

● THE Gospel Part 15 – A Great White Throne – Study Guide

This study guide focuses on the **absolute necessity of personal change** as the singular requirement for entering the Kingdom of Heaven. It contrasts the arrogance of modern theological systems and historical figures like Korah with the **humble service and suffering** exemplified by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 4. The text reinforces that the Gospel is addressed to the **redeemed**, who face a specific judgment at the **Bema Seat** for their deeds, whether good or evil, prior to the Kingdom reign. It also provides a scriptural analysis of the **Great White Throne judgment**, clarifying that this event occurs after the thousand-year reign and is reserved for "the dead" (the outsiders), distinct from the first resurrection of the redeemed. Ultimately, it exhorts believers to **stay within the bounds of written scripture** and prioritize active service to the brethren to avoid being shut out of the narrow gate.

Definitions of Key Words

- **Change:** The mandatory internal and external transformation required to enter the Kingdom; it is contrasted with mere religious profession or "holding a hand up".
- **Messiah (Christ):** A **title of heirship** to the coming Kingdom, not a surname; it identifies Jesus as the King and the redeemed as joint-heirs.
- **Puffed Up:** An egotistical state of **spiritual arrogance** caused by inflated knowledge or going beyond what is written in scripture.
- **Servant (Dulos):** A bond-slave; the primary identity of a follower of Christ, defined by **active service to the body**.
- **Narrow Gate:** The restrictive entrance to the Kingdom, where Jesus acts as the **Gatekeeper** determining entry based on obedience rather than theology.
- **Great White Throne:** The judgment of "the dead" (outsiders) that occurs **after the thousand-year period**, distinct from the judgment of the redeemed.
- **Ionian Life:** Age-lasting life; the life of the coming Kingdom age promised to those deemed worthy.

Expansion of Key Points

1. The Targeted Focus: The Lost Sheep of Israel

Jesus Christ's ministry was focused primarily on the **redeemed**—specifically the "lost sheep of the house of Israel" who had wandered off track. The source emphasizes that the repercussions of disobedience, such as being cast into "outer darkness," are addressed to the **unfaithful redeemed** rather than the ungodly world.

2. The Prerequisite of Entry: Radical Change

According to **Matthew 18:3**, entrance into the Kingdom is impossible **"unless you change and become like little children"**. This change is not a one-time event but a continuous dropping of old theological "moulds" in favour of the words of Christ. Those who rely on "mighty works" or manifestations while refusing to change their character will find themselves **locked out of the gate**.

3. Avoiding Arrogance: Not Beyond What is Written

A primary reproof to the church at Corinth—and modern believers—is the command **"not to go beyond what is written"**. Going outside of scripture introduces human theology and causes believers to become **"puffed up"** in favour of one against another. The sources warn that arrogance and presumption, like that of **Korah in Numbers 16**, lead to the false belief that one is already "righteous" or "reigning as kings" without the need for judgment.

4. The Identity of a Follower: Servant and Steward

The Apostle Paul defines the faithful as **"servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God"**. Service is not optional; the sources state that if one does not **serve the body (the brethren)**, they do not truly love or serve Christ. Jesus identifies service to the "faithful" as service directly to Himself.

5. The Standard of the Apostolic Life

Paul contrasts the "puffed up" Corinthians with the reality of his own life: being **"last of all,"** hungry, thirsty, poorly dressed, homeless, and slandered. He describes the apostles as **"the scum of the world"** for the sake of the truth. Believers are urged to be **imitators of Paul**, accepting that teaching the Kingdom message leads to being held in disrepute rather than honour.

6. The Judgment of the Redeemed (The Bema Seat)

The redeemed do not escape judgment; they must all appear before the **judgment seat of Christ** to receive what is due for what was done in the body,

"whether good or evil". This corresponds to the "first resurrection," which includes both the **just (to life)** and the **unjust (to shame and contempt)**. This judgment determines one's inheritance and position in the Kingdom.

7. The Great White Throne and the Final Outcome

The **Great White Throne judgment** involves "the dead"—those who do not belong to Christ—and occurs after the thousand-year reign and the release of Satan. These individuals are judged by what is written in the books according to their deeds. Following this, **death and Hades** are thrown into the lake of fire, which is the **second death**.

Biblical References

- **Numbers 16:** The rebellion and judgment of Korah.
- **Daniel 12:2:** Resurrection to life or shame and contempt.
- **Matthew 5 & 7:** The Sermon on the Mount and the narrow gate.
- **Matthew 8:12:** Outer darkness (referenced contextually).
- **Matthew 11:27:** Revelation according to the Son's choice.
- **Matthew 13:24-30:** The parable of the wheat and the weeds (darnell).
- **Matthew 18:1-4:** Changing to become like children; greatness in the Kingdom.
- **John 5:28-29:** Resurrection of life vs. resurrection of judgment.
- **Acts 24:15:** Resurrection of both the just and the unjust.
- **Romans 11:28-32:** Irrevocable calling and disobedience [contextual review].
- **Romans 14:10 / 2 Corinthians 5:10:** The judgment seat of Christ for good and evil.
- **1 Corinthians 4:1-21:** Servants and stewards; Paul's suffering; not going beyond what is written.
- **1 Corinthians 15:** Resurrection order and the "changed".
- **Titus 1:2:** The promise of Ionian life.
- **Revelation 20:4-15:** The thrones, the thousand years, Satan's release, and the Great White Throne.

Study Questions

- **Audience Identification:** According to **Matthew 18**, who is the "lost" group Jesus is attempting to get back on track?
- **The Prerequisite:** What does the source identify as the "truth" regarding entering the Kingdom in **Matthew 18:3**?
- **The Danger of Theology:** What happens to a believer when they "go beyond what is written"?
- **Service Criteria:** How does the Apostle Paul justify his credibility in **1 Corinthians 4**?
- **Resurrection Distinction:** What is the difference between the resurrection mentioned in **Daniel 12:2** and the one in **Revelation 20:11-12**?
- **Judgment Outcomes:** According to **2 Corinthians 5:10**, what two categories of deeds are judged at the Bema seat?

Answer Key

- **The lost sheep of the house of Israel**—God's redeemed people who have wandered off.
- Unless an individual **changes and becomes like a little child**, they will never enter the Kingdom.
- They risk becoming **"puffed up" (arrogant)** and divided against one another because human ideas replace scripture.
- He identifies as a **servant and a steward**, emphasizing his active work and suffering for the body.
- Daniel 12:2 refers to the **first resurrection of the redeemed** (just and unjust); Revelation 20:11-12 refers to the **Great White Throne judgment of the dead (outsiders)** after the thousand years.
- **Good and evil.**

Exhortations

- **Change Now:** Do not wait for the judgment seat to present your excuses. Today is the day of change; humble yourself like a child and align your life with the commands of Christ.
- **Serve the Body:** Recognize that you cannot follow Christ without serving His people. Find a way to give a drink, food, or a visit to your **faithful brethren**, for in doing so, you serve the Messiah.

- **Stay Within the Lines:** Throw out the commentaries and the "Armani-suit" theology. **Stick to the book** and do not go beyond what is written to avoid spiritual arrogance.
- **Endure the Affliction:** If life is a "breeze," ask yourself if you are on the right track. The narrow gate is tough, and the path of truth often leads to being **held in disrepute**—but the future Kingdom reign is worth every momentary affliction.
- **Focus on the Kingdom:** Stop looking at your current problems and start looking at the **magnificent, glorious Kingdom**. Let that vision drive your repentance and your service.