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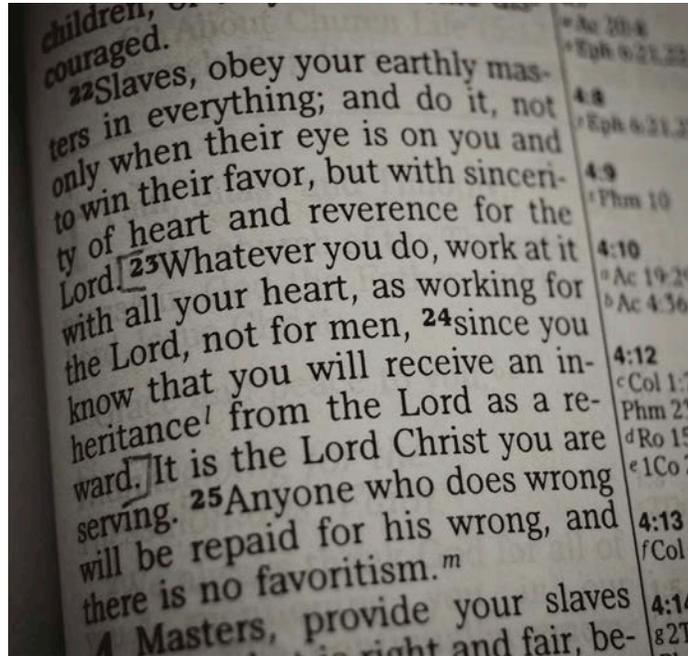
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# Better Understanding *the* Believer's Future Judgment



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**E**SCHATOLOGY IS THE BIG THEOLOGICAL word that encases the study of future events as recorded in the Bible. It is no secret that noble, Bible-believing Christians hold divergent viewpoints on what the Scriptures teach concerning the specifics surrounding the second coming of Christ.

One thing, however, that most believers do agree on is that the study of the believer's personal future — as depicted in the Bible — should prove to be highly motivational and directive in the here and now.

I therefore believe you will find this study quite compelling, directional and motivational. Like the Apostle Paul in numerous passages, I cannot escape the gravity and significance of what follows relative to viewing my life with a very sober eternal perspective — all in preparation for what Scripture calls the Bema Seat Judgment. I pray God will use this study in your own life in a similar, profound way. Read on.

**Weekly Bible Study During Session**

SENATE: 8:00 AM Tuesdays, Rotating Offices of Senators. *Hot Breakfast Served.*

HOUSE: Capitol H324: Monday or Tuesday Evenings after First Votes Back. *Dinner Served.*





## MINISTRY UPDATE

### CBN's "The 700 Club"

Airs Lead Feature on Capitol Ministries



"MEET THE MEN who are taking the Gospel into the halls of Government," is how the Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) promoted a lead feature story on Capitol Ministries that aired on "The 700 Club" television show Wednesday, March 9.

"Across the country state legislatures are meeting to create policy and change laws for millions of Americans. At the same time, work is underway to change lawmakers from the inside out," began the story by Jennifer Wishon, CBN's White House Correspondent.



Jennifer Wishon

Capitol Ministries has planted Bible studies in 40 state Capitols, and several of the Ministry Leaders were interviewed for the story including Perry Gauthier, who leads a Bible study and ministers to Public Servants in Nebraska.



Perry Gauthier

Gauthier explained that Capitol Ministries steers clear of politics and is not partisan. "I say Jesus died for donkeys and elephants and we love both sides of the aisle," he said.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Are you spending, wasting, or investing your life? Are you having the maximum impact on the maximum amount of people for all of eternity? These are huge, sobering questions that require solitude, introspection, prayer and sobriety in order to answer with integrity.

I ask you to gather your courage and immerse yourself into these passages — how will you adjust or refine your life's direction as a result of digesting what follows?

## II. THE DATA ABOUT REWARDS

The apostle Paul wrote 2Corinthians 5:10 to believers at the church in Corinth:

*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*

In very plain, straightforward language Paul is communicating that every believer will undergo a judgment — not to determine if one will go to heaven or hell (The Great White Throne Judgment is different and is for unbelievers and takes place at the end of the Millennial Kingdom, cf. Rev. 20:12), but to determine the believer's rewards and the breadth of his reign in the Millennial kingdom. This judgment of believers is termed The Bema Seat Judgment and occurs after the rapture of the Church and prior to Christ's Second Coming with His saints wherein He will set up His throne in Jerusalem and reign with His bride, the Church, for 1,000 years. (As you can see by the above, I am what theologians term a "Premillennialist" in regards to my personal conviction pertaining to future events, i.e. eschatology. Premillennialism, by the way, is by far the most popular view of what Scripture teaches concerning future events amongst Evangelicals today.)

Specifically, in regards to this understanding, at the end of Revelation 20:4, the Apostle

John states, *and [the believers] reigned with Christ for a thousand years.* Most interestingly, the word here for *reigned* (ebasileusan) is the verb form of the noun Basileus, which means *King* in the Greek. *Kings* and *reigning* go together. In English we say "Bakers" (noun) "bake" (verb); "Gardeners garden;" and "Climbers climb," but we don't say (as they do in biblical Greek) that "Kings king." In English we say "Kings reign" and that's how it's translated here in the New American Standard Bible. Revelation 20 goes on to declare that all believers in the future *will be priests of God and of Christ, and will reign with Him a thousand years* (20:6).

Implicit in the context, and borne out by these and other passages, is that believers will be judged and recompensed according to their faithfulness and obedience to Scripture in this life and that their reward — specifically the breadth of their *reign* as *kings* under the *King of Kings* in the Millennium — will be directly related to, and proportional to their actions of obedience to God during their earthly lifetime. Take heed. Make no mistake about it, states Romans 14:12 in parallel meaning to 2Corinthians 5:10 which we have already briefly examined, regarding believers at the Bema Seat Judgment:

*So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God.*

Whereas salvation itself is based on Christ's work on our behalf: *for by grace you have been saved through faith, and not of yourself...* (Ephesians 2:8-9), these passages teach that:

**EACH BELIEVER'S REWARDS ARE BASED ON HIS OR HER RESPONSIVE FAITHFULNESS AND INDUSTRIOUSNESS IN CHRIST**

The following outline represents some of the pertinent biblical teaching regarding our understanding of the believer's future judgment and the accompanying idea of



his or her rewards. Notice first that there are degrees of rewards.

### III. THE DEGREES OF REWARDS

At the Bema Seat Judgment there will be various degrees of reward. Paul makes this evident in 1Corinthians 3:12-15:

*Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.*

As you can see, this passage is pregnant with truth related to this week's study. First, the word *foundation* is a reference to the corporate Body of Christ (cf. Ephesians. 2:20). Paul is writing to the corporate body of Christ in Corinth, i.e. the Church he founded years prior in the city of Corinth.

Contextually this passage relates to the implied idea of expanding the Body of Christ — both in the sense of expanding God's Kingdom here on earth, and in eternity. This passage then, pertains to how one is to best go about doing that. *Gold, silver, and precious stones* represent effective, dedicated spiritual service done correctly, with the aim at building up the Body of Christ. On the other hand, *wood, hay, and straw* convey the idea of shallow activities in a believer's life, a life that is bent on pursuing worthless things with no aim, sight, or tangency to matters of eternal value or significance. I.e. *wood, hay, and straw* represent the work of self-centered saints whose concerns in this world are other than those of the One who saved them by His power and grace.

The former will stand the test of *fire*, the latter will not. *Revealed with fire* connotes God's discerning judgment regarding the

forementioned. What endures His *testing* are those things that survive His scrutiny and judgment — those things that the believer has accomplished in His power for His glory. This fact is substantively supported by the following passages: Matthew 25:21, 23; Luke 19:11-27; 2Corinthians 5:9; Philippians 3:13, 14; 1Thessalonians 2:19, 20; 2Timothy 4:7, 8; James 1:12; 1Peter 5:4; and Revelations 22:12.

Again, note that the passage we are presently examining pertaining to the subject of the Believer's Future Rewards is about the Believer, not the unbeliever: the believer's eternal security is not in question here in 1Corinthians 3:12-15. The passage makes this clear when it closes with *but he himself will be saved*. This inclusion is what insures our understanding that this passage pertains to believers.

Accordingly, if you take the time to examine the previously listed passages, Scripture is teaching that:

**THERE ARE DEGREES OF  
REWARDS FOR BELIEVERS  
— AND THEY INCLUDE THE  
BREADTH OF ONE'S REIGN  
DURING THE MILLENNIAL  
KINGDOM**

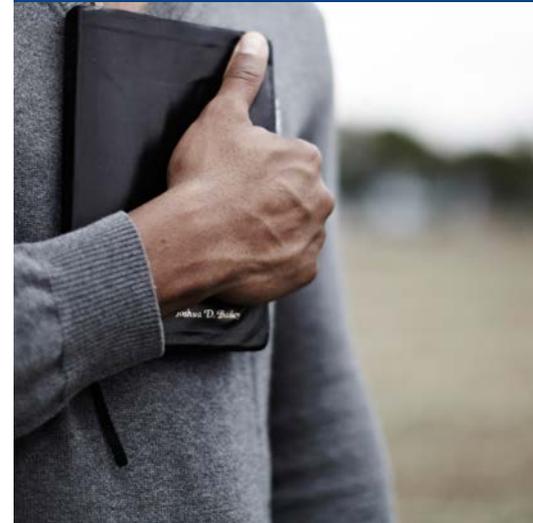
Specific to the biblical concept of the believer's breadth of *reign*, let us pivot to examine one of the aforementioned passages from my above list: Jesus' parable in Luke 19:11-27. Specifically note verses 17-23 that follow:

*“And he said to him, ‘Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, you are to be in authority over ten cities.’ The second came, saying, ‘Your mina, master, has made five minas.’ And he said to him also, ‘And you are to be over five cities.’ Another came, saying, ‘Master, here is your mina, which I kept, put away in a handkerchief; for I was afraid of you, because you are an exacting man; you take up what you did not lay down and reap what you did not*

### ♥ VERSE OF THE WEEK

## Philippians 2:16

*... holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.*



*Those who share the good news of Jesus Christ with others will not be empty handed when they stand before their Maker.*



Continued from page 2



Also interviewed were Dale Walker who has led 13 Public Servants to Christ in New York, and Carl Wimmer, former Utah legislator who became an evangelical Christian, left the Mormon church, and is now Ministry Leader to his former colleagues at the Salt Lake City Capitol.



Dale Walker



Carl Wimmer

Ralph Drollinger, founder and president of Capitol Ministries, talked about creating the ministry 20 years ago to change the direction evangelical Christians established in the 1970s and 1980s when they lobbied Public Servants for better laws. Instead, Capitol Ministries' mission is to change hearts and make disciples of Jesus Christ in the political arenas.



Ralph Drollinger



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*sow.' He said to him, 'By your own words I will judge you, you worthless slave. Did you know that I am an exacting man, taking up what I did not lay down and reaping what I did not sow? Then why did you not put my money in the bank, and having come, I would have collected it with interest?'"*

This is a profound parable containing many insights into God's expectations regarding His chosen ones, His called-out saints, His Kingdom builders. Save explaining the whole of the parable, it is quite easy to capture the concept that Jesus meant to communicate that varying degrees of rewards are bestowed by Himself in relationship to the faithfulness of a servant. And it is not a far-fetched conclusion to take the ruling over cities as a **king** in a literal sense, given the previously made connection between the words **reign** and **king** per the book of Revelation: Again the point: the **reigning** of Christians as **kings** under the King of Kings is the definitively literal meaning of Revelation 20 given the fact that Jesus mentions literal cities in this parable! In concluding this, keep in mind that the similar source is Jesus in both the parable as recorded (by Luke herein), and in Revelation (as recorded by John from Christ via an angel per Rev. 1:1-2).

(To interpret these passages figuratively, when the text provides no indication of the author's intent for a figurative meaning only, is to cavalierly change one's hermeneutical approach to Scripture — from the Grammatical-Historical-Normative school of interpretation to a Figurative approach for no particular reason or justification.)

Given what we have learned so far, the following four questions are in order:

1. **ARE YOU PREPARING TO REIGN ETERNALLY?**
2. **WHAT WILL YOUR MASTER SAY AT YOUR JUDGMENT?**
3. **WHAT CATEGORY OF**

**REWARDS WILL HE APPLY TO YOU?**

#### 4. **WHAT WILL BE THE BREADTH OF YOUR REIGN?**

The answers to these four questions directly relate to your faithfulness while here on earth to what is important to Him in what He has communicated to you in His Word.

Per my shopping list of passages, there are an overwhelming amount of other passages that punctuate the concept of rewards relative to a believer's faithfulness today. In fact, there are so many passages as to make this idea of the believer's coming judgment scream out at you from the pages of Holy Writ! With this concept now explicated from Scripture it is easier to see how the following passages fit into this bigger picture.

##### A. MATTHEW 6:20-21

*"But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."*

##### B. LUKE 6:22-23

*"Blessed are you when men hate you, and ostracize you, and insult you, and scorn your name as evil, for the sake of the Son of Man. Be glad in that day and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven. For in the same way their fathers used to treat the prophets."*

##### C. LUKE 12:18-21

*"Then he said, 'This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.'" But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have*



*prepared?’ So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”*

**D. LUKE 12: 42-44**

*And the Lord said, “Who then is the faithful and sensible steward, whom his master will put in charge of his servants, to give them their rations at the proper time? Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes. Truly I say to you that he will put him in charge of all his possessions.”*

**E. 1CORINTHIANS 3:8**

*Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor.*

**F. 1CORINTHIANS 13:3**

*And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.*

**G. GALATIANS 6:9-10**

*Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.*

**H. EPHESIANS 6:7-8**

*With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free.*

**I. COLOSSIANS 3:23-24**

*Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.*

**J. 1TIMOTHY 6:18-19**

*Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.*

**K. 1PETER 1:4**

*to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,*

**L. 2JOHN 8**

*Watch yourselves, that you do not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward.*

**M. REVELATION 11:18**

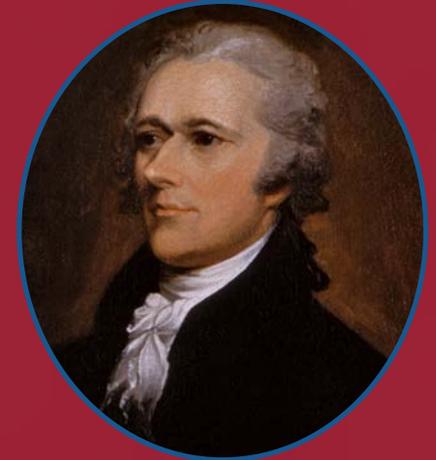
*And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth.*

**N. REVELATION 22:12**

*“Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.”*

Conservative theologian Wayne Grudem says this about rewards:

It would be morally and spiritually beneficial for us to have a greater consciousness of this clear New Testament teaching on degrees of heavenly reward. Moreover, in our own lives a heartfelt seeking of future heavenly reward would motivate us to work wholeheartedly for the Lord at whatever task he calls us to, whether great or small, paid or unpaid. It would also make us long for his approval rather than for wealth or success. It would motivate us to work at building up the church on the one foundation, Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup>



**Alexander Hamilton**, Revolutionary General; signer of the Constitution; Author of the Federalist Papers; Secretary of the Treasury.

Following his duel with Aaron Burr, in those final twenty four hours while life still remained in him, Hamilton called for two ministers, the Rev. J. M. Mason and the Rev. Benjamin Moore, to pray with him and administer Communion to him. Each of those two ministers reported what transpired. The Rev. Mason recounted: [General Hamilton said] “I went to the field determined not to take his life.” He repeated his disavowal of all intention to hurt Mr. Burr; the anguish of his mind in recollecting what had passed; and his humble hope of forgiveness from his God. I recurred to the topic of the Divine compassion; the freedom of pardon in the Redeemer Jesus to perishing sinners. “That grace, my dear General, which brings salvation, is rich, rich” — “Yes,” interrupted he, “it is rich grace.” “And on that grace,” continued I, “a sinner has the highest encouragement to repose his confidence, because it is tendered to him upon the surest foundation; the Scripture testifying that we have redemption through the blood of Jesus, the forgiveness of sins according to the richness of His grace.” Here the General, letting go my hand, which he had held from the moment I sat down at his bed side, clasped his hands together, and, looking up towards Heaven, said, with emphasis, “I have a tender reliance on the mercy of the Almighty, through the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ.”<sup>1</sup>

The Rev. Benjamin Moore reported:

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Danielle and Ralph Drollinger

"When the hearts are right, the laws are right," said Drollinger who, along with his wife Danielle, leads The Members Bible Study in the U.S. House and Senate.

The story also included interviews with state Senators and Representatives and discussed Capitol Ministries' goals to start 10,000 ministries in local governments and plant 200 ministries in as many countries across the globe.

"It's kind of an oasis in a sea of problems down here," New York Assemblyman Steve McLaughlin said of the Bible Study led by Walker.



Steve McLaughlin



The 700 Club is one of the longest running television shows in American history and can be seen in 96 percent of the homes in the U.S. today, according to CBN sources. The program is carried on the Freeform (formerly ABC Family) cable network, FamilyNet, Trinity Broadcasting Network, plus numerous local U.S. television stations, and is seen daily by approximately one million viewers. [cm](#)

Again, these insights from Scripture are what led me into full time ministry years ago — I couldn't get away from the profundity and significance of these passages relative to investing my life for eternity . . . in preparation for the Bema Seat Judgment . . . versus spending (or wasting) my life on superfluous activities which are so often nothing but self-serving, ego-gratifying ventures.

### REMEMBER, THERE ARE DEGREES OF REWARDS

#### IV. A DETAIL ABOUT REWARDS

As if this study were not profound already, it becomes increasingly so. 1Corinthians 4:5 indicates that the secret sins of believers will be revealed during the Bema Seat Judgment. Beloved, this fact in itself should provide ample motivation for godly living! Note this idea in what Paul pens to believers:

*Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God.*

This is an extremely informative passage that every believer should know by heart and ponder as he or she is tempted to sin. Not only will one's sins be exposed — but the very motives of the heart! This is a chilling and sobering passage.

### YOUR FINAL REWARD WILL NOT BE BASED SOLELY ON OUTWARD SERVICE, BUT ALSO ON INWARD HOLINESS AND MOTIVES

That is to say God accounts as *wood, hay, stubble* the things done outwardly right with inwardly wrong motives. Wow! Such truth should drive us to our knees. "Search my heart Oh God!" must be our constant prayer as we seek to serve Him from a pure

heart. As you can see, this is an important detail not to be overlooked in a study about the believer's rewards.

We should not move on from this passage without mentioning another important and timely insight. Don't judge another's motives! Evangelicals are too often at fault here. One can accurately measure the sin of adultery, or the robbing of a bank (outward, manifest actions in the life of another), but to attempt to judge another's motives, or heart is to enter into the world of speculation. That is God's job, not ours!

One cannot possibly know what compels another to good or bad deeds. To say things like, "this is all about him, not God" while a person sincerely attempts to serve God, illustrates the error in but one of many ways. Such spiritual immaturity also fosters a bad Christian culture of self-righteousness. Pharisaic attitudes turn off many an onlooker. This passage specifically teaches that it's *the Lord* [who] *discloses the motives of men's hearts*, not you! Rejecting judgmentalism and realizing that judgment is God's responsibility will free you to love people more fully and unreservedly versus harboring unmerited skepticism and jaded emotions! Such easily identified attitudes are both repulsive and ugly. Remember: To judge others' motives leaves you vulnerable to God's judgment of your motives — and to losing His reward for otherwise faithful service.

#### V. THE DELIGHT REGARDING REWARDS

Scripture is clear about the eternal security of believers, or better theologically, the perseverance of the saints. Again, the Bema Judgment, as stated, relates to the degrees of rewards, not the finality of salvation. The true believer should have no fear of eternal condemnation. Note John 5:24 in this regard:

*"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into*



*judgment, but has passed out of death into life.”*

States Romans 8:1:

*Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*

The Day of Judgment for believers is a day of determining rewards, whereas for unbelievers it is a day of condemnation — since they possess no imputed righteousness from Christ, having failed to bow their knees to His Lordship. Romans 10:9-10 makes this clear:

*If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.*

Having bowed the knee, the believer should delight in his or her eternal security! Eternal rewards then, are best understood as delightful add-ons that we should all be compelled to achieve stemming from the realization that we are recipients of the free gift of salvation through faith in Christ! What a delight to serve a gracious God who delights in rewarding us!

## VI. FURTHER DELIBERATIONS CONCERNING REWARDS

What does the book of Proverbs (and one passage from Philippians 2) further teach about rewards? It adds some keen, practical insights as additions to this study. Here are four things that are keys to gaining God's rewards in your life:

### A. OBEDIENCE GAINS REWARDS

*Proverbs 13:13: The one who despises the word will be in debt to it, But the one who fears the commandment will be rewarded.*

## THIS PROVERB IS STRAIGHTFORWARD ABOUT THE NECESSITY OF OBEYING GOD'S WORD IN ORDER TO ATTAIN REWARDS FROM THE MASTER

There is not only a future reward relative to one's obedience to God's precepts — but today, as we walk in obedience to God there is a present one: States Isaiah 66:2, *“But to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word.”* Conversely, God does not look favorably, He does not reward, those who are arrogant, proud, and disobedient who disregard His Word.

### B. RIGHTEOUSNESS GAINS REWARDS

*Proverbs 13:21: Adversity pursues sinners, But the righteous will be rewarded with prosperity.*

This is a general Proverb expressing a recurrent biblical theme. Unrelated to future rewards, this Proverb speaks about one's present rewards here and now: namely, what you sow in life you will also reap (cf. Hosea 8:7). This general principle within Proverbs is replete throughout the whole of the OT. Righteousness brings blessing and reward, whereas evil exacts a divine curse. The Psalmist said, *Evil shall hunt the violent man and overthrow him* (Psalm 140:11, KJV). In contrast, the righteous are recipients of His grace. Proverbs 11:18 and 22:4 highlight this principle respectively,

*The wicked earns deceptive wages, But he who sows righteousness gets a true reward*

*The reward of humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, honor and life.*

### C. LOVING YOUR ENEMIES GAINS REWARDS

*Proverbs 25:21-22: If your enemy is hun-*

*Continued from page 5*

[I]mmediately after he was brought from [the field] . . . a message was sent informing me of the sad event, accompanied by a request from General Hamilton that I would come to him for the purpose of administering the Holy Communion. I went. . . I proceeded to converse with him on the subject of his receiving the Communion; and told him that with respect to the qualifications of those who wished to become partakers of that holy ordinance, my inquiries could not be made in language more expressive than that which was used by our [own] Church. — [I asked], “Do you sincerely repent of your sins past? Have you a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of the death of Christ? And are you disposed to live in love and charity with all men?” He lifted up his hands and said, “With the utmost sincerity of heart I can answer those questions in the affirmative — I have no ill will against Col. Burr. I met him with a fixed resolution to do him no harm — I forgive all that happened.” . . . The Communion was then administered, which he received with great devotion, and his heart afterwards appeared to be perfectly at rest. I saw him again this morning, when, with his last faltering words, he expressed a strong confidence in the mercy of God through the intercession of the Redeemer. I remained with him until 2 o'clock this afternoon, when death closed the awful scene — he expired without a struggle, and almost without a groan. By reflecting on this melancholy event, let the humble believer be encouraged ever to hold fast that precious faith which is the only source of true consolation in the last extremity of nature. [And I]et the infidel be persuaded to abandon his opposition to that Gospel which the strong, inquisitive, and comprehensive mind of a Hamilton embraced.<sup>2</sup>

One other consequence of Hamilton's untimely death was that it permanently halted the formation of a religious society Hamilton had proposed. Hamilton suggested that it be named the Christian Constitutional Society, and listed two goals for its formation: first, the support of the Christian religion; and second, the support of

*Continued on page 8*



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the Constitution of the United States. This organization was to have numerous clubs throughout each state which would meet regularly and work to elect to office those who reflected the goals of the Christian Constitutional Society.<sup>3</sup> **cm**

<sup>1</sup> John M. Mason, *A Collection of the Facts and Documents Relative to the Death of Major General Alexander Hamilton* (New York: Hopkins and Seymour, 1804), p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> John M. Mason, *A Collection of the Facts and Documents Relative to the Death of Major General Alexander Hamilton* (New York: Hopkins and Seymour, 1804), pp. 48-50.

<sup>3</sup> Alexander Hamilton, *The Works of Alexander Hamilton*, John C. Hamilton, editor (New York: John F. Trow, 1851), Vol. VI, p. 542, to James A. Bayard, April, 1802; see also, Alexander Hamilton, *The Papers of Alexander Hamilton*, Harold C. Syrett, editor (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), Vol. XXV, p. 606, to James A. Bayard, April 16, 1802.



*Making Disciples of Jesus Christ  
in the Political Arena  
Throughout the World*

**CAPITOL MINISTRIES** is a ministry organization that provides Bible studies, evangelism and discipleship to political leaders. Capitol Ministries was founded in 1996 and has started ministries in 40 state capitols and dozens of foreign federal capitols. **cm**



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*gry, give him food to eat; And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink; For you will heap burning coals on his head, And the LORD will reward you.*

An ancient Egyptian custom was to carry coals on one's head (in a pan) in order to publicly display contrition. Why coals? They outwardly symbolized the burning pain of shame, guilt, and repentance going on inside the person's mind and heart. Accordingly, when one proactively and publicly loves his enemies, it should bring shame to the offending party relative to their actions of hatred. Further, Paul quotes this Proverb in Romans 12:20 in the context of repaying no one with evil for evil (12:17). *If possible* he says, *be at peace with all men (12:18)*. When one possesses this strength of character, self-control, and discipline, God will, if not immediately, eventually reward you — it is a promise of Scripture!

Some say, "Don't get mad; get even." That's witty, but it's patently opposite of what Scripture states should be our response. In Romans 12, God promises that He will bring vengeance on the offender. My experience is that when I follow this teaching, the retribution by God is much more severe and effective than anything I could have initiated. He promises to repay (cf. 12:19). The Lord will reward you if you respond with outward, aggressive and deliberate love toward your opponents! What a wonderful (but difficult to enact) truth.

### D. SHARING THE GOSPEL GAINS REWARDS

**Philippians 2:16** *Holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.*

A study on the believer's judgment and rewards would not be complete

without careful observation of this passage pertaining to the subject matter. *Holding fast the word of life* is a reference to the believer being about sharing Christ with others. 1John 1:1 and John 1:1 and 14 make this abundantly clear: the *word of life* is a reference to Jesus Christ. And, in regards to making Him known (what *holding fast* means), the whole of the stated idea is in conjunction with *the day of Christ*. *The day of Christ* is another term for the believer's judgment day. It follows that evangelism gains rewards. Those who share the good news of Jesus Christ with others will not be empty handed when they stand before their Maker.

### VII. SUMMARY

It follows that there are just degrees of reward: to the saint who serves his Savior more in this earthly life than does another, the former's reward and reign in the Millennial Kingdom will be greater than the slothful or naïve believer who diminishes his or her calling in Christ. More pointedly, as to those who are so busy with self-centered pursuits, void of any desire to building His Kingdom, those who have no time even for Bible study, fellowship and prayer, theirs is a life of *wood, hay, and stubble* (although Scripture is clear they will be saved). Their reward and reign will be less than the faithful follower who in spiritual maturity is guided by an informed life of scriptural intake and habitual obedience.

May this study on the believer's rewards inform your conscience with a deep and abiding desire to live faithfully and industriously for God's purposes and glory! Amen.

<sup>1</sup>Grudem, Systematic Theology, p. 1145.

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