

Are You Safe to Save? Arch Chater

It is one thing to be seen as a "good person" by those around us and to have one's name on the church roll. It is another thing to stand before God in the judgment. What saith God? The Bible says, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." 2 Cor 5:10. To some it is believed that only Christ's life come into review when each ones name comes up in the judgment, irrespective of how each one lived their life. The bible teaches that our words and deeds are examined.

"And behold I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.... Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gates into the city." Rev 22: 12, 14.

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works." Rev 20:12-13.

"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with his angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works." Matt 16:27.

It is not claimed or suggested in these verses that we are saved by our works – we are definitely saved by faith in Jesus Christ – Ephesians 2:8. However it is clear that we are judged by our works and our works reveal our faith. Are the works consistent with faith or consistent with worldly attachments?

In the book the Great Controversy there is a whole chapter dedicated to the Investigative Judgment and it would be prudent for each one to read and receive the light God has given on this most important subject.

After quoting the judgment scene described in Dan 7:9-10, Sister White wrote, "Thus was presented to the prophet's vision the great and solemn day when the characters and the lives of men should pass in review before the Judge of all the earth, and to every man should be rendered "according to his works." GC 1888 p. 479

What will pass in review when God opens the books for the judgment?

On that solemn day our “characters” and “lives” will pass in review “before the Judge of all the earth” and to every man should be rendered according to His works.” Even though we are saved by grace through faith, God judges our characters to see who is worthy to receive eternal salvation.

Sister White wrote, “The books of record in heaven in which the names and the deeds of men are registered, are to determine the decisions of the judgment (GC p 480). The record of all our deeds defines the value and kind of faith that each one possessed during their lifetime on the earth. Did we have an active and living faith, whereby we grew in Christ day by day, or did we have an intellectual faith, a head knowledge that failed to surrender the life to Christ?

The prophet of the Lord continues, “Our acts our words, even our most secret motives, all have their weight in deciding our destiny for weal or woe. Though they [our good and evil words and deeds] may be forgotten by us, they will bear their testimony to justify or to condemn. (GC 486-487).

It is clearly stated by Sister White in the book *Desire of Ages*, p 637, that Christ’s life will not be investigated instead of our own, when we are judged. “In that day (the judgment), Christ does not present before men the great work He has done for them in giving His life for their redemption. Rather He presents the faithful work they have done for Him. To those whom He sets upon His right hand, He will say, “Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungered and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye visited me. I was in prison and ye came unto me. “ Matt 25:34-36. But those who Christ commends know not that they have been ministering unto Him. To their perplexed inquiries, He answers, “In as much as ye have done it unto one the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. “ Matt 25:40.

And then friends, there is a “book of remembrance” written before God, in which are recorded the good deeds of “them that feared the Lord and that thought upon His name. “ Mal 3:16. Their words of faith, their acts of love, are registered in heaven. Nehemiah refers to this when he says, “Remember me, O my god... and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my god.” Nehemiah 13: 4. In the book of God’s remembrance, every deed of righteousness is immortalised. There every temptation resisted, every evil overcome, every word of tender pity expressed, is faithfully chronicled. And every act of sacrifice, every suffering and sorrow endured for Christ’s sake is recorded.” GC 481.

Even through we are not saved by our good deeds, we should desire to fill up volumes with our good deeds, not for the purpose of earning salvation – that we can never do – but that the Father may be glorified in the Son. The revelation that Christ lives in each believer's life and "He doeth the works" was revealed by Jesus to Peter when He said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do, shall he do also... Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name that will I do that the Father may be glorified in the Son." John 14: 12-13. Without Jesus living out the life of the believer, the good deeds we would desire are not possible, even the desire must come from heaven. Our only hope is in Christ, our Saviour, example, life and strength, for He said "Without me ye can do nothing... But to him that abides in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." John 15:5.

Is there only a record of our good deeds in heaven? No, there is also a record of our sins. By our words and deeds we will be either justified or condemned for they are the measure of our faith. Jesus said: "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." Matt 12: 36-37.

Sister White wrote "Every man's work passes in review before God and is registered for faithfulness or unfaithfulness. Opposite each name in the books of heaven is entered with terrible exactness every wrong word, every selfish act, every unfilled duty and every secret sin, with every artful dissembling. Heaven sent warning or reproofs neglected, wasted moments, unimproved opportunities, the influence exerted for good or for evil, with its far reaching results are **all** chronicled by the recording angel." GC 482. How circumspect in relation to our calling we need to be?

Typically we think only about our good deeds and sinful thoughts and acts being recorded. However, here we are told that "unfilled duties, wasted moments and unimproved opportunities" are brought into judgment. Should not this impress our hearts to the claims our Saviour has on each one.

"In the judgment the use made of every talent will be scrutinized. How have we employed the capital lent us of heaven? Will the Lord at His coming receive His own with usury? Have we improved the powers entrusted us, in hand and heart and brain, to the glory of God and the blessing of the world?" GC 487.

It is obvious Heaven places no value upon a mere profession of faith. Faith must work by love. Every kind deed and every loving act performed with the love of Christ in the heart is acceptable to God.

The time, the pen, the voice, the talent, dedicated to further His kingdom (which springs from a love for God and fellow man), will be rewarded.

By what will the character and lives of men be tested in the judgment? Says the wise man, "Fear God and keep His commandments for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment." Ecclesiastes 12:13 -14.

"Those who in the judgment are "accounted worthy" will have a part in the resurrection of the just. Jesus said, 'They which shall be accounted worthy to attain that world and the resurrection from the dead.... Are equal unto the angels and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.' Luke 20: 35, 36 (GC 482).

Because the saints are "accounted worthy" does not mean that they have earned anything. Their names coming up in the judgment, having gone under God's review, were found safe to save. They have allowed Him to write His law upon their hearts and minds. They have surrendered all. They have repented and confessed their sins. They have been cleansed from sin. They have given their whole heart to Jesus and the Lord declares by the prophet Isaiah, "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgression for mine own sake and will not remember thy sins." Isaiah 43:25. And "I will not blot out his name out of the book of life." Rev 3:5.

"At the appointed time for the judgment – the close of the 2300 days in 1844 – began the work of the investigation and blotting out of sins. All who have ever taken upon themselves the name of Christ must pass its searching scrutiny." GC 486. The judgment begins with Adam and Eve and then it proceeds to every professed believer throughout the ages. "The judgment is now passing in the sanctuary above. All who would have their names retained in the book of life, should now in the few remaining days of their probation, afflict their souls before God by sorrow for sin and true repentance." GC 490.

Friends, "Watch and pray for ye know not when the time is." Mark 13:33. "Watch ye therefore lest coming suddenly, He find you sleeping." Mark 13: 35, 36