

God's Inflexible Impartiality

God is not one to show partiality, but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right, is welcome to Him. —**Acts 10:34-35, NAS**

I find it interesting that in 1 Corinthians 9:25 Paul refers to strict training and in verse 27 to the body being tamed: he says, "I beat my body and make it my slave." So our bodies are given to us as a trust from God. Our bodies are also a spiritual temple (1 Cor. 6:19). They are also referred to as "instruments of wickedness" (Rom. 6:13). And last, the source of the tongue (James 3:6), which is considered "a world of evil among the parts of the body."

The Corinthians were in danger of missing out on the prize. The question is: Are we? What grips me, and I pray it will grip you, is that Paul believed in God's ruthless impartiality. Let that grip you. At the judgment seat of Christ Paul knew that his own present intimacy with God did not mean that he could tell God what to do. Paul's intimacy with God did not result in an over-familiarity with Him, whereby he says, "Well, it can't happen to me." Paul did not have indemnity because he was an apostle; preachers do not have indemnity because they seek conversions; high-profile Christians have no indemnity; your years of Christian service are not going to guarantee that you get the prize.

Martin Luther said, "When I get to heaven, I expect to be surprised three times. There will be those in heaven I thought wouldn't be there, and there will be some missing I thought would be there, but the greatest surprise will be that I am there myself." But could I paraphrase that one more time? I suspect there will be three surprises: some will receive the prize I thought would not, some will not be rewarded that I thought would, but the greatest surprise will be if I receive it.

And I pray that we all do.

Excerpted from *When God Says "Well Done!"* (Christian Focus Publications Ltd., 1993).