

The Judgement of the Believer?



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A brief excerpt of the study: In this study, we will address a divisive question within the body of Christ: “**Is a Believer Subject to the Judgment of Christ?**” And as is with many disagreements in the body of Christ, this dispute is also based on the truth we have understood in part which we have allowed to overshadow the parts we don't. As a result, we have created a tunnel vision of a self-reasoned conclusion to the neglect of truths that might contradict it. The outcome of which is that we exclude ourselves from incremental truths that are appointed for the days we are living in. And this subject is not something we can easily brush aside to be of secondary importance, because our understanding of this truth will determine the manner we conduct our lives as Christians, which will bear serious consequences. So, we aim to address this subject from the perspective of the consequence of the Second Death, by exploring what constitutes an escape from its judgment. Now, if you want to explore this subject in more depth we encourage you to explore the studies titled, “**Exempt from Hades not Hell,**” and “**Judged for Righteousness not Sin.**”

We will begin with a prayer: We thank you, Lord, for this opportunity, our prayer is for your word to go out in the power of your Spirit so that it might bring repentance to the knowledge of the truth to those who hear, we pray this in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The main text of our study is from 2 Corinthians 5 verse 10, which reads, “**For we must all be revealed before the judgment seat of Christ**, that each may receive back the things done through the body according to what he did, **whether good or evil.**”

Abolishment of Death.

We start our study with a simple but controversial question: — from what did Jesus come in the flesh to save us? Now, the majority of times the answer Christians give, is to say, “He saved us from Hell.” But this is a great deception, one which we ourselves have propagated against ourselves. And whether we believe it or not, the Lord Jesus Christ did not come in the flesh to save mankind from Hell, but from the Covenant of Death and Hades, that is the First Death that came to effect on the account of the one offense of Adam. The key point being, “**Jesus in the flesh!**” Hell, which has to do with the Second Death, is an entirely new judgment that comes to effect at the end of all ages, the key point of which has to do with Christ as Spirit. And the distinction between these two answers is the core issue that has to do with the judgment of Christ that is to come. And since the majority of the Church is geared to think according to the former, we interpret the Scriptures from this tainted perspective and are misled. The consequence of which is that, we at times have become lax in our duties towards those that seem to have grasped the fringes of the truth of the gospel, wrongfully concluding in ourselves that they have already escaped from Hell. When they are at a precious stage of infancy that must be carefully nurtured so that they may grow to make their election sure. [2 Peter 1 verses 10 to 11.] The result of which is that there are many in the body of Christ that have stopped at the forgiveness of sins, to the neglect of all other requirements.

The problem is we fail to understand, there is an absolute requirement for the judgment of the First Death to be annulled, before the judgment of the Second can be applied. When the Lord Jesus Christ walked the streets of Judea, the First Death was in full effect on the account of the sin of Adam, which He had to abolish by the sacrifice of Himself. As Paul said, “Therefore, since the children have partaken of blood and of flesh, **He also likewise took part in the same things**, so that **through His death He might destroy the one holding the power of death**, that is, the devil, and **might set free those who all their time to live were subject to slavery through fear of death.**” Hebrews 2 verses 14 to 15. And again to Timothy he says, “And now having been made manifest by **the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, having abolished death** and having **brought to light life and immortality through the gospel.**” 2 Timothy 1 verse 10. Here, when Paul said, “He has abolished death,” it might appear that it is part of the immortality that comes through the gospel, but it is not. These two points seemingly appear interchangeable, but they are not. The abolishment of death is a fact that applies to all of mankind, it is a direct consequence of Christ having put away the sins of the world. But immortality belongs to those that believe the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in order to be established in the New Covenant and be saved. All of which are in respect to the fulfilment of the words of Isaiah who prophesied saying, “**Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation;** Whoever believes will not act hastily. Also **I will make justice the measuring line, and righteousness the plummet;**” Then he says, “**Your covenant with Death will be annulled, and your agreement with Sheol will not stand.**” Isaiah 28 verses 17 to 18. Isaiah was basically saying, the main purpose for which the Messiah came in the flesh was to abolish Death and Hades, in order to establish a New Covenant of righteousness. And if you are able to get anything out of this study, you must be confident of this truth, and must be able to distinguish the merits of the First Death from that of the Second.

Paul said, "For the love of Christ compels us, having concluded this, **that One has died for all, therefore all have died.**" Then he says, "Therefore from now, **we regard no one according to the flesh.** Even though we have regarded Christ according to flesh, **yet now we regard Him thus no longer.**" 2 Corinthians 5 verse 14, & 16. Paul was making the point that since Jesus Christ was judged according to the flesh on the account of the sins of the world, no one else can be judged according to the flesh. Hence the reason he says, "**Therefore from now, we regard no one according to the flesh.**" Think of it, — if we are expected not to regard anyone according to the flesh, how much more does God perceive this to be true. We have to see Jesus on the cross with the sins of the entire world upon His shoulder, through which He has abolished Death and Hades once and for all. Meaning God cannot judge the world for the sins committed in the flesh, since He has already judged Jesus, as Paul says, "**God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not reckoning their trespasses to them.**" 2 Corinthians 5 verse 19. For which reason the first aspect that describes our journey in Christ, is illustrated in having come out of the flesh through the death of the cross, in order to be raised to a new life in the Spirit, so that we may live a new way of life in Him. [Romans 7 verse 6.]

So what does this really mean? The point is for us to understand the merit of the First Death as relates to the separation of the Soul from the Body. In which respect Paul says, "So then, **just as through one trespass,** it is unto **condemnation to all men,** so also through **one act of righteousness** it is unto **justification of life to all men.**" Romans 5 verse 18. Please note, all mankind was condemned on the account of the one trespass of Adam, likewise, all mankind is now justified to life on the account of the one act of righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. This will be troublesome to comprehend if you do not distinguish the body from the soul, or if you hold the erroneous doctrine of spiritual death, which is a doctrine invented by mankind. We have to look at this from the perspective of having been redeemed from the First Death, that is from being captives of the kingdom of darkness. In which regard Paul says in another place, "For **since death, [that is first death,] came by a man,** so also **by a man has come the resurrection of the dead.** For as indeed **in Adam all die,** so also **in Christ all will be made alive.**" 1 Corinthians 15 verses 21 to 22. Justification of Life that came through Christ, is compared against the sure judgment of Death that came through Adam. One act of disobedience, against one act of righteousness, Death in one and Life in the other, and it applies to all because it is addressing the state of our body. So in simple terms, just as in Adam the Body of all mankind died, so in Christ the body of all mankind will be made alive, meaning, everyone will be raised one day.

That is to say, in the resurrection where the annulment of the First death is fully completed, the souls and body of mankind will be united, as to be made alive. The significant point of which is that, only then can the judgment of the Second Death can be applied, on the account the judgment of the First death is fully annulled. We need to bear in mind, people who go to Hell are not dead as we traditionally know to be death, but are alive, since the body and soul are united to be one eternally. So they are cast out from the presence of God in this state of life to be subject to eternal fire. However, even though their body is made alive, their soul remains dead in sin and trespasses, meaning they are in a state of condemnation of conscience. [Ephesians 2 verse 1.] The only way the soul of mankind can be redeemed from this state of condemnation is by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, through which a distinction is made between those who belong to Christ, and those who do not.

So, when we say, the body of the unbelievers will be made alive in the Lord Jesus Christ, the best way this can be illustrated is in respect to Adam, after the fall. God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, **to know good and evil.** And now, lest **he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever** – therefore **the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden** to till the ground from which he was taken." Genesis 3 verses 22 to 23. The point God was making was that

it would be detrimental for mankind to remain in a body that lives forever, while the soul is in the state of condemnation of evil. And this is exactly the state in which unbelievers will be raised on the final day, their body is made alive on the account of the Lord Jesus Christ who has abolished death, even though their soul remains condemned, on the account they have refused the sanctifying effect of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have to understand, it is the First Death that is annulled through Christ, and that for everyone whether we believe it or not!

And this is where the concept of spiritual death also falls apart. Because if we say, it is the spirit of Adam that died on the account of his disobedience, thereby we all died spiritually. Then when Paul says, “all will be made alive in Christ,” this would mean everyone's spirit will also be made alive on the account of the righteousness of Christ. And we know this is not true, since we claim we are saved because our spirit is made alive in Christ while the world remains dead, then this would mean there is no difference between a believer and an unbeliever. However, if it applies to all then we must understand it was not speaking about our spirit, but our body that was once subject to death through the fall of Adam. It is the body that died, not the spirit. [Romans 8 verse 10.] So our body will surely be raised, the question is, what state would our soul be in?

Judgment Seat of Christ.

And this brings us to the point when the Lord said to His disciples, “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and **on this Rock I will build My Church, and the Gates of Hades will not prevail against it.**” Matthew 16 verse 18. This statement that was once a cause for division in the Church, is once more embroiled in another controversy. And before you judge the previous disagreement in respect to those that failed to grasp its truth, please ask yourself, how are you interpreting “**the Gates of Hades?**” Because, how we perceive this simple word is the central issue to understanding the judgments of God. Now, the prevailing thought within the Church of God is that the forgiveness of sins in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ is an escape from Hell, which is something we ourselves have concluded through the misinterpretation of the word “Hades.” The word, “Hades,” which is directly associated with the Hebrew word “Sheol,” is a place that is found in the depths of the Earth where the souls of dead mankind are kept. [Psalm 16 verse 10, Acts 2 verse 27.] So, when the Lord said, “**the gates of Hades,**” the sentiment He wanted to clearly convey to us is that the Church is exempt from the Judgment of the First Death. Whereby the legal authority the kingdom of darkness held over the souls of mankind, on the account of the sin of Adam, has been revoked. So, by saying Hades, the Lord is separating those that belong to Him, that have received the forgiveness of sins, through which the power of Satan is broken. [Acts 26 verse 18.]

Having said this, forgiveness of sins is not exemption from the judgment of righteousness. If the Lord had said, “the gates of Gehenna, that is “Hell” will not prevail against His Church, then the Lord would have meant, the Church is beyond being held accountable for the righteous judgement of God to come, which is in respect to the Second Death. [Matthew 10 verse 28.] That is to say, the fact that the Lord carefully framed His word as to refer to “Hades” that is in respect to the First Death, and not “Gehenna,” which is in respect to the Second Death, must bear so much weight. The significance of which is that though the Church is saved from the First Death which is in reference to the sin of Adam, it is not exempt from the Second, which is in reference to the righteousness of Christ. And the Church makes a very big mistake when blurring these two concepts. For which reason our study is aimed at illustrating the serious consequences of failing to understand the terms of the Judgments of Christ. It is like a man expecting a tap on the wrist only to be faced with a noose.

Now, the common error Christians make is that we do not distinguish between the judgement of sin which leads to death, and that of Righteousness which is for the purpose of inheriting life. So we commonly say, Christians do not come into judgement, and that is absolutely right in part as far as it concerns the First Death. As the Lord said, “Truly, truly, I say to you that **the one hearing My word and believing the One having sent Me**, he has eternal life and **does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.**” John 5 verse 24. The whole concept of exemption from judgment is based on the statement, “**has passed out of death into life.**” Meaning, we are redeemed from the current state of death to which we are currently subject, that is the First Death. So, this statement has absolutely nothing to do with the Second death, which is entirely based on the inheritance of the kingdom of God and is pronounced against those that are first made alive. We have to bear in mind that the Second Death is a judgment that brings one from life to death, that is why Jude says, “Twice having died.” The only time exemption from the Second Death is mentioned in the entire bible is in Revelation 20 verse 6, when the dead are raised in a spiritual body in order to reign with Christ for 1000 years, and this is of significant importance which we will address later.

Now, many have sought to explain this passage in a mindset of, “the gates of Hell will not prevail against the Church,” and, “a believer does not come into judgment.” As a result they have sought to make a distinction between the judgement seat which Paul speaks about in the main text of our study, which is called “the béma seat,” and that of the Great White Throne described in Revelation 20 verse 11, and in Matthew 25 verse 31. The idea is to illustrate the béma seat purely being for the purpose of giving reward to Christians, while the Great White throne being for the judgement of the Lake of Fire. So the argument is, if you stand before the béma seat of Christ, then you are not subject to the judgment of the Second Death. However, the béma seat is not for the purpose of reward only, since Christ Himself was condemned to death from a béma seat of Pontius Pilate. [John 20 verse 13.] More so, the Great white throne is not only for the judgement of Second Death, but even to reward others to life, that is those whose names are found in the Book of Life. From the same Great White Throne Christ judged the sheep nations to life, while He judged the goat nations to the Second Death. [Matthew 25 verses 31 to 46, Revelation 20 verses 13 to 14.]

So, we need to have a correct expectation of what it means to stand before the béma seat of Christ. The béma seat is simply meant to illustrate a seat from which a ruler is going to render a ruling, that is all. It is no different from the seat a judge may sit on in order to render judgment by striking the gavel. And the main difference between the béma seat of Christ, and the Great White Throne is as it relates to jurisdiction. In that, the béma seat of Christ is meant to determine entry into the kingdom of God, to which only those that have obtained the new nature as spirit have the privilege. And this idea of jurisdiction is illustrated in the writing of Luke, where Pilate realising Jesus was from Galilee, therefore under Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent Him to be judged by Herod. [Luke 23 verses 6 to 7.] Likewise, the béma seat of Christ has an element of jurisdiction as it relates to those that have the option to inherit the kingdom of heaven. While the Great White Throne represents an ultimate judgment that encompasses both heaven and earth. Where every creature from the height of the heavens to the depth of the earth are all brought forth to face the ultimate eternal judgment. The end of which is that the present heaven and earth, that is the universe we know, will melt away in fervent heat. [2 Peter 3 verses 7, & 10.]

Having said this, the problem is that we think the judgment unbelievers are faced with is different from that of our own. We assumed the judgment of unbelievers to be on the basis of sins, as a result we have used their judgment to be our qualification. However, we need to realise neither they, nor us, are judged for the sins committed in the flesh, on the account of the Lord Jesus Christ who has put all

the sins of the world upon Himself. [2 Corinthians 5 verses 19, & 21.] As a result the judgment to come is based on righteousness which is in respect to the Life of the Son of God, then we can see neither they nor us are exempt for its judgment. What we have to understand is, the judgment to come is not on the basis of the First Covenant which resulted in death on the account of sin, but on the Second which resulted in life, which applies to believers and unbelievers alike. The difference between an unbeliever and a believer in respect to the Second Covenant is that a believer has the possibility of obtaining the eternal riches, while the unbeliever has none.

However, because we approach the béma seat of Christ with the mindset of “no judgement,” our theological point of view does not allow for the possibility of consequence when faced with the judgment of Christ. As a result we have taken the statement that is directed at the Judgment of the First Death, which was annulled by the death of the Son of God in respect to sin, and we have applied it to the judgment seat of Christ, which is established by His Life in respect to righteousness. However, these are two fundamentally different concepts. The judgment of the First Death is in respect to something no one can do anything about, that is sin. While the Second Judgment is all about the application of faith in regards to what God is ready and willing to do for us, according to what He has made available to us in Christ. And this point is repeatedly illustrated for us by the Lord in the parable of Talents, in Matthew 25 verses 14 to 30, the parable of minas, in Luke 19 verses 11 to 27, and the parable of the servants of the household, in Matthew 24 verses 45 to 51 and Luke 12 verses 42 to 48. All of which have one central theme, that is the demand the Master makes of them is based on one simple factor, “what have they done with the gift the master has given to them.” For which reason Luke says, “And **everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required;** and from him **to whom much has been committed, more will they ask of him.**” Luke 12 verse 48. And as much as the Master of the household rendered rewards to His faithful servants, in each case there are some that were faced with His wrath.

The Body of Inheritance.

The best way to understand the judgment seat of Christ, is to think of it from the perspective of the ultimate reward that has to do with obtaining a spiritual body in the likeness of the Lord. So in every instance when Paul speaks of the inheritance of the kingdom of God that is to come, he speaks of it from the point of view of the body of inheritance. And just as Christ was born into the natural realm bodily to be flesh and blood in order to obtain the inheritance of the Earth, we must also be born into the realm of the spirit bodily in the likeness of the Heavenly Man, so that we may be partakers of the inheritance of Heaven with Him. And this point is illustrated in Romans 8 verse 23, 1 Corinthians 15 verses 20 to 23, & 46 to 49, 2 Corinthians 5 verses 1 to 5, Ephesians 1 verses 13 to 14, 1 Thessalonians 4 verses 15 to 17, and Revelation 20 verse 6. All these references are in respect to one concept, that is the resurrection of those that belong to Christ in the likeness of His body, which has to do with the Day of the Lord. In which regard Paul said, “**For our citizenship exists in the heavens,** from whence also we are awaiting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, **who will transform our body of humiliation, conformed to the body of His glory.**” Philippians 3 verses 20 to 21. Paul makes this statement in contrast to those Christians that have given themselves to live to the dictates of the desires of their flesh, through which they have made themselves an enemy of the Cross of Christ and subject to destruction. Therefore, if the spiritual body is in itself the reward, then we cannot assume we are already in the body of reward when we come to stand before the judgment seat of Christ. Since even those Christians that have escaped the judgment of the First Death, yet lived to the dictates of their flesh must stand before Him, so that they may be made subject to the reward of the unbelievers.

The way we have to understand the Second Death is from the perspective of having first been made alive. So, while we generally understand the First Death to be the separation of the spirit, soul and body, the Second Death is expressed from the point of view of the soul and body having been brought into unity. [Revelation 20 verse 11 to 14.] Meaning, the ultimate escape from its judgment is determined at the inheritance of the body. That is to say, those that are raised in a natural body are subject to its judgment, while those that are rewarded a spiritual body in the likeness of the Lord are exempt. Then we might say, but we have the pledge, the guarantee of the purchased possession. [Ephesians 1 verses 13 to 14.] And that is right, but it requires us to continue in faith to the very end, without having been moved away from the hope of the gospel. [Colossians 1 verse 23.] And this point can be illustrated in the example of Israel, in that, everyone who came out of the slavery of Egypt had the promise of inheriting a land flowing with milk and honey, but only those that walked with God in obedience obtained it. That is to say, they crossed the Red Sea having been approved by the blood of the lamb as a means of escape from the bondage of slavery, which is an illustration of escape from the First Death, however this was not the end, nor inheritance.

And this concept is further illustrated in the fact Joshua circumcised the whole congregation of Israel after they had crossed the Jordan River, which is an expression for being taken up into the kingdom of Heaven, as portrayed in the story of Elijah. Thereby illustrating to us, one must come before the judgment seat of Christ before obtaining a spiritual body. Likewise, our purchased possession is before us, and we need to be exhorted to press forward in the faith, so that we may obtain it. That is why Paul said, “heirs indeed of God, and **joint-heirs of Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him**, so that we may also be glorified together.” Romans 8 verse 17. And again he says, “**To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings**, being conformed to His death, **if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from out of dead.**” Philippians 3 verses 10 to 11. Paul was trying to impress upon us the importance of being diligent in faith for the purpose of obtaining this reward, especially as we mature in the faith so that we may be careful to walk according to the level we have attained.

And the ultimate reward of a spiritual body in the likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ is portrayed in the Parable of the Ten Virgins. In that, when Christ comes to receive His bride, which Paul clearly portrayed for us to be the day we the living are transformed to put on a body of immortality, in 1 Corinthians 15 verses 51 to 52, can be associated with the wise virgins that went into the banquet hall with the Bridegroom, which is to say “are caught away,” as described in 1 Thessalonians 4 verses 15 to 17. However, at the same time we have to take into consideration the foolish virgins that are left outside, meaning those that are still in the body of dishonour. These foolish virgins were all members of the household of the Bridegroom, and are without fault since they are all virgins. Nonetheless, because they did not live prepared lives through the knowledge of Him in truth, in order to walk by His Spirit in exhibiting the nature of the Bridegroom in their body, so when the day suddenly came they were left outside. As a consequence He tells them, “**Truly I say to you, I do not know you.**” Matthew 25 verse 12. The same day, same court, same judgment, but some were rewarded with a spiritual body, while others remained in the body of flesh. This is a snapshot of the judgment seat of Christ displayed in a single moment in time, where some come into their eternal inheritance, while others fall short. For which reason the Second Death has no authority over the wise virgins, as John says, “Blessed and holy is the one having **a part in the first resurrection!** Over these **the second death has no authority.**” Revelation 20 verse 6. However, the same cannot be said to the foolish virgins that remain in the body of flesh.

Please Note, the moment when the possibility of the judgment of the Second Death is rendered without effect, it was not when we were redeemed from the kingdom of darkness, nor was it at any other moment during our walk as Christians, but the moment we obtained the eternal reward of the spiritual body in the likeness of the Lord. That is why we say, the Church is not exempt from its judgement, until we all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, where every member of His household must give an account of the life they lived. Because the judgment of the Second Death is wholly dependent on the Life of the Lord Jesus Christ that is lived in us while we are in the body of flesh. So Paul says, “each may receive back the **things done through the body** according to what he did, **whether good or evil.**”

And the judgment seat of Christ is illustrated for us in a real life example, where Paul was faced with rendering judgment on a member of the church of Corinth, who acted immorally toward the wife of his father. To whom Paul rendered judgment saying, “Deliver such a one to Satan for destruction of the flesh, **so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.**” 1 Corinthians 5 verse 5. By this one statement, Paul addressed two fundamental concepts, the first is that in our current state of living life in the flesh, being in the spirit is a status, just as being in the flesh was once a status. Second, he pointed to the day of the Lord, which is a reference to the day we come into possession of our inheritance in Christ, the main event of which is that we acquire a spiritual body in the likeness of the heavenly Man, for which the Holy Spirit at present is the guarantee. [2 Corinthians 5 verse 5.] As a result, Paul considered it to be far better for such a one, that his flesh may be destroyed in the present, so that his status as spirit may remain intact. Please consider, why would Paul make such a statement, if the offender's status as spirit was not at risk? Why would Paul subject anyone to torment at the hands of the worst of all enemies of mankind, if there was no benefit to be had? Yet, Paul considered it far prudent to do this, because he valued the spirit of the man who was at risk of falling away from obtaining his inheritance.

And the steps Paul took to address the action of the offender was based on the judgment of God that is yet to come, in which regard Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, “**For this is the will of God**, your sanctification: **You are to abstain from sexual immorality**; each of you to know how to win mastery over his own vessel in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust, as also the Gentiles, not knowing God; **not to go beyond and to overreach his brother in the matter**, because **the Lord is avenging concerning all these things**, just as also we told you before **and thoroughly warned**. For God has not called us to impurity, but into holiness. **So then, the one rejecting this does not disregard man but God, the One also giving His Holy Spirit to you.**” 1 Thessalonians 4 verses 3 to 8. So the man that offended his father in such matters was at risk of the judgment of God, who is an avenger concerning such things, the outcome of which would have affected his status as spirit. The main point of which is that, the day of the Lord, that is the judgment seat of Christ comes with the possibility of judgment against a spirit that has fallen short. And we ought not to neglect the thorough, stern, imperative warnings of Paul given in respect to the conduct of our body, as if it does not matter.

And, the negative outcome of the judgment seat of Christ is expressed as, “**But if that servant should say in his heart**, ‘My master delays to come,’ and **should begin to beat the men-servants and the maid-servants, and to eat and to drink and to get drunk**, the master of that servant will come in a day in which he does not expect, and in an hour that he does not know, and **he will cut him in two and will appoint him a place with the unbelievers.**” Luke 12 verse 45 to 46. [Matthew 24 verses 48 to 51.] Please note the outcome, this person that was once counted to be part of the household of the master is now stripped and sent out to receive the reward of the unbelievers. And in relation to the above example, that is to say he is stripped of his status as spirit which is of the new creation, so that

he may partake of the reward of those who fell being in the flesh. We have to remember, the main difference between believers and unbelievers is one of nature, one is in the flesh while the other in the Spirit. [Romans 8 verse 9.]

And the consequence of the judgement seat of Christ can be expressed in relation to the Church of Sardis, the Lord said, “But you have **a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments**, and they **will walk with Me in white**, because they are worthy. **The one overcoming** thus will be **clothed in white garments**. **And I will never blot out his name from the Book of Life**, and I will **confess his name before My Father and before His angels.**” Revelation 3 verses 4 to 5. There are two main important points to take from this statement, the first is that, it is possible to soil the garment we have received, that is to say to defile our conscience to the point of having it seared. Second, the consequence of such actions is that our name can be blotted out from the Book of Life. The Lord was not making an empty threat, when he revealed to us the possibility of blotting out names. The very concept of blotting out comes with the implication that the name was once written. So the question is, why would the Lord insinuate the possibility of blotting out names, if there was no merit to it? And the fact the Lord associated those who are not blotted out are those whose garments are still white implies those that have soiled their garment are blotted out.

And the possibility of falling short from the intended purpose of the inheritance of the kingdom of God is apparent in all the writings of the New Testament. The most obvious one being, “**For it is impossible for those once having been enlightened**, and having tasted of the heavenly gift, and **having become partakers of the Holy Spirit**, and having tasted the goodness of God’s word and the power of the coming age— **and then having fallen away—to restore them again to repentance**, crucifying in themselves the Son of God and subjecting Him to open shame.” Hebrews 6 verses 4 to 6. That is to say, such a one has willfully continued in the practice of sins to the point of having his conscience to be defiled. So, the soul that was once purified by the blood of Jesus Christ from the deeds committed in the flesh, cannot be cleansed a second time for the one that knowingly defiled it while in the spirit.

In the same manner Peter also writes, “**For if, having escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**, now **again having been entangled in these they are subdued**, the last state has become worse to them than the first. **For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness**, than having known it, **to have turned from the holy commandment having been delivered to them**. The thing true of the proverb has happened to them: ‘**A dog having returned to its own vomit**,’ and, ‘**A sow having washed, to her rolling place in the mire.**’” 2 Peter 2 verses 20 to 22. Now, we may argue a sow is not a sheep, therefore such a one was never born again. However, we must also take into consideration the first example that states, “**As a dog returns to its vomit**,” which is part of Proverb 26 verse 11, the end of which states, “**so a fool repeats his folly.**” So, Peter’s point was not to use the animals as an expression of nature, but purely to illustrate a practice of old habits. So even though we are still in a body of flesh in which we have practiced all manner of sinful acts, we are not to continue in it as if nothing has changed. Whether we are in the flesh or in the spirit while we are in this world, we are still in a body of dishonour, yet our conduct must not be determined by it.

These are the ones whom the early Christians called the disapproved, and Jude describes their state saying, “**These are the hidden reefs, feasting together with you** fearlessly in your love feasts; shepherding themselves; **clouds without water**, being carried about by winds; **autumnal trees without fruit**, **twice having died, having been uprooted**; wild waves of the sea, foaming out of their

own shame; wandering stars, **to whom the gloom of darkness has been reserved to the age.**" Jude 1 verses 12 to 13. In saying they are hidden reefs, Jude is letting us know they are undiscovered dangers that have embedded themselves among the saints, and are simply playing church. Having said this, our main focus is on the statement, "twice having died," in that, Jude was making sure we understood, these were once brought to life through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, but having rejected the way of righteousness have gone back to rolling in the mire. As a result, they have died once more, first while they were in the flesh, and the second time is while they are in the spirit. And all of these must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, because they are not subject to the judgment of the First Death, since they have all escaped through the knowledge of the Lord. [John 5 verse 24.] The outcome of which is that they are stripped, cut into two, and apportioned their rewards with the unbelievers, meaning they are subject to the Second Death.

Roots of Judgment.

We have to understand the First Death has to do with sin, since the root is the nature of Adam. However, the Second Death has to do with righteousness, since the root is the nature of Christ. And this is the very reason everyone is subject to its judgment, and since the Church itself is established in righteousness, it means the Church is also subject to its examination. The error we make is that, we assume since we are made a New Creation in Christ, this also means we are without free will. However, we have to realise some fall from the faith on the account that their free will is misled through deceptive means. Which is the point Paul was making when he said, "**For there will be a time when they will not endure sound teaching, but according to the own desires, having an itching ear, they will gather around them teachers to suit themselves, and indeed they will turn away from hearing the truth, and will be turned aside unto myths.**" 2 Timothy 4 verses 3 to 4. So people still have the option to give heed to whom they will. For which reason Paul fought hard to convince the Galatians from making a catastrophic mistake, from a path that would have taken them away from the Grace of the Lord. So to say there is no possibility of falling away from the faith is to say there is no free will. And Paul's advice to Timothy in regard to the ministry of the Lord is, "**Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; convict, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and instruction.**" 2 Timothy 4 verse 2. So, we are expected to earnestly contend for the faith by all means, in order to convince those that are being misled from the truth. We cannot be neglectful to think they are none who are working contrary to the purposes of God, be it intentionally or in ignorance.

The Lord has every right to assess the hearts of mankind for whom He has paid such a great price. So, Paul says, "And He died for all that **those living no longer should live to themselves, but to the One having died for them and having been raised again.**" 2 Corinthians 5 verse 15. [1 Peter 4 verse 1 to 2.] And in Romans he says, "Therefore much more, **having been justified now by His blood, we will be saved by Him from wrath!** For if, being enemies, we were **reconciled to God through the death of His Son**, much more, having been reconciled, **shall we be saved in His life!**" Romans 5 verses 9 to 10. Please pay careful attention, the life of the Lord Jesus Christ that is lived out in us, through our submission to Him is the means by which we escape the wrath to come. The forgiveness of sins is the foundation in reconciliation with God, but now the intent of our hearts must be examined to distinguish those that seek to honour Him from those that mock. [Galatians 6 verse 7 to 8.] That is why the judgment that relates to the Second Death must come at the end of the Christian life, when we stand before His judgment seat. God in removing sin by breaking its power and hold over us, has given us free reign so that we by our freewill may live for Him. [Romans 6 verse 11 to 12.] The

church makes a serious mistake when it is focused on the forgiveness of sins, to the neglect of a life of righteousness to produce holiness. [Romans 6 verse 22.]

The main culprit of which is our failure to understand what it means to be in the flesh and in the spirit, which has resulted in our failure to understand the judgment that relates to sin and righteousness respectively. In that, Jesus in the flesh served one purpose, in order to make way for Jesus as a Living Spirit to serve another. As Paul said, “Likewise, my brothers, **you also have been put to death to the Law through the body of Christ, for you to belong to another, to the One having been raised out from the dead, so that we should bear fruit to God.**” Romans 7 verse 4. This statement has to do with a fundamental change in nature, from that of flesh which we are all delivered through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, to that of the spirit, which has to do with the Life of the Lord Jesus Christ. In which regard Peter also says, “**Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, so that He might bring you to God, having been put to death indeed in the flesh, but having been made alive in the spirit.**” 1 Peter 3 verse 18. As such, each nature has an expression of death associated with it, the First Death as it relates to the condition of being in the flesh on the account of the sin of Adam. And the Second Death has also come to effect on the account the righteousness of God is made available in Christ Jesus. The point is, being in the Spirit comes with the condition of living for Christ, by putting off the old nature and putting on the New. [Ephesians 4 verses 20 to 24.] For which reason Paul says, “Now those of Christ Jesus **have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.** If we live by the Spirit, **we should also walk by the Spirit.**” Galatians 5 verse 24 to 25.

A simple way to look at this is in terms of seeing Adam and Christ as figureheads of mankind, and a consequence of death is associated through each. In Adam, comes the First Death as a consequence of being slaves of sin. That is we are made captives of the kingdom of darkness, our body given to the grave and our soul to Hades. However, in Christ, the consequence of the First Death is first annulled by putting away sin through the sacrifice of Himself. And we are now given the option to live for Him by His Spirit so that we may escape the consequence of the Second Death, which is on the account of the righteous judgment of Christ. Sin is the nature of the devil that finds its expression through our body. For which reason Paul says, because of these things, the wrath of God will come on the sons of disobedience, meaning, in those the spirit of the air found a means by which the lust of the flesh and its mind are expressed. [Ephesians 2 verses 1 to 3.] So, the reason mankind takes part in judgment that is aimed at the devil and his angels, is on account they have not sought to separate themselves from the life of the flesh that will bear the consequence of the Second Death, through belief in the truth. [Matthew 25 verse 41.]

So, when we fail to make distinction between the First and the Second Death we misrepresent the judgments of God, through which a portion of the body of Christ is put at risk. Paul did not shy away from the truth of the Judgment of Righteousness that is to come, neither did Peter, both of them clearly showed, the church is the first to be subject to its judgment. As there was a judgement that was according to Adam, now there is a judgement which is according to Christ. And being in Christ is not an exemption from this judgment, because the measuring line is not sin, but righteousness. In which regard Peter said, “**For it is the time for the judgement to have begun from the house of God;** and if from us first, **what will be the outcome of those disobeying the gospel of God?** And, “**If the righteous one is saved with difficulty,** where will appear the ungodly and sinner?” 1 Peter 4 verses 17 to 18. Now, this would not make sense if Peter was speaking about sin and death, since it is annulled through the Death of the Lord Jesus Christ. More so, the believer is made exempt from the judgement of the First Death, through which the authority of the kingdom of darkness is revoked,

hence the reason the Lord said, “The gates of Hades will not prevail against the church.” Therefore, Peter is speaking of a new judgement to which even the righteous must be subject. As a result he put the judgment of the believer to be on the same level as the judgment of the unbelievers, because the measuring line for us and them is the same. As Isaiah said, **“I will make justice the measuring line, and righteousness the plummet.”**

So, when Peter said, “the righteous one is saved with difficulty,” the sentiment he wanted to portray to us is not one of the bestowment of rewards, but the fact that even the righteous will come into the inheritance of the kingdom of God with difficulty. He is not speaking about the forgiveness of sins, because to be considered righteous, the foundation must first be established upon the Cross of Christ. Yet even after this fact, he says they will come into their inheritance with difficulty. And the consequence of failing to obtain the eternal reward is to be made subject to the judgment of the Second Death. So when we sugar coat the judgment of Christ, we give the impression there is no consequence in respect to the manner we live our lives, because we claim our past, present, and future sins are all covered, and this does not help anyone.

The Consequence of Future Sins.

And this concept of the forgiveness of future sins, is something we ourselves have reasoned with a wrong frame of mind, and in some instances this has proved to be a means by which people have brought destruction upon themselves. The idea being, since Christ was crucified 2000 years ago, this must mean all sins regardless of the time frame, be it past, present, or future are forgiven. Now, we know there is an element of truth to this, since the blood of Christ is eternal and surpasses the constraints of time. Therefore, it must encompass the first sin that was committed by Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, all the way up to the Great day of Judgment, where Death & Hades are forced to give up the dead that are in them, on the account the effect of sin is revoked in Jesus Christ. Through which every generation of mankind that has come through the ages have the option to apply the blood of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins, for which reason the gospel was even preached to those that were dead. [1 Peter 4 verse 6.] However, the problem arises when we seek to project sin to be an aspect of the future of the believer, by failing to take into consideration a change of nature from that of being in the flesh, to being in the spirit, which is central to the christian faith.

Paul wrote, **“Justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation through faith in His blood, for a showing forth of His righteousness, [because of the forbearance of the sins having taken place beforehand, in the forbearance of God,] for the showing forth of His righteousness in the present time, for Him to be just, and justifying the one of the faith of Jesus.”** Romans 3 verses 24 to 26. Now, the main point of our discussion is that Paul said, **“In His forbearance [God] had passed over the sins committed beforehand.”** So, the question we need to ask is: if the forgiveness of sins is all-encompassing, why would God give a timeframe for the sins He has already forgiven? And this is because the blood of Jesus Christ has a personal application to the individual, to the one that comes into faith in Jesus. In which regard Peter also said, **“For in whomever these things are not present, he is blind, being short sighted, having received forgetfulness of the purification from his former sins.”** 2 Peter 1 verse 9. By saying, “sins committed beforehand,” and “purification from his former sins,” both Paul and Peter are addressing every individual that comes to faith through belief in Christ Crucified, at which point the manner of life they have lived while being in the flesh, being sons of Adam, is forgiven. For which reason Paul in another place says, **“God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not reckoning their trespasses to them.”** 2 Corinthians 5 verse 19.

So, as much as the blood of Jesus Christ has application to every generation of mankind that was born according to the flesh, it is also a means by which we are cut off from our old nature in order to be raised anew. In that, we are changed from the state of being in the flesh, which relates to the sinful deeds we helplessly committed being enticed by the body of our sin, to that of the New Creation in Christ, which has to do with the righteousness of God. The main point of which is that sin is the nature and expression of the flesh that is ruled by the spirit of the world. For which reason Paul says, **“I am fleshly, having been sold under sin.”** Romans 7 verse 14. In regard to which he sought to explain to us the helplessness of our situation when we were held captive of sin that worked in our body to bring forth death. [Romans 7 verses 18 to 24.] However, we have now been redeemed from this condition through the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. So Paul now asks, **“How shall we who died to sin still live in it?”** Romans 6 verse 1. By saying this, Paul is asking the question, how can sin possibly be part of our future? So throughout Romans chapter 6 he worked hard to make sure we understood we have died to the old nature of the flesh in Christ Jesus. The main event of which is the baptism in water, as a means to illustrate we have died to the old nature of the flesh through burial with Christ, so that we may be raised to a new life in the Spirit. [Romans 6 verses 3 to 4, & Colossians 2 verses 11 to 12.] And he describes the outcome saying, **“Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him,** so that the body of sin might be annulled, **that we are no longer enslaved to sin.** For the one having died **has been freed from sin.”** Romans 6 verses 6 to 7. Meaning, we are cut off from the tree that belongs to the sinful nature of the flesh, and are now grafted to the Tree that is of the Spirit which is in righteousness.

So, sin is not part of the future of the one that is made a New Creation in Christ, it cannot be, since there is no sin in the Spirit. We cannot expect righteousness from the one who is in the flesh, nor should we expect sin from the one who is in the Spirit. As John says, **“And you know that He appeared, so that He might take away sins; and in Him there is no sin. Anyone abiding in Him does not sin.”** 1 John 3 verses 5 to 6. So, if we are in Him, we ought not to project sin to be part of our future, since we are no longer in the path of sin, but of righteousness. For which reason, God Himself does not want us to have such a mindframe. We look at Israel and say, those that died in the wilderness were those that have the mentality of slaves, so that those that are free may possess the land. And it is exactly the same accusation that is raised against us, when we project sin to be part of our future, the focus is not on our freedom but our slavery. We are supposed to lift up people to the way of righteousness by assuring them their sins are once and for all forgiven. That they may walk by His Spirit in faith, leading to the sanctification of their body as they grow in the knowledge of Him. That is to say, His life may be manifested in their mortal body. [2 Corinthians 4 verses 10 to 11.]

So, God is not saying to us, from this day forward whatever sins you commit is of no consequence. No, that will be contrary to the nature of God. That is why Paul says, **“But let sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness not even be named among you, as also is proper to saints, and filthiness, and foolish talking, or crude joking, which are not fitting, but rather thanksgiving.”** Ephesians 5 verses 3 to 4. Please note, there is no allowance to be made for sin, not even to be named among the saints. What we were once in the flesh is forgotten and it is never to be regarded, but what we are in the present is according to Him. And our mind has to be renewed to this new reality so that there may be no conflict between our spirit, soul and body. So God, having given us a New Nature which is according to Himself, expects us to grow up in Him so that we may walk in a manner that is pleasing in His sight. Now, this does not mean we do not fall and falter, as John said, **“And if anyone should sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous One.”** 1 John 2 verse 1. By that he means there is a safe guard, but this does not mean we are to make a practice of sin. [1

John 3 verse 7 to 9.] Nonetheless, our life has to be geared to the nature of righteousness, for which we are expected to live according to the Spirit.

The problem is when people stop at the forgiveness of sins, and subject their life to a perpetual state of sin and forgiveness. Through which they have failed to perceive the central purpose of the cross, that is the change of nature that has taken place when we accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour. And as essential as the Cross of Christ is to our salvation, since without the cross there can be no forgiveness of sins, nonetheless, the cross is meant to be the beginning, not the end. It is the door by which we come out of the kingdom of darkness, so that we may walk in righteousness by the power of the Holy Spirit. However, God does not force us, He has given His nature, His desires are at work in us, He entices us to read His word, He gives us understanding, He brings teachers and exhorts us, He wants us to walk with Him in agreement. But at no point does He take control of our free will. So even though we have tasted His power, experienced His Holy Spirit, yet by our own disobedience and the deceptions of our own desires, we can choose to twist His word and brush aside sound teaching, so that we may walk in a manner that pleases the lusts of our flesh and bring destruction upon ourselves.

And Paul also expresses the sentiment of the judgment to come as it relates to the believer in his letter to the Hebrews. And he begins by first establishing a statement that affirms the forgiveness of our past sins, for which reason he quotes Jeremiah and writes, **“And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us;** for after having said before: **“This is the covenant that I will make with them,** after those days, says the Lord, **putting My Laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them into their mind,”** and, **“Their sins and their lawless acts, I will remember no more.”** Now where there is forgiveness of these, **no longer is there an offering for sin.”** Hebrews 10 verses 15 to 18. Now, we can read this and say, this means our future sins are covered, or we can say, sin is no longer part of our future because our root is changed to be in Christ Himself. As John says, **“Anyone having been born of God does not practice sin, because His seed abides in him, and he is not able to continue sinning,** because he has been born of God.” 1 John 3 verse 9. So, Paul’s point was that the New Covenant, which is expressed as His Laws being written in our hearts and our minds by the Spirit of God, is established on the account that the sins we committed while in the flesh are forgiven by the blood of Christ. As he said earlier, **“He is the mediator of a new covenant,** so that, **death** having taken place **for redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant,** those having been called **might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.”** Hebrews 9 verse 15. Please note, by saying “for redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant,” Paul is literally pointing at our past sins, meaning the deeds we committed while we were in the flesh. The Second Covenant that is established by the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ is not about sins, but righteousness.

However, when we interpret the writings of Jeremiah with the concept of future sins, we are under the mindset of the continuation of our sinful nature of the flesh. By which we discount the Scripture that testify to us we have died with Christ and are raised with Him to a new life in the Spirit. So when Paul says, “Now where there is forgiveness of these, **no longer is there an offering for sin,”** he is making the point that the nature of the flesh in respect to sin is put aside by the sacrifice of Christ. [Hebrews 9 verse 26.] Otherwise Paul would have contradicted himself, after making such a sweeping statement that brushes aside sin, by saying, **“For if we sin willingly after we are to receive the knowledge of the truth,** no longer remains **a sacrifice for sins,** but a certain terrifying expectation of **judgment and fury of fire being about to devour the adversaries.”** Hebrews 10 verses 26 to 27. Now the question is, how could a judgment of fury of fire be upon the one whose sins God has promised not to remember, be it intentional or unintentional. However, when we consider the change of nature, whereby Jesus in the body has redeemed us from the condition of being in the flesh to which we were

given to the practice of sin, so that we may be in the Spirit in order to walk according to His nature. Then, to sin willingly means one who perfectly knows the will of God but has chosen to act contradictory to the truth. [Luke 12 verses 41 to 48.] So, the point Paul was making was that if we continue in the practice of sin, after knowing we have been redeemed by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, then there is no means of repentance as explained in Hebrews 6 verses 4 to 6.

However, we try to explain away this verse by saying, it is speaking of those that reject the offer of life that comes through the Lord Jesus Christ. And this is contradicted by the fact the paragraph begins with the word, “for.” In that, Paul is referring to the previous statements that established the New covenant, saying, “**This is the covenant that I will make with them**, after those days, says the Lord, putting **My Laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them into their mind.**” And he describes the means by which we enter into this covenant saying, “We should draw near with a sincere heart, in full assurance of faith, **our hearts having been sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our body having been washed with pure water.** We should hold fast to **the confession of our hope, unwavering;** for the One having promised is faithful.” Hebrews 10 verses 22 to 23. And he establishes his point by comparing the judgment associated with the violation of the Old covenant, against the violation of the New, and says, “**Anyone having set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercies** on the basis of two or three witnesses.” Hebrews 10 verse 28. That is, in order for one to set aside the Law of Moses, the general perception is that person must first be bound by it.

Therefore, it is on the account of the one that has violated the Second Covenant that he makes the point of, “**a certain terrifying expectation of judgment** and fury of fire being about to devour the adversaries.” Which he later expressed as, “**How much worse punishment** do you think will he deserve, **the one having trampled upon the Son of God**, and having **esteemed ordinary the blood of the covenant** by which he was sanctified, and **having insulted the Spirit of grace?**” Hebrews 10 verse 29. So, when Paul says, “after we are to receive the knowledge of the truth,” it is in the same regard as Peter, when he said, “For if, **having escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**, now again having been entangled in these they are subdued, **the last state has become worse to them than the first.**” 2 Peter 2 verses 20 to 21. The main point of which is that, when Paul first said, “Now **where there is forgiveness of these, no longer is there an offering for sin,**” he was speaking in regard to the one who came out of the flesh, that is from the first covenant. However, afterward when he says, “**For if we sin willingly after we are to receive the knowledge of the truth, no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,**” he is speaking to the one who is in the spirit and under the New Covenant, and ought to know better. And for the one that falls in this state there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, sins Christ cannot be crucified a second time.

And the fact that this judgment of God is spoken in regard to the believer is proved in the statement, “For we know the One having said, “**Vengeance is Mine; I will repay,**” and again, “**The Lord will judge His people.**” it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” Hebrews 10 verses 30 to 31. Please note, the judgment of vengeance that will repay each according to his own works is not directed at the world, but towards His people, meaning those that have entered into covenant with Him. [Ephesians 2 verses 19 to 21.] If Paul wanted to show this judgment is in respect to those that rejected the Gospel, then he would have said, God's wrath will come upon the sons of disobedience, as he did in Ephesians 5 verses 6 to 7, and Colossians 3 verses 6 to 7. And the fact this warning is aimed at those that have come into faith of the Lord Jesus Christ is proved by the manner Paul ended the chapter saying, “**But My righteous one will live by faith; and if he might shrink back, My soul does not take pleasure in him.**” But we are not of those drawing back to destruction, but of faith

to the preserving of the soul.” Hebrews 10 verses 38 to 39. So, this judgment of fury of fire in the repayment of vengeance which Paul speaks about in this letter is not aimed at the sons of disobedience, but the one to whom righteousness has once been attributed, yet has fallen away from the truth. Meaning, the believer is not exempt from the judgment of righteousness that could potentially result in the Second death.

Walk by the Spirit.

Paul wrote, “But this One, **having offered one sacrifice for sins in perpetuity**, sat down at the right hand of God.” Then he says, “For by one offering, **He has perfected for all time those being sanctified.**” Hebrews 10 verses 12 & 14. The point is, when it comes to sins in regard to the nature of the flesh, it is a finished work since Jesus has already sat down having fulfilled all its requirements, for which reason he says, “He has perfected for all time.” But this is followed by a present continuous work of sanctification, that is a life that exhibits His nature as a fruit of righteousness. So, the question is not about the forgiveness of sins, since he has said they are already perfected, but the effect this is meant to have in sanctifying our walk. On the day the Lord was betrayed, the Lord washed the feet of His disciples, and when Simon Peter objected, the Lord said, “**Unless I wash you, you have no part with Me.**” Then He follows this with, “The **one having been bathed** has no need to wash, **except the feet**, but is wholly clean.” John 13 verses 8 & 10. Please note, we are wholly clean because we have been washed from our sins by the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, but this was not the end. Now, our feet need to be washed, that is to say, the manner we walk must be directed in righteousness by the Spirit of God in order to bear the fruit of sanctification, the end of which is eternal life. [Romans 6 verse 22.] The very fact Jesus Christ is actively engaged in purifying those that seek to live godly in Him means there is an expectation to walk in a manner that is worthy of God. [Ephesians 5 verses 26 to 27.]

So, it is important for us to come to the realisation of our absolute forgiveness of sins in Christ, so that we may be open to receive the Spirit of God, and may live according to His nature in righteousness. In that, we should never conflict the forgiveness of our sins with the expectation God has for us to walk in the ways of righteousness, because they are essentially addressing different aspects of salvation. [Romans 5 verses 9 to 10.] As a result those that are in danger of the judgment to come are those that have neglected the Spirit of God, in that they know of Him by name, but have no idea of the purpose for which He is sent. The blood of the Lord Jesus Christ sanctifies our soul from the condemnation of sins, on the account of which the Holy Spirit has now come to sanctify our body, so we may offer it to God as a living sacrifice. [Romans 12 verse 1.] So, it is our lack of understanding in distinguishing the judgment that relates to sin to that of righteousness that has caused many to disregard the essential role the Holy Spirit plays in the salvation of mankind, as a result many are in danger of falling short of the inheritance of the kingdom of God.

And Paul throughout his letters sought to warn us of the dangers of failing to obtain the inheritance of the kingdom of God in respect to the deeds that are committed in the body, giving a special emphasis to the Holy Spirit. [1 Corinthians 3 verses 16 to 17, 1 Corinthians 6 verses 9 to 11, & 18 to 19, Galatians 5 verses 19 to 25, Ephesians 5 verse 5 to 10.] Now, Paul's statement has mainly to do with the honour of having the Spirit of God to dwell in our body, however the deeper implication has to do with the power that is present in us to live according to His will. Paul in his letter to the Thessalonians said, “**For God has not called us to impurity, but into holiness.** So then, the one rejecting this does not disregard man but God, **the One also giving His Holy Spirit to you.**” 1 Thessalonians 4 verses 7 to 8. That is to say, the manner we are expected to hold our body always comes back to the provision

of His Holy Spirit, which is meant to be the expression of His resurrection power that works towards us. The outcome of which Paul describes saying, “Now may the **God of peace Himself sanctify you completely**, and may **your spirit and soul and body be preserved, entirely blameless** at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. **The One calling you is faithful, who also will do it.**” 1 Thessalonians 5 verses 23 to 24. That is to say, our body will not disobey us to desire sinful acts, because it is brought into submission by the Spirit of God, since it is Him who gives life to our mortal Body. [Romans 8 verse 11.] And he expresses the same sentiment to the Galatians and says, “Now I say, **walk by the Spirit, and you should not gratify the desires of the flesh.**” Galatians 5 verse 16.

The main point we are trying to impress upon you is that, how we walk this life after we have come to the saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ is of great importance. Most especially, since the manner we are expected to hold our body in honour is not by our own strength and willpower, but by the power of the Spirit of God through the knowledge and belief of the truth. However, the Church thinks salvation is the work of the Blood alone, that is the same as saying, forgiveness of sins is inheritance of the kingdom of God, but it is not. Salvation is the combination work of the Son of God and the Spirit of God, and we have to learn to discern the purpose for which each Divine Person of the Godhead is sent. The New Covenant is all about Sanctification by the Spirit of God for the inheritance of the kingdom of God, on the account we have been established on the foundation of the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. As Paul says, “God has chosen you from the beginning **unto salvation in the sanctification of the Spirit, and by faith of the truth**; to this also He called you through our **gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.**” 2 Thessalonians 2 verses 13 to 14. Please note, the emphasis of Salvation is on the present work of the Spirit of God on the account we have been established in the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, which Paul states in Romans 8 verses 10 to 11, 1 Corinthians 6 verse 11, Galatians 5 verses 24 to 25, Ephesians 5 verses 25 to 27, as well as Titus 3 verses 3 to 7. As much as the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ addressed our Old nature, the Spirit of God is presently working in us according to the New. We have to understand, God’s intention has always been that we may reflect His nature, for which reason He gives us His own Spirit.

Israel failed to obtain their inheritance being fearful of the enemy because they gave no regard to the power of God that was in their midst. [Numbers 14 verse 11.] And it is in regard to the same concept that all manner of impurities are practiced by the body of Christ, because we do not give any regard to the power of the Holy Spirit that dwells in us. That is why Paul when addressing those who continue in the practice of sin he said, “**For indeed He was crucified in weakness, yet He lives by God’s power.**” Then he says, “Examine yourselves whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. **Or do you not recognize yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you**, unless you are unapproved?” 2 Corinthians 13 verses 4 to 5. To recognise Jesus Christ is in us, is to recognize the power of God that is at work in us to help us live according to His ways. And it is the lack of this knowledge that proved in those that continue in sin.

The believer is not beyond examination, for which reason the judgment of God starts in the House of God, meaning those that are in the Spirit. The simple fact of which is that, if there was no possibility of failure, being swept away by errors and deceitfulness of sins leading to destruction, there would have been no need for the Lord to give us His Holy Spirit to help us in this life. So, Paul saw it imperative to pray without ceasing so that the body of Christ may be full of wisdom and spiritual understanding, and to be strengthened by the Holy Spirit in the inner man so that they may walk in a manner that is pleasing to God. [Ephesians 1 verses 17 to 19, Colossians 1 verses 9 to 10.] So, when we sin knowingly after we have come to the knowledge of the truth, there is a problem, as Paul said, “[The Lord] both **will bring to light the hidden things of darkness**, and will make **manifest the**

motives of the hearts; and then the praise will come to each from God.” 1 Corinthians 4 verse 5. This concept is based on the Proverbs of Solomon that says, “If you say, “**Behold, we did not know about this,**” does not He who **weighs hearts consider** it? Does not the One who guards your life know? **Will He not repay a man according to his deeds.**” Proverbs 24 verse 12. Meaning, the intent of our hearts are determined based on what we know, for which reason the sins we commit in full knowledge bear serious consequences. [Hebrews 4 verse 12.] Even though the Lord may bear with us long so that we may come to our senses and repent having come to the knowledge of truth. [2 Timothy 2 verse 25 to 26.]

As such, there are teachings that are meant to be directed at different levels of a Christian life. However, the Church acts like a child that has come of age, yet is perplexed at the thought of having to chew solid food, thinking everything must be in the form of milk to which we are accustomed. The Lord said to Peter, “**Feed My lambs,**” “**Shepherd My sheep,**” and “**Feed My sheep.**” John 21 verses 15 to 17. By saying this, the Lord made a distinction between the infants of faith from the mature. Lambs are meant to be fed on the basics of the faith that has to do with the forgiveness of sins, that is milk. While Sheep are meant to be fed on solid food that is in the revelation of the deep things of God, to guide them in the ways of righteousness, for which they are held accountable. In regard to which Paul said, “For **everyone partaking of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness,** for he is an infant. But **solid food is for the mature,** the ones by constant use having **trained the senses for distinguishing both good and evil.**” Hebrews 5 verses 13 to 14. We blur the line, when we keep feeding the sheep with the food that is intended for lambs, through which we associate the allowance given to the lambs to be the same as to the sheep.

We should not mistake the milk that is given to infants to be sufficient food for the mature, it is not. So Paul tells us, “**Nevertheless, to that which we have attained, we are to walk by the same.**” Philippians 3 verse 16. Meaning, one who is skilled in the word of righteousness being able to distinguish evil from good, should not try to live as a newborn believer who does not know any better. Whereby an example is given of a sheep that has been given all the privileges of knowing the truth, yet sought to live in a manner that is less than acceptable and was rejected. [Hebrews 6 verses 4 to 6.] Paul said, “**To await His Son from the heavens,** whom He raised out from the dead—**Jesus, the one delivering us from the coming wrath.**” 1 Thessalonians 1 verse 10. Here, Paul is revealing to us the purpose for which Christ is presently actively engaged, that is to deliver us from the Wrath to Come. Please bear in mind, this wrath is not in reference to “the Bowl of the Wrath of God,” mentioned in the Book of Revelation. If so, this would have meant, none of the disobedient that lived prior to the closing of the age would have been subject to it. Therefore, “the coming wrath,” is a reference to the judgment of the Second Death, to which everyone must equally be subject.

The judgment to come is not about sin, but of righteousness, that is the practice of the nature of God through the knowledge of Him. Please pay careful attention, the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ is a finished work by which we are reconciled to God. But now, He seeks to deliver us from the wrath to come by His Spirit in sanctifying our walk, the end of which is the inheritance of eternal life. And the Lord Jesus Christ is in the process of checking we have our house in order as the day is drawing to a close. And that day will come as a rude awakening to many that have stopped at the forgiveness of sins, and lived life to the neglect of the pursuit of righteousness. So Paul says, “Therefore, **just as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk in Him,** having been **rooted and being built up in Him,** and being strengthened in the faith.” Colossians 2 verse 6 to 7. So, the Church must be reminded of the present, active, and vital role of the Holy Spirit, in respect to the inheritance of the Kingdom of God. And we neglect this truth to our own detriment.