



The Alexander SBS Summer 2025 Series

Lesson #12 – The Bema 2 of 2

Main Idea

Today marks the final lesson in our Fruit of the Spirit series. I've written, led, and taught Bible studies for 40 years and this is one of the most impactful studies I've ever done. It's been great because of the content and its impact in helping me understand the importance of bearing fruit for Jesus through holy living, but I've also enjoyed our conversations and discussions each week. What the Lord is doing in our group is significant.

In today's lesson we're going to not only wrap up the series, but we're going to complete our discussion on the Bema. Ironically and fitting for this lesson, Jesus' judgment at the Bema will be our final connection to earth. All of the things you and I have done will be evaluated at the Bema. Probably the greatest challenge for a human, and Believer, is the concept of delayed gratification. Like a 5-year old on the cereal aisle at the grocery store, "We want it now!" There will be consequential rewards and benefits for Believers who are willing to wait on God, but a loss of rewards for those who do not.

In last week's lesson we "talked about" the Bema, but this week we're going to discuss "preparing for" the Bema. We can designate this week as "Bema Prep" week. Wilbur Smith's quote, cited in Joe Wall's *Going for the Gold* book (page 7), seems most appropriate to kick things off.

The whole subject of rewards for the believer is one, I am afraid, rarely thought of by the ordinary Christian, or even the average student of Scripture. But it is both a joyous and solemn theme and should serve as a potent incentive for holiness of life.¹

Because they are so appropriate, I've left the Bible passages the same as those used last week. However, this week we're going to discuss Jesus' principles for judging Believers discussed in Chapter 6 of *Going for the Gold*. Several of these are sobering reminders that we should not be cavalier about this future judgment. We need to take this seriously!

- Principle #1: Jesus will judge our deeds, our words, our thoughts, and our motives. (Romans 2:5b-6)
- Principle #2: Only what the Holy Spirit produces in our lives has any value at the Bema. (John 15:5)
- Principle #3: Jesus will reward us according to our persevering faith in God and His Promises.
- Principle #4: Jesus will reward us in proportion to our faithful and wise stewardship. (The Parable of the Talents, Matthew 25:14-30).
- Principle #5: At the Bema Jesus will take into account how we responded to the Word of God. (Psalm 19)
- Principle #6: At the Bema, Jesus will be concerned with the purity of our lives. (2 Timothy 2:15-23)
- Principle #7: At the Bema Jesus will take into account how long we have been saved. (Parable of the Landowner, Matthew 21:33-46)
- Principle #8: Jesus will reward us for our secondary involvement in the ministry of others. (Matt. 10:40-42)
- Principle #9: If we judge others, Jesus will apply our standards when we judge others, (Matthew 7:1-2)
- Principle #10: Jesus will reward us for the results of our ministry in the lives of others. (1 Thessalonians 2:19, Paul discussing converts he will present to Christ)
- Principle #11: Teachers will receive the stricter judgment. (James 3:1)
- Principle #12: Not only production but contribution to production will be rewarded. (1 Corinthians 3:6-8)

¹ Wilbur, Smith, "Inheritance and Reward in Heaven," *Eternity*, March 1977, p. 79



Questions for Consideration

1. Of the 12 listed principles which one(s) do you believe present the greatest challenge for you?
2. Of the 12 listed principles which one(s) do you believe are areas of strength for you?
3. How does knowing we will be judged at a future date make you cognizant of the sin in your life?
4. As we wrap up this series, what have you learned?
5. In what ways is your life going to be different now that you have studied the Fruit of the Spirit?

Bible Verses

2 Corinthians 5:1-10

¹For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. ²Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, ³because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. ⁴For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. ⁵Now the one who has fashioned us for this very purpose is God, who has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

⁶Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. ⁷For we live by faith, not by sight. ⁸We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. ⁹So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. ¹⁰For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

Romans 14:10-12

¹⁰You, then, why do you judge your brother or sister? Or why do you treat them with contempt? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. ¹¹It is written:

“As surely as I live,” says the Lord,
‘every knee will bow before me;
every tongue will acknowledge God.’”

¹²So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.

1 Corinthians 3:12-15

¹²If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, ¹³their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work. ¹⁴If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. ¹⁵If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames.

