Heaven will not be all heaven. One event will transpire on those golden streets that will be anything but joy for its occupants. There is tremendous anticipation in the thought of the day we shall be lifted from this life to our eternal home but there is a problem; we must first go to the Judgment Seat of Christ (Crandall Miller). “On Judgment Day, fire will reveal what kind of work each builder has done. The fire will show if a person’s work has any value,” writes the Apostle Paul, “if the work survives, that person will receive a reward. If the work is burned up, the builder will suffer great loss. The believer will be saved, but like someone barely escaping through a wall of flames.”

In his book Thimble Crown Crandall Miller writes about an experience he received while reading 1 Corinthians 3:13-15, “I suddenly … had a very vivid picture of being at the Judgment Seat of Christ. I stood in heaven watching as the works of others were brought out and piled up. They were then tested by fire. It all looked good for me, because I had served God for many years, preached hundreds of times, served as a pastor; taught ministers in seminary … joined three churches … was baptized … had perfect attendance at Sunday School … and kept busy serving the Lord. Suddenly, my name was called and I stepped forward with confidence.” “They brought out my pile of works,” he declares, “and I noticed large holes in it and wondered why. The answer came. The holes are the things you should have done and didn’t. I was devastated. Not everything … was gold, silver or precious stones; wood, hay and stubble were mixed in my pile. My perfect Sunday School attendance was fuel for fire. Why was this not a good work I questioned? My mom got this reward because she pushed me out of bed and took me. There were holes in my prayer life. Why? When I did anything other than God’s perfect will; … that work became wood and hay. There were instances when I should have worked but instead I prayed; and when I should have prayed but instead I worked. My preaching was flawed. I had taken credit at times when a service went well even though I had been careless and was not properly prepared. Things were not as I expected. They brought fire to my pile and I watched it burn. Tears began to roll down my face … and out of the ashes an angel took the remains and formed a crown for me—a small Thimble Crown.

Suddenly, I saw myself beside streets of transparent gold … I saw Jesus coming. I watched the saints … dropping their crowns at His feet (Revelation 4:9). My heart broke when Christ came over to me. I dropped down on my knees and laid a Thimble Crown at his feet. This is how much I loved You; this is how much … I cared.”

June 2