

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

Vol. XXXVI

April 19, 2026

No. 16

Christians Will Judge Angels

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The New Testament makes it clear that there is ONE lawgiver and JUDGE (*James 4:12*). The Father has in turn given ALL JUDGMENT to His Son, Jesus the Christ (*John 5:22*). While these passages are explicitly clear, Paul reminds the saints in Corinth, “*Know ye not that we shall judge angels?*” (*I Corinthians 6:3*). Does the New Testament contradict itself? If not, what does Paul mean by saints judging angels?

The Greek word translated “*judge*” is KRINO, which denotes someone “*determining, or choosing so as to pronounce judgment.*” Members of the church in Corinth were instigating lawsuits against one another, and going before the unbelievers of the world for judgment. (*I Corinthians 6:1, 6*). To shame fellow brethren in their actions, Paul points to a fact the Corinthians should know: “*...we shall judge angels.*” The point is clear. If Christians will be judging angels, who are higher than man, surely, they have the ability to judge matters between their fellow brethren in Christ.

Whatever is involved in judging angels, the same point applies to the world, for Paul reminds the brethren they should

also know, “*the saints shall judge the world*” (*I Corinthians 6:2*).

This “judging” will be in the future and distinguished from this life. The judging of the world and angels is indicated as “shall judge,” pointing to some-time in the future. Knowing Christians will judge angels, Paul concluded, “*how much more, things that pertain to this life*” (*I Corinthians 6:3*). Paul is pointing to the final judgment, when the affairs of this life on earth are over, and accountability occurs.

Other passages make it clear angels are being reserved for the final judgment. God has not spared sinning angels but “*... cast them down to hell, and committed them to pits of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment...*” (*2 Peter 2:4*). The angels who have discarded their proper habitation before God are being kept “*in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great day*” (*Jude 6*).

One way God’s people could “judge” the world and angels without usurping the authority of the ONE JUDGE – JESUS CHRIST, is that the Christian’s decision to submit the Lord’s standard of righteousness passes judgment upon the unrighteous decisions of the world and angels.

Noah’s faith, made perfect through his total obedience in preparing the ark, had the effect of condemning the world: “*through which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith*” (*Hebrews 11:7*). The word, “condemn” is an intensified form of KRINO, the word Paul uses regarding Christians judging the world and angels. As people make choices to live righteously according to God’s law, they distinguish themselves from the unrighteous world. They live truly as “saints.” Jesus will point out the difference of character between the righteous and the unrighteous, making the distinctions on the Judgment Day (*Matthew 25:31-46*).

Think about it. The righteous choices you make and live out in this life not only prepare you for heaven, but will stand in judgment against the unrighteous choices of man and angels on the Judgment Day. There is therefore no higher, nor future standard of righteousness in the universe than that found in Christ. We should then be able to solve moral issues between brethren without going before worldly courts, airing out our dirty laundry, bringing shame upon the church, and hurting the cause of Christ.