

1 JOHN: DISCERNING TRUE FROM FALSE SPIRITUALITY

Part XII: True Spirituality's True Godly Love, 1 John 4:7-5:3

C. True Godly Love's Victory Over Dreading The Judgment Seat Of Christ (1 John 4:17-19)

I. Introduction

- A. 2 Corinthians 5:10 teaches that each believer will give an account of his life at Christ's judgment seat, and Paul added in the next verse that this leads us to "fear" the Lord so as to heed His assignments in life for us.
- B. However, such "fear" can become "terror," what God does not desire in His people, so 1 John 4:17-19 teaches how godly love in the believer overcomes such "terror" of Christ's judgment seat (as follows):

II. True Godly Love's Victory Over Dreading The Judgment Seat Of Christ, 1 John 4:17-19.

- A. One way that the believer can discern that God's love has been permanently fully developed (*teteleiota*, perfect passive of *teleioo*, "to be fully developed," U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 822; The Analyt. Grk. Lex., 1972, p. 402, 401) in him is that he has "boldness, confidence, fearlessness" (*parresia*, Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 635-636) in the "day of judgment," 1 John 4:17a.
- B. This "day of judgment" **cannot** be the judgment of unbelievers at the Revelation 20:11-15 Great White Throne judgment where men are cast into hell, for the believer has "permanently passed over" (*metabebeken*, perfect tense of *metabaino*, "to pass from one place to another," Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T., p. 340; Ibid., The Analyt. Grk. Lex., p. 265) from that judgment of condemnation unto the state of eternal life according to John 5:24.
- C. Rather, this 1 John 4:17 judgment is the judgment seat of Christ for **believers** that comes after the rapture when one's works are judged so that he either receives a reward or a lack thereof for his life as a believer, and even if all of his works will be destroyed by God's judgment, his own soul will still be saved, 1 Cor. 3:13-15.
- D. The rationale behind having such "boldness, confidence, fearlessness" at Christ's judgment seat is the fact that just as He (Christ) is, so also are we believers in this world, 1 John 4:17b. In other words, "(a)n unloving Christian is *unlike* his Lord and may anticipate rebuke and loss of reward at the judgment seat. But a loving believer is one in whom the work of God's love has been made complete (cf. the same words in 2:5; 4:12), and the fruit of that is boldness before the One Who will judge him. In this way he achieves the goal of confidence and no shame before Him, expressed in 1 John 2:28," Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 900.
- E. We learned in our last lesson that such love is achieved by (1) heeding Scripture (1 John 2:3) and (2) relying on the indwelling Holy Spirit of God to produce God's love (1 John 4:13; Galatians 5:16, 22-23), so applying these practices will produce a confident boldness to face the judgment seat of Christ!
- F. John added that there is no "slavish fear" (*phobos*, Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 871) in God's love in the believer, but a perfected, completed love casts out such "slavish fear" (*phobos* again; Ibid.), because such "slavish fear" (*phobos* once again; Ibid.) has "punishment" (*kolasis*, Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 441), and he who fears (*phobeo*, "to fear" as a verb, Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T., p. 822; Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 870-871) is not perfected in God's love, 1 John 4:18. The "slavish fear," or terror, has its own punishing torment, and perfect love expels such slavish fear with its torment, leaving a healthy respect for God, cf. 2 Cor. 5:11a.
- G. John added that we believers love because God first loved us (1 John 4:19), repeating the thought of 1 John 4:10 where God showed His love in sending His Son to be the satisfaction of His wrath for our sins that God might instead shower His lovingkindness upon us. Thus, a believer perfected in God's love knows he will face One Who loved Him so much that He sent His Son in his behalf. Since that love is perfected in himself, the believer knows the Lord he faces is a fuller Author of love than he is with the love in himself, so he joyfully relaxes contemplating his standing before His loving Lord with God's love perfected in him!

Lesson: *To face the judgment seat of Christ with bold confidence, the believer must heed Scripture and rely on the Holy Spirit to produce His demeanor and motivation unto godly love and works. Once this love is thus perfected in a believer, he has full confidence and boldness in contemplating the judgment seat of Christ, for He knows that the Lord Who will judge Him has an infinite degree of the love he sees perfected in himself, and the mutual fellowship he enjoys with his divine Judge causes the believer to rejoice and relax in great boldness in standing before Him!*

Application: *(1) If we dread the judgment seat of Christ, we have not had God's love perfected in us. (2) To correct this problem, may we heed God's Word and rely on the indwelling Holy Spirit that He might produce in us His love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control to abound in heeding God's Biblical will for us that we might joyfully, boldly anticipate standing before our Lord at His judgment seat!*