

## Discussion Questions: Live for the Line, Not the Dot

Matthew 16:24-27

2 Corinthians 5:6-10

1. What comes to your mind when you hear the word “saint”? How do you feel about the Biblical idea that all Christians are called to be saints?
2. Why do you think most American Christians have a difficult time dealing with the Biblical truth that life on this earth is only temporary, and this life is not even the best life that God intends for us to experience?
3. Pastor Mark suggests that the most important question upon our death will not be what other people thought of how we lived our earthly lives, but what did the Lord think of how we lived our early lives. Do you agree or disagree? Why?
4. We are living in an age when people don't like the idea of being held accountable before God. Why is it important for Christians to embrace this important Biblical concept?
5. Pastor Mark points out that going to Heaven is not a reward. It is a free gift of God's grace, based on what Jesus has done through his death and resurrection. But once we get to Heaven, we will receive rewards based on our deeds while we lived on earth. Have you ever thought of this idea? How does that impact your day-to-day decisions?
6. Read 2 Corinthians 5:6-10. Pastor Mark explains that the term “Judgment Seat” refers to the “Bema,” which was an elevated platform where the King or Emperor would reward Olympic Athletes for their performance in the Olympic Games. The Bible uses this analogy to describe the Christian standing before God to receive rewards based on how he or she lived in this life. Pastor Mark suggests we should live every day in anticipation of that moment when we stand before our King. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

7. Some might be concerned that the promise of rewards will cause people to do good deeds out of selfish motives, like a child doing chores in order to get an allowance. But Pastor Mark suggests that God knows the motives of our hearts and will take that into account. Yet God also wants us to be aware of rewards and desire rewards. How do we balance this tension between doing good motivated by a love for God and others, with doing good while knowing that rewards will be coming our way someday?
8. Pastor Mark suggests that, in talking about rewards, the Lord is not inviting us to be selfish, He is encouraging us to be wise and to think from a heavenly perspective. How does that idea impact our understanding of the things that our secular culture tells us to pursue and value?
9. Pastor Mark describes the idea of the dot and the line (originally described by Randy Alcorn). Imagine a dot with a very long line going out from it. The line never really ends. The dot represents this life, the line represents eternity after we die. Pastor Mark agrees with Randy Alcorn, who advises that we should “live for the line, not the dot.” If you were focused on living this life based on what awaits you in eternity after you die, what would you change about your life right now?