

“THE LIFE GOD REWARDS”

Big Idea . . . Part 3: The Good News about Rewards

INTRO: “How much time this week did you spend thinking about eternity?” Too preoccupied? What we do on earth impacts what we do in heaven. Too many miss this truth: There is an unbreakable link between how we behave on earth and what we experience in heaven. The NT is clear that some believers will have more rewards, authority, and responsibilities in eternity (Matt. 16:27; 19:21, 27-30; Lk. 6:22-23; 19:11-27; Matt. 25:20-21; 2 Cor. 5:10). Knowing this is true, should influence the choices we make, the actions we take, and how we carry out our lives as followers of Christ. Remember most of the main events of our forever lives take place after death.

God has granted to all who believe the free gift of abundant and eternal life, plus much more. All true believers do enter heaven but not all have the same experiences in heaven. God pays attention. One day He will make all things right and He will generously reward those who honor Him for everything we did for Him on this earth. Jesus came to tell us that God is not only our Redeemer, but our Rewarder! Our life now directly impacts everything that will happen to us after we die. Our choices on earth have direct consequences on our life in eternity. Compensation/Rewards await. Moses (Heb. 11:23-29); Paul (1 Cor. 9:24-27; 2 Cor. 5:9-11; Phil. 1:20-21). In Luke 14:12-14 . . . God will repay us for good works (esp. to those who can’t pay us back) after we are dead and in heaven (Rev. 22:12). When we are, we will be “blessed”!

Scriptures on expected behaviors / Promised result (1 Tim. 6:18-19; Col. 3:23-24; Lk. 6:35; Matt. 6:3-4, 6, 17-18)

WHAT WILL GOD REWARD US *FOR*? Not exhaustive list but here’s what we do know.

1. God will reward you for *seeking* Him through spiritual practices (Matt. 6:6; Heb. 11:6). Connect to HURRY series
2. God will reward you for *submitting* to your authority as a faithful steward (1 Cor. 4:1-2; Matt. 24:45-47; Eph. 6:8; Col. 3:22-24).
3. God will reward you for *self-denial* (Matt. 16:24-27).
4. God will reward you for *serving* those in need in His name – cannot pay you back (Mk. 9:41). Matt. 25:35-40 (6 specifics)

5. God will reward you for *suffering* for His name and reputation (Lk. 6:22-23).
6. God will reward you for *sacrifices* made for Him (Lk. 6:35; Matt. 19:29 100-fold!).
7. God will reward you for *sharing* your resources (time, talents, treasure) to advance His kingdom (Matt. 6:3-4; 25:20-22; 1 Tim. 6:18-19).
8. God will reward you for *steadfastness* to the truth (Jn. 14:6; 2 Jn. 7-8).

How does this list leave you feeling? Excited, humbled, discouraged? **“BUT I DON’T DESERVE ANY REWARD!** Just joining Jesus in heaven is enough.” I get it, but our God loves to reward us, even for what we’re already glad and willing to do for Him. Three passages:

- Luke 17:10 . . . it is both a duty and privilege to serve Him. If He rewards us, it’s because He is generous and gracious, not because we deserve it.
- Matt. 20:1-16 Parable of Laborers is the Vineyard – God can be as generous as He wants with what belongs to Him.
- Heb. 11:6 *rewards* – Two words in NT describe reward (*misthos* and *apodidomai*) both refer to the reward itself. But here (only use) it refers to the GIVER (the person). To please God, we must not only believe “He is”, but that He “is a rewarder”.

Prayer to live for God’s Reward (PPT) . . .

CONC: I don’t think most Christians give heaven much thought. Once we take care of going there, we usually give it little thought. Yet, Paul said . . . (Col. 3:2). If we do think about it, it’s often incorrect (play harp, float on cloud, inc.); mostly seeing loved ones again. What we do *with* Jesus matters forever. How we live *for* Jesus also matters forever! What we do on earth impacts what we do-and get-in heaven. God is our Redeemer and Rewarder. Our rewards come mostly in heaven and for eternity.