

The Judgment Seat of Christ

The Christian life is a race. The race started the day we trusted Christ as Savior. We will continue to run the race until the day God calls us home. In most forms of racing, there can only be one winner. But the Christian race is more like cross country; we don't all have the same level of talent, but we can all run the race in such a way as to receive the prize.

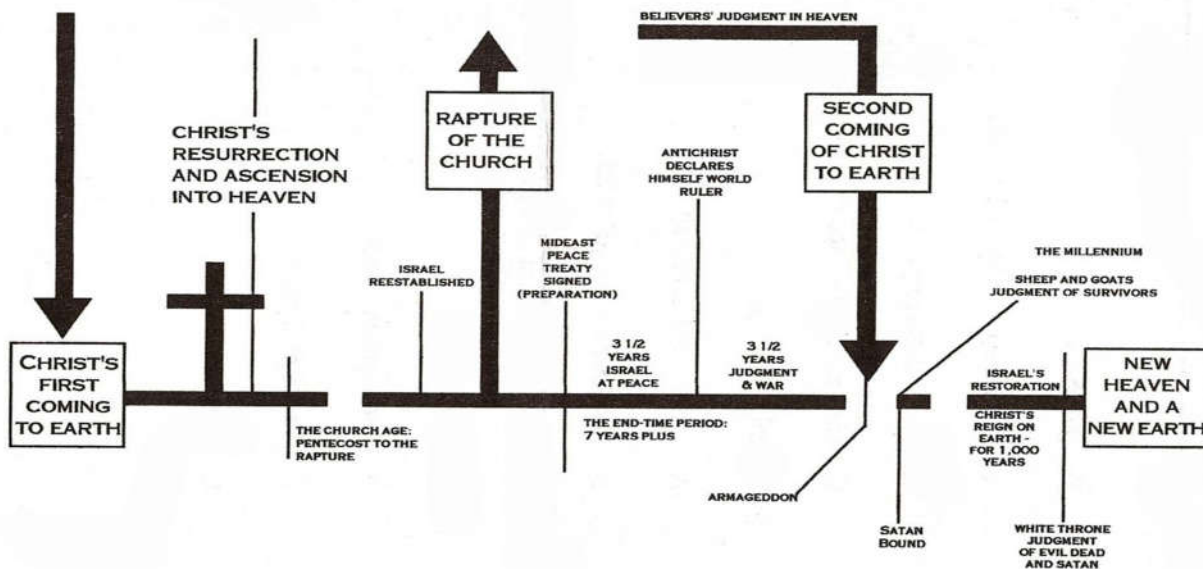
As we discovered in our previous study, our Christian race will be evaluated and compensated at the Judgment Seat of Christ. In this study we will discover the where, the when and the who of the *Judgment Seat of Christ*.

Possibly, the next event in God's prophetic plan is Jesus' return for the Church. We call this event *the Rapture*. The Rapture is described in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17. The Rapture could take place at any time. When we are gathered to the Lord in the air, Jesus will take us to the 3rd heaven which is the dwelling place of God.¹ This will fulfill Jesus' promise to His disciples found in John 14:1-3.

In a moment we will read Revelation 19:6-16 that describes the Second Coming of Christ. From Revelation 19:6-16 we will discover both where and when the Judgment Seat of Christ will take place.

We see the *Rapture of the Church*. At the Rapture we will receive our resurrection bodies and be taken to the 3rd heaven. Sometime after the Rapture, the Great Tribulation will begin on the earth. The Great

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Tribulation will last seven years. *The Second Coming of Christ* will bring an end to the Great Tribulation. At His second coming Jesus will come from the 3rd heaven to the earth. As we will see in Revelation 19, the Church comes with Jesus from the 3rd heaven to the earth. In addition, Revelation reveals that the

¹ 1st Heaven is the atmosphere around the earth; it is the daytime sky. ² 2nd Heaven is outer space; it is what see when looking at the night sky. ³ 3rd Heaven is the dwelling place of God.

Church will have already been purified and rewarded at the time the Church comes with Jesus from the 3rd heaven to the earth. This shows us the Church has been with Jesus in the 3rd heaven prior to the Second Coming of Christ. From these observations we know the when and where of the Judgment Seat of Christ (Rev. 19:6-16).

When and where will the Judgment Seat of Christ take place?

The Judgment Seat of Christ will take place in the 3rd heaven, between the Rapture and the Second Coming of Christ.

The final question for our study this morning is this:

Who will participate in the Judgment Seat of Christ?

The Lord Jesus

All church-age believers

The first person is rather obvious! God the Father has appointed Jesus judge (John 5:22). The rest of the participants will be church-age believers from Pentecost, 33AD to the last person to believe at the time of the Rapture (2 Cor. 5:10). To be clear, all church-age believers will be at the Judgment Seat of Christ; no unbelievers will be there. Unbelievers will be judged at the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:11-15) which will take place after the conclusion of the Messianic Kingdom.

VOM Items for the Month of May: Box of one gallon zip seal plastic bags and medical tape.

Children's ministry and VBS signups for volunteers will start Sunday, May 15th out on the patio.