

WHAT ARE THESE HEAVENLY REWARDS?

The sermon on the mount displays who will receive what rewards and who will miss out

Luke 6:20-23 - 20 Looking at his disciples, he said: "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. 21 Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh. 22 Blessed are you when men hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man. 23 "Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their fathers treated the prophets.

Luke 6:24-26 - 24 "But woe to you who are rich, for you have already received your comfort. 25 Woe to you who are well fed now, for you will go hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep. 26 Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for that is how their fathers treated the false prophets.

Moses had the foresight to give up present worldly pleasures and focused on receiving Heavenly rewards - Heb 11:24-26 -24 By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. 25 He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. 26 He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.

During the final judgment two things will happen reward and destruction - Rev 11:16-18 - 6 And the twenty-four elders, who were seated on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, 17 saying: "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign. 18 The nations were angry; and your wrath has come. The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your saints and THOSE WHO REVERENCE YOUR NAME, both small and great — and for destroying those who destroy the earth."

We are to live our lives as an athlete in a game, to win the prize - Phil 3:12-14 - 12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Rewards will go to everyone no matter their position on earth - Eph 6:7-8 - 7 Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, 8 because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free.

Crowns are Part of those Heavenly rewards

Crown of righteousness - 2 Tim 4:6-8 - 6 For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Now there is in store 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 longed for his appearing.

Crown of Life –

James 1:12 Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

Rev 2:10 Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.

Crown of Glory are for Ministers & Pastors - 1 Peter 5:1-4 - To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: 2 Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers — not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; 3 not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. 4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

Crown of victory - 1 Cor 9:24-27 - 24 Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. 25 Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. 26 Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. 27 No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

HOW DO WE GET THESE REWARDS?

Your life is your ministry. What you invest your life in Spiritually will dictate the Rewards you receive in the end - 1 Cor 3:10-15 - 10 By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds. 11 For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, 13 his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. 14 If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. 15 If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.

***The difference is, though I live for God, did I live MORE for things that glorified God or more for other purposes**

Our rewards in heaven will be based on our actions on earth –

Matt 16:27 For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person ACCORDING TO WHAT HE HAS DONE.

Ps 62:11-12 - 11 One thing God has spoken, two things have I heard: that you, O God, are strong, 12 and that you, O Lord, are loving. Surely you **will reward each person ACCORDING TO WHAT HE HAS DONE.**

Knowing we will be rewarded by Him is part of our Faith - Heb 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that **he rewards those who earnestly seek him.**

Earnestly seek - ekzeteo (ek-zay-teh'-o) to search out, i.e. (figuratively) investigate, crave, demand, Hebrew term for worship:

We must have the same mind as Jesus because we cannot comprehend what it truly means to have or to lose our rewards - Phil 2:5-8 - 5 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, 7 but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death — even death on a cross!

We all have a role to play as part of the body. Our reward will be from us doing what we were ordained to do - 1 Cor 3:5-9 - 5 What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe — as the Lord has assigned to each his task. 6 I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. 7 So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. 8 The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and EACH WILL BE REWARDED ACCORDING TO HIS OWN LABOR. 9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.

Being persecuted because of Jesus gets rewards - Matt 5:11-12 - 11 "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you BECAUSE OF ME. 12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

It comes down to purpose, are you doing it for God or not - Matt 6:1-4 - "Be careful not to **do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them.** If you do, **YOU WILL HAVE NO REWARD FROM YOUR FATHER IN HEAVEN.** 2 "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, **THEY HAVE RECEIVED THEIR REWARD IN FULL.** 3 But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

OTHER THINGS WE MAY NOT REALIZE AFFECT OUR REWARDS?

Our prayers are based on purpose, are we praying to and for God or for anything else? - Matt 6:5-6 - 5 "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners **to be seen by men.** I tell you the truth, **they have received their reward in full.** 6 But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

When you fast, it comes down to purpose, is it to humble ourselves before God or to display ourselves before others - Matt 6:16-18 - 16 "When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, **THEY HAVE RECEIVED THEIR REWARD IN FULL.** 17 But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, 18 so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

How we treat those ordained by God will provide us rewards - Matt 10:41-42 - 41 Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a **prophet's reward**, and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a **righteous man's reward.** 42 And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, **he will certainly not lose his reward.**"

How we treat our enemies will greatly affect our reward in Heaven - Luke 6:32-36 - 32 "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' love those who love them. 33 And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' do that. 34 And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' lend to 'sinners,' expecting to be repaid in full. 35 But **love your ENEMIES, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back.** **THEN YOUR REWARD WILL BE GREAT, and you will be sons of the Most High,** because he is kind to the **ungrateful and wicked.** 36 **Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.**

How we are to our authorities will either reward us good if we do what God says, or bad if we do not - Col 3:22-25 - 22 Slaves, **obey your earthly masters** in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. 23 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, **as working for the Lord, not for men,** 24 since you know that **you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward.** It is the Lord Christ you are serving. 25 **Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong,** and there is no favoritism.

Enduring in hard times and sufferings will richly reward us - Heb 10:32-36 - 32 Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you stood your ground in a great contest in the face of suffering. 33 Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you **stood side by side with those who were so treated.** 34 You **sympathized with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property,** because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions. 35 So do not throw away your confidence; **it will be richly rewarded.** 36 **You need to persevere SO THAT** when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.

HOW CAN WE LOSE THESE REWARDS?

We receive for doing Good but we will lose for doing bad - 2 Cor 5:7-10 - 7 We live **by faith, not by sight**. 8 We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. 9 So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things **done while in the body**, WHETHER GOOD OR BAD.

By not living according to God's rules - 2 Tim 2:5 Similarly, if anyone competes as an athlete, he **does not receive the victor's crown UNLESS** he **competes according to the rules**.

We can lose those Heavenly rewards by careless living - 2 John 7-11 - 7 Many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist. 8 Watch out that you **do not lose what you have worked for**, but that you may be rewarded fully. 9 Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not **have God**; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house or welcome him. 11 Anyone who welcomes him shares in his wicked work.

There are those that can make use lose our prize IF WE ALLOW THEM - Col 2:18-19 -18 Do not let *anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize*. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions. 19 He has lost connection with the Head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.

***Ultimately, the Bible reveals who rejects and denies the truth of remaining grounded in the foundation of Christ. Such individuals are destined to be separated from God forever. However, those who remain on that foundation—living by faith—will be rewarded according to the reverence and focus they demonstrate throughout their lives.**