just going to be bypassed. When the Judgment comes at that platform, Jesus Christ is going to judge in order to find what is divine good. That's what "dokimazo" tells you – that is the thing He is looking for.

So it's going to try every man's work by fire: "And the fire shall test every man's work of what sort it is." That means of what kind it is. It's going to reveal the quality. Now, what are the results?

Verses 14-15: "If any man's (or anybody's – don't think you escaped something, ladies) work abides, which he has built upon it, he shall receive a reward. Here again, we have the very thing that the apostle Paul is talking about: "Because I want to see accumulating super abundance to your accounts – fruit-bearing, for what purpose? To store rewards in heaven. You couldn't have it more specifically stressed in the Word of God. It is important to put points on the board. If you don't, you're going to lose the game. It is important to store treasures in heaven. If you don't, you will be the poorer for it for all eternity. Everybody has an equal chance to do it. Some Christians never will be able to do it. They will never overcome their natural inclination to refuse to give their money to God's work. Some will overcome it mightily through the intake of doctrine. They'll be fabulously rich in heaven. Every Christian is going to come under this judgment.

It says, "If," which is the first-class condition, because some Christians' work will abide, "That he has built upon the foundation of salvation in Jesus Christ, he shall receive a reward." What's the reward? The Bible doesn't spell it out. The Bible simply tells us that God is going to reward us, and it is going to be something, no doubt, very tremendous.

Verse 15: "If any man's work shall be burned (that is, it shall have been proven to be worthless), then he shall suffer loss." He shall, as the result of this burning up, suffer loss. The word for "loss" here means "forfeit." He's going to forfeit something. This is the Greek word "zemioo." "Zemioo" means to forfeit. What's he going to forfeit? He is going to forfeit the reward that could have been his. He is going to forfeit reward. He shall suffer loss: "But he himself shall be saved, yet as by fire." That is the very judgment of God that says, "Your good works were human good. I have nothing for which to reward you," or, "I have very little for which to reward you." That same true judgment of God is also going to save you, because that same accurate, honest, fair judgment of God is also going to say, "You're under the blood of My Son. You're cared for because you have received My Son as your Savior, and therefore you may enter My heaven." So that same God, who is a God of justice, will judge you to lose reward; to receive reward; and, to ensure your eternal life.

So what constitutes works that survive? I should add that it's not entirely the work that you do. I know that somebody is going to come up and say, "Now, please tell me what kind of works will survive? I don't want to fool around with any other kind. If I were the conniving type of preacher that I have the great ability to be, I would give you a list of such things. I could think of all kinds of them that would benefit us greatly in order to get you hustling to do certain things. But that's not the way it works. It's not entirely the work in itself. It's the motivation by which the work is done.

Two people can walk up to that offering box and give a gift to the Lord's work. One can do it because he is trying to bribe God for something. Some girl can look at herself and say, "I'm 20 years old and I'm not married. My life is practically ruined. It has passed me by. Lord, I'm going to give you 15% of my income if you'll give me a nice husband. So she gives 15% of her income very faithfully in the offering box. Will she receive reward for that? Never. She won't even receive a nice husband for that. She more likely is going to receive a bum for that. She's all mixed up.

Somebody else might come along. Some young woman might come along and say, "God, I'm 20 years old, and I'm so grateful that you have helped me survive the second wave of libido, and that I haven't fallen for somebody else. I'm just so grateful for the fact that doctrine is working in my life." So she gives 15% of her income. She gives it on a grace basis. She gives it as unto the Lord. God is going to take the same gift (the same amount), and she will receive reward for it while the other girl will not. So it isn't just what you give. It's the motivation under which you give it. A Spirit-filled Christian will serve; will exercise his gifts; and, will exercise his priesthood in a way that it is divine good production, and that God can reward. Another Christian will do the same thing in a way that it's done under old sin nature motivations or appeals, and it's human good production.

After a study like this, it would be very tempting to ask all of you to bow your heads and close your eyes, and to ask yourselves to examine your own attitude toward your material things; what you have done with the things that God has given you; and, how you have supported the Lord's work. It would be tempting to ask you whether you are not just a little bit ashamed of yourself. Then while all heads are bowed and eyes closed, we could ask, "How many of you will just slip a hand up and say, 'I'm going to give 5% more?' I see that hand there. Yes, I see that one there. Yes, I see that one. God bless you, brother. God bless you, sister. Is there another who will give just 5% more?"

Now after you give it, are you going to get more reward? Never. You're giving it under non-grace principles. So be careful that you think that it's just nice good things. Be careful that you don't misunderstand even what Paul is saying – that it's just the fact that you finance God's work. Unless you finance it in the right way, it will not be to your reward. It has to be to the Lord's glory. It has to flow from the motivation of the Spirit of God. It has to come as the result of your spiritual maturity structure, and having the capacity to give, not as the result of your old sin nature being tricked into giving by some slick town preacher who enables you to do something that you would not do.

The time of this judgment is at the resurrection. After you have had your body raised, you are taken immediately into the Lord's presence. We call that the rapture, described in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17. At that point, you are going to receive your rewards. Revelation 19:7 describes the return of the church, and we see that the saints are dressed in their righteousnesses, which indicates that they have now received the rewards for their good works. The righteousnesses with which they come back are the divine good production that they have brought with them. So the rewards are associated with that great day when we meet Christ in the air and he takes us to heaven to be with Himself. Then we stand at the platform. Then we receive this judgment.

So financing the Lord's work is the right thing to do. But doing it in the right way is critical. Because if you do it the right way, if it's under the Spirit of God's leading, just the result of your capacity that you've built in your soul spiritually to do this, there are going to be great rewards for you in heaven. Don't ever let any preacher trick you. I've heard plenty of them come up with this kind of nonsense that, "No, there will not be some Christians who will enjoy rewards that other Christians will not enjoy, because our rewards are merely crowns, and the Bible says we're all going to take our crowns and throw them at Jesus' feet. So all the guys who spent their life producing human good are not going to be any more left out than those who spent their lives producing divine." Well, you go ahead and believe that kind of bunko if you want to, but just remember what the apostle Paul said: "I want to see you Philippians super-abounding, accumulating treasures in heaven. I want to see something to your account.

Crowns, indeed, we shall have, but those are Medals of Honor. The rewards are something apart from that. Anytime you get a spiritual leader who tries to suggest to you that rewards are not a reality, it's because he doesn't want to alert people to this, and because he doesn't want to get some Christians identified for the no-good characters that they are in the way they handled their money; in the way they handled their lives; and, in the way they handled their spiritual gifts. It's up to you. You're your own priest. You can be anything you want to be. But there is a judgment day coming. Someday, it's report card day at the Judgment Seat of Christ, and then it'll be "phaneroo." There will be no hiding and no kidding. It will be complete manifestation. You can kid us now; you can be a clown; and, all of us can be impressed with you. But up there, you're going to get what's coming to you, whether it be good or whether it be bad. It's up to you to choose.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1973

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