

# 1 Corinthians 4:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

## Analysis

---

**Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come.** The imperative *me krinete* (μὴ κρίνετε, "do not judge") prohibits premature evaluation. *Pro kairou* (πρὸ καιροῦ, "before the time") refers to Christ's parousia (return), the appointed moment for final assessment. The command doesn't forbid all discernment (5:12; Matt 7:15-20) but warns against presumptuous verdict-rendering on servants accountable to another Master.

**Who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts.** Two future verbs emphasize eschatological certainty: *phōtisei* (φωτίσει, "will illuminate") exposes concealed deeds; *phanerōsei* (φανερώσει, "will reveal") unveils secret motives—*boulas tōn kardiōn* (βούλας τῶν καρδιῶν, "counsels/intentions of hearts"). Only then, when Christ's light penetrates all darkness, will true assessment be possible. **And then shall every man have praise of God**—*epainos* (ἔπαινος, "commendation") awaits the faithful, however obscure their service seemed to human observers.

## Historical Context

---

Eschatological judgment was central to early Christian theology. Paul consistently points to the bema of Christ as the ultimate tribunal where hidden things are

revealed (Rom 2:16; 14:10-12; 2 Cor 5:10). The Corinthians' premature judgments reflect realized eschatology gone wrong—acting as if the kingdom had fully arrived (v. 8) when actually they still lived between Christ's advents, in the "already/not yet" tension of redemptive history.

## Related Passages

---

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

---

1. What judgments have you made about others' ministries or motives that God might overturn at Christ's return?
2. How does the promise that God will reveal all hidden faithfulness encourage you when your service goes unnoticed or unappreciated?
3. In what areas are you living as if final judgment has already occurred, rather than waiting for Christ's authoritative verdict?

## Interlinear Text

---

ἄστε	μὴ	πρὸ	καιροῦ	τι	κρίνετε	ἕως	ἄν	ἔλθῃ
Therefore	nothing	before	the time	G5100	judge	until	G302	come
G5620	G3361	G4253	G2540		G2919	G2193		G2064
ό	κύριος	ὅς	καὶ	φωτίσει	τὰ	κρυπτὰ	τοῦ	
G3588	the Lord	who	and	will bring to light	G3588	the hidden things	G3588	
	G2962	G3739	G2532	G5461		G2927		
σκότους	καὶ	φανερώσει	τὰς	βουλὰς	τῶν	καρδιῶν·		
of darkness	and	will make manifest	G3588	the counsels	G3588	of the hearts		
G4655	G2532		G5319		G1012			G2588
καὶ	τότε	ό	ἔπαινος	γενήσεται	ἐκάστῳ	ἀπὸ	τοῦ	
and	then	G3588	praise	have	shall every man	of	G3588	
G2532	G5119		G1868	G1096	G1538	G575		
θεοῦ								
God								
G2316								

## Additional Cross-References

---

**James 5:7** (References Lord): Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

**2 Corinthians 5:10** (Judgment): For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

**1 Corinthians 3:13** (Parallel theme): Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

**Hebrews 4:13** (Parallel theme): Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

**2 Corinthians 10:18** (References Lord): For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

**Romans 2:16** (Judgment): In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

**Romans 2:1** (Judgment): Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.

**Revelation 20:12** (Judgment): 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.

**Ecclesiastes 12:14** (Judgment): For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

**Romans 2:29** (Resurrection): But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.