

## **A Study of Heaven – Week 5**

### **Our Rewards in Heaven or Heaven's Oscars**

Roman 13:1-7 tells us that while on earth we should give to others what we owe them whether it is taxes, customs, respect or honor because God has put them in power over us.

More importantly, these things aren't important. 1 Chronicles 29:15 tells us that this is because we are visitors in this world. Our home is in heaven according to Hebrews 13:14.

While visiting a Sunday School class in Tennessee a number of years ago, I was corrected by someone saying that I shouldn't expect the blessings from God as a motivation. I believe that they were wrong because God uses carrots and sticks to try to keep us in line.

In His "kingdom parables", Jesus tells us that the kingdom of heaven is like a:

Matthew 13:44 – Hidden Treasure

Matthew 13:45 – The finest pearl

Matthew 13:47-49 – A dragnet – collecting all souls and the good and bad souls will be separated.

Matthew 13:51-52 – New and old household treasures

All of these things are rewards.

2 Chronicles 15:7 says be strong because our work will be rewarded.

2 John 1:8 warns us to make sure that we receive our "full reward".

1 Peter 1:3-4 tells us that there is an inheritance which is imperishable, undefiled, and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you."

Mark 10:29-30 tells us that we will get one hundred times the return on our investment of work in eternal life.

Revelation 22:12 tells us that Jesus is returning and our reward is with Him.

Also Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 5:9-10 that we will also "*receive compensation for the deeds done through the body*". It also says that we will receive this compensation "*before the judgment seat of Christ.*" It will be given for good or bad.

The reward is not to be our sole focus for getting into heaven but God tells us about them. As we have already seen our blessings in heaven will be amazing and we will be rewarded. So what are these rewards?

### **The Victor's Crown**

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 tells us about this crown. It says, *"24 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. 25 Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. So they do it to obtain a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. 26 Therefore I run in such a way as not to run aimlessly; I box in such a way, as to avoid hitting air; 27 but I strictly discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified."*

Verse 24 - Paul is telling us to live our lives in such a way as to win the crown. Verse 25 says to exercise self-control (NASB) or disciplined.

Matthew 6:19-21 tells us that we are to store up or seek rewards that are in heaven because they are imperishable and incorruptible.

### **The Crown of Rejoicing**

In 1 Thessalonians 2:17-19, Paul tells the Thessalonians that he was eager to see their faces. In verse 19, he mentions the crown of rejoicing.

Depending on which Bible translation that you are using it could be the crown of pride, crown of exultation or crown of boasting. It is sometimes referred to as the "Soul Winner's Crown".

According to Dr. Jeremiah, "this crown is given for playing a part in leading others to Christ". Luke 15:10 tells us there is rejoicing in heaven when a sinner repents.

When Paul and his companions arrived in Thessalonica (Acts 17), verses 2 and 3 tell us that Paul reasoned with the Thessalonians for 3 Sabbaths. He was trying to lead them to the saving knowledge of Jesus.

### **Crown of Righteousness**

2 Timothy 4:8 says, *"in the future there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing."* This verse tells us that this crown is given for those that

carry Advent further than just in December. It requires a life looking forward to Jesus' second coming.

Peter, Paul and John wished for the Lord's return.

1 Corinthians 16:19-24 - Thus, Paul with his own hand said, "O Lord, come!"

2 Peter 3:10-12 - Thus, we should be "*looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God,*" (NASB) or "*Look forward to and speed its coming.*" (NIV)

Rev. 22:20-21 – Just as Paul said above, John said, "*Come, Lord Jesus.*" More and more, I tend to quote this one, especially with what is going on in the world today.

5 parables about being ready for the 2nd coming of Christ.

Luke 12:35-36 & Mark 13:33-37 - The Door-Keeper

Luke 12:39-40 & Matt. 24:42-44 - Owner Of The House

Matt. 24:45-51 & Luke 12:41-46 - Servant In Charge Of the household

Matthew 25:1-13 - The Ten Virgins.

Matt. 25:14-30 & Luke 19:11-27 - Proper Use Of Talents

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### **Crown of Life**

James 1:12 says that we are to persevere because we love Him in order to get this crown.

Revelation 2:10 tells us how faithful we must be to God, faithful unto death.

Dr. Jeremiah says that the "Crown of Life is given in recognition of enduring and triumphing over temptations and trials, even to the point of martyrdom."

### **Crown of Glory**

1 Peter 5:1-4 says, "*Therefore, I urge elders among you, as your fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and one who is also a fellow partaker of the glory that is to be revealed: 2 shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not with greed but with eagerness; 3 nor yet as domineering over those assigned to your care, but by proving to be examples to the flock. 4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.*"

Dr. Jeremiah says "This crown seems especially designed for Christian leaders and for those who are faithful shepherd of the people of God."

“Reward, not of debt, but of grace, shall be given to the most obscure and unknown of you, who for his sake have sought to teach little children or to reclaim the adult who had fallen into sin. Take courage – your work of faith and labour of love are not in vain in the Lord, and will do wonders yet to the praise of His grace.” (Spurgeon)

### **The Greatest Reward of all**

The greatest reward is not the crowns. Mike and I have often talked about heaven, just to be in heaven and be with Jesus. Just to be on the positive side of eternity. There are numerous southern gospel songs about being in heaven with Jesus. One of my favorites is a song by the Booth Brothers, “Look for me at Jesus feet”.

“Let me tell you where I'll be.  
I'll be thanking Christ, my Savior  
For saving a wretch like me.”

In our study of the Book of Revelation, we came across the twenty-four elders in the throne room of God that were wearing crowns. Revelation 4:4 says that they “*were clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads.*” Revelation 4:10 tells us what they did with their crowns. They cast their crowns before the throne of God and worshiped Him.

We will be in heaven not because of what we have done but because of what Jesus did. What do these verses say about what we must do to receive these rewards?

- a. Hebrews 10:10 – Sanctified or made holy
- b. Romans 8:1 – No condemnation because of Jesus
- c. 1 John 2:12 – Our sins are forgiven because of Jesus
- d. 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 – Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection
- e. Galatians 1:3-4 – Jesus gave Himself
- f. Ephesians 2:8-10 – Grace through faith in Jesus, a gift

Matthew 25:23 says that because of what Jesus did and because we have grace through faith, then He will say to us “Well done good and faithful servant . . . enter the joy of your master.”

Our crowns are not to be used to glorify ourselves, they are to be used glorify Jesus for what He has done for us. There is only one who walked on this earth that is to be glorified above all and that is Jesus, Revelation 5:12 tells us so.

Being with Jesus will be our greatest reward!!