

AMERICÁ'S Hope

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PREPARE TO APPEAR

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"Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (II Corinthians 5:9-11)

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." (John 12:48)

How will Christians, who have taught the direct opposite of what Christ spoke concerning the Jewish religion, fare at the judgment seat of Christ? To be summoned before the judgment seat of Christ will be the most awesome experience that we as Christians will have, either in this life or in the life to come. Our appearance before the judgment seat of Christ will determine our position in the ages to come.

In Matthew 12:36 and 37 Christ said: "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." Here again, we have the expression "in the day of judgment." "Every idle word" is defined as meaning barren and lifeless word.

Both the Old and the New Scriptures make it very clear that there is one particular thing that we as individual Christians will be judged on. We will be examined and judged on whether or not we have been faithful. We shall cite scriptures to establish this fact that our position, authority and reward will be determined by whether we have been faithful.

From Matthew 19:27 through 30 we already know that the twelve apostles "shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." But there will be millions of other positions and services to be rendered in the kingdom age.

In Matthew 24:45 through 47 Jesus said: "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find

so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods." Note he said, "Who is a faithful and wise servant." "Faithful" to whom or what? "Wise," wise in what? We will consider that later.

In Matthew 25:21 Jesus said: "His Lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord." Note the word "faithful" appears twice in this one verse. Luke also records this statement by the Christ.

In I Corinthians 4:1 and 2 Paul wrote: "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." Here again we find that it is required of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God that they be faithful. Referring to his own calling and ministry, Paul wrote the following in I Timothy 1:12: "And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry."

Paul indicates the reason God called him and opened the Word of God to him was because God knew Paul would be faithful to the Word. Undoubtedly, the opposite is also true. Namely, that God does not open His Word to those who will not be faithful to the Word.

In II Timothy 2:1 through 3 Paul wrote the following: "Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Therefore thou endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." Here again the requirement is to faithful men.

In Hebrews 3:1 and 2 we read: "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house."