

GOD'S REWARDS ARE PROMISED

THE FIRST CENTURY GOSPEL CHURCH/PHILADELPHIA

S189R

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Few professed Christians have realized or claimed the part of their inheritance that pertains to a person's life here on earth. However, Jesus died on the Cross to grant His believers God's rich blessings in this life, just as much as in the life to come (Eternal Life).

(1 Tim.4:8-9 assures) "For bodily exercise profits a little, but 'godliness' is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is, and, of that which is to come. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance." (The Apostle is telling us that part of our inheritance in Christ, is for us to be rewarded for acknowledging 'God' in all of our ways), (and to 'forsake' past habits of following worldly ways, plans, and policies.

God's rewards for a true Christian in this life, have been almost entirely lost sight of in the professed Christian world of today. However, it brings as much glory to God to claim and receive His promised 'rewards' in our life, as it also glorifies God to receive divine healing (or anything else that we are trusting on Him for). (Ephes.6:8-9 reminds us) "You well know that whatever right thing anyone does, he will receive a requital for it from the Lord, whether he is a slave or a free man. And you masters act towards your slaves on the same principles, and refrain from threats. For you know that in Heaven there is One who is your Master as well as theirs, and that merely 'earthly distinctions', there are none with Him."

With regard to forsaking something (ie, wrong fellowship, material things, unscriptural money, or anything else) for the Kingdom of God's sake, we find (in the Scriptures) there is also a great 'reward'. If a true Christian is serving and pleasing God according to His precious and solemn Word, they will often be called upon to do things that would cause them a loss in some way; whether it be a loss of friends (in order to obey Scripture on keeping fellowship with other 'believers'), or the loss of money, position, or 'reputation' (meaning, in a 'worldly sense', of course), or it could be 'losses' in many other things.

However, God's 'promised rewards' are mentioned (Mark 10:), and they would be received in a way that is according to His Holy Word, not in a way that is contradictory to His Word. Jesus used figurative language to teach his Apostles and to emphasize importance of one

being Scripturally correct in one's financial matters. Jesus told the apostles (vs.25) "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God." (Vs. 26-28) "They were astonished beyond measure, and said to one another, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus looking on them said, "With men it is impossible, but not with God; for everything is possible with God." "Remember," said Peter to Him, "that we 'forsook' everything and have become your followers." [Forsook, means to renounce or disown something, never to go back to it.]

Jesus then told them of the rewards to be received in God's way, when one forsakes something and suffers a 'loss' in some way in order to obey the Scriptures, (whether it be unbelieving friends, money, or whatever else, when one puts God's 'Word' first in their life). (Vs. 29-30), "In solemn truth I tell you," replied Jesus, "that there is no one who has forsaken house or brothers or sisters, or mother or father, or children or lands, for my sake and for the sake of the Good News, but will receive a hundred times as much now in this present life--houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, lands--and persecution with them--and in the coming age the Life of the Ages."

When God rewards a person for what they have 'forsaken' for the sake of obeying His Word, those rewards would be received in a way that is according to His Holy Word, not in a way that is contradictory to His Word. [As mentioned in a sermon message on not owning property, if one were to sell a house to obey Jesus' command to sell property (and forsake the ownership of a house) God will not give them another house to 'own', after He has already told us to 'sell' and give the proceeds to the needy. That would be a contradiction of His Word, as well as once again having something else (worldly treasure) to depend on, instead of one's 'place of trust' being centered on God, Himself.

However, God will bless one with a comfortable home in which to live, while we are eagerly expecting the coming return of our Savior. As Jesus said, we are to receive back a hundred-fold reward for whatever we lose (or give up) for the Kingdom of God's sake, but with persecution (He reminded), and in the world to come, 'Eternal Life'. And, Jesus reminded His Apostles (who had given up and forsaken everything to follow Him), (vs. 31) "But many who are now first will be last, and the last, first."

We have all heard of (and known of) many examples of this 'principle of God's Truth' and 'fulfillment of His Promises', where one has suffered the loss of money or other things. However, by obeying the Scriptures given us (Matt.5:38-42) to not seek to recover it, they have been blessed with many-fold rewards of extra money (or other needed things), for that is what God promises. And, as always, each financial or material blessing received in God's way, always carries a most valuable spiritual blessing, as well. That is the most

important part of each blessing received, for it is vital to the progress we all need to make in our spiritual growth, and our preparation for Eternal Life (which is the ultimate 'reward' that God promises for those who obediently 'trust' on His Son.

Others we have known to have given up worldly companions, only to have God's promise fulfilled, by receiving a companion who is a 'believer' in God's Truth.

Others lost a good position or job, rather than do things that are un-Scriptural, and they have received a position that is surely a hundred times better than the one they had lost or given up (in order to get on Scriptural grounds).

It is the same in every walk of life, whatever we forsake here in this life, for the Kingdom of God's sake, we are to receive a hundredfold reward (as Jesus said, and God is faithful to His 'promises'). No one needs to be afraid of losing the respect or friendship of another person (including family members) when one puts God's Word first in their life and makes decisions according to God's will and plan in order to please Him. Instead, God can or will use those very circumstances, to gain the respect or keep the friendship of those persons, because it is His plan of hundredfold blessing for true followers of His Son, who put His 'will' first in their life.

Again, as was mentioned, "Few professed Christians have realized or claimed the part of their inheritance that pertains to one's life here on earth. However, Jesus died on the Cross to grant us God's rich blessings for godliness in this life here, just as much as in the life to come (Eternal Life).

(1 Tim.4:8) reminds us, "but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is, and, of that which is to come. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance." (the apostle said). And (Ephes.6:8) "You well know that whatever right thing anyone does, he will receive a requital for it from the Lord,".

The Apostle was telling us that part of our inheritance in Christ, is to be rewarded for acknowledging God in all of our ways, but God's rewards for the 'Believer' in this life, have been almost entirely lost sight of in the Christian world today. However, it brings glory to God to claim and receive our rewards in this life, just as it glorifies God to receive healing from Him (or anything else that we trust Him for).

When one forsakes or loses something for the Kingdom of God's sake, there is a great 'reward'. However, a Christian who is serving and pleasing God according to His Word, may often be called upon to do things that would cause them loss in some way; whether it be a loss of friends, loss of money, a worldly reputation, or a 'loss' of some other thing.

God's rewards for a person after they have 'forsaken' things to obey His Word, would then be received in a scriptural way, not in a way contradictory to His Word. One will be blessed with better things than they had before, and be received by trusting God, not trusting in plans of the self-life. And, most importantly, not returning to a place of having something else to depend on, instead of one's 'place of trust' staying centered on God, Himself. A 'believer' should be found to be "trusting on the Son of God, while eagerly expecting the coming return of our Lord and Savior.

We all may have heard many examples of the fulfillment of this 'principle of God's Truth', where one had experienced the loss of money or other things. However, by their obeying Scripture as given us in (Matt.5:41-42) "And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away." And they did not seek to recover what was given up to obey Scripture, they have been blessed with many fold rewards of extra money (or needed things), for that is what God promises.

Some have given up worldly companions, only to have God's promise fulfilled, by receiving a companion who is a 'believer' in God's Truth.

It is the same in financial matters (the late Pastor said), and many professed Christians do not give God even one-tenth as tithe on their income. The excuse they make, is that it is not commanded in the New Testament, but only under the law. However, that excuse will not stand the test in light of the Scriptures, for Abraham is given to us in Scripture as our true example. And, we are told plainly, that if we walk in the steps of faithful Abraham, we are to be blessed along with faithful Abraham. Abraham tithed on all that he received when he met Melchizedek (Heb. 7:1-4), and Abraham lived four hundred years before the law was given.

God has promised in Malachi 3:10, that if we bring all our tithes into His storehouse, He will open the windows of Heaven and pour out a blessing, that there will not be room enough to receive it. We have been given the opportunity to prove that in our own life, as well as seeing it proven in the lives of many other Christians who have been blessed many-fold by God.

The Pastor recalled a member of the Church who began to tithe (as he came to know the Truth), and whose income increased almost four times over (in the matter of a few years time). He also recalled another family whose income more than doubled in a span of thirteen months after they began tithing, and then doubled again in the few years that followed. God's Word also promises great reward to giving to the poor, for in (Proverbs 19:17), it says, "He who is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and He will reward him for what he has done."

Then (2 Cor.9:6) likens giving to the poor, as to one sowing seed, "Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously."

Jesus told His disciples (Luke 12:33) "Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys."

That certainly is a vast reward, since God's 'riches in glory' by 'Christ Jesus', are beyond the conception of our finite minds. This does not mean that we will have to wait till we go to Heaven to receive the reward, but, that we can draw from that 'divine promise' by our prayer to God, the same as we can draw from an earthly bank, when we have a need or a scriptural desire for finances in this life.

The Pastor referred to a man named George Mueller, who literally obeyed that verse in Luke 12:33, and he began to trust in the living God without looking to any human source. He spent the money that the Lord blessed him with, in feeding and training orphans in England and other places. At the end of each year, he was as poor as he was at the beginning, for he did not save a penny for a rainy day, but used his money to help others, as God sent it to him.

In his old age, some of Mr. Mueller's unbelieving friends tried to set up a bank account that he could depend on to sustain him for the rest of his life, but he refused their offer, since he truly believed that His Heavenly Father (His God in Heaven) Who had always sustained him in life, would not forsake him in his older age. Therefore, that he should be contented to trust God each day, for he believed God's Word of Promise that God would never fail him.

(Hebr.13:5) "Your lives should be untainted by love for money. Be content with what you have; for God Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER, NEVER LET GO YOUR HAND: I WILL NEVER NEVER FORSAKE YOU."

Mr. Mueller believed God's Word and Promise given to all of us (Luke 12:29-32) "Therefore, do not be asking what you are to eat nor what you are to drink; and do not waver between hope and fear. For though the nations of the world pursue these things, as for you, your Father knows that you need them. But make His Kingdom the object of your pursuit, and these things shall be given you in addition. Dismiss your fears, little flock: your Father finds a pleasure in giving you the Kingdom. Sell your possessions and give alms. Provide yourselves with purses that will never wear out, a treasure inexhaustible in Heaven, where no thief can come nor moth consume."

God is just waiting to use other true children of His as stewards of His financial wealth, and of His manifold mercy and grace. Wherever He can find a person who will be a channel for blessings (instead of a hoarder), He will cause an unlimited supply to flow

through them, to be a blessing to the poor and needy and suffering ones.

So, we need to see in faith and by faith, God's promises of His 'rewards', and to claim them just the same as we claim any other of His 'promises', if we want to receive the full reward. When Israel went into the land of Canaan, God told Joshua that He had given them every part of the land that they placed the sole of their foot upon.

It should be the same in every part of our Christian life; that is, whatever we see in His Word, and make our claim for, and take our stand upon His Promise, ... that God is waiting to see that His Word is made true and fulfilled for us. Thus, we want to pray for God to strengthen our faith to receive what we have prayed for in the Name of His Son.

Only a few of God's 'rewards' have been mentioned here, however, He has promised to reward us for every good and Scriptural thing that we do (Ephes.6:8). So, may we all understand and obey God's precious Word, that we may be enabled to see and claim His Promises, and receive the full reward that He promises in all things.

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The First Century Gospel Church/Philadelphia

S189R SOME MAIN POINTS OF "God's Rewards are Promised":

1.. The basis and foundation for fulfillment of God's Promises is 'the power of the Atonement sacrifice' of Jesus Christ on the 'Cross at Calvary', so that the 'rewards' for 'godliness' (which is 'believing faith' on Jesus' sacrifice, will indeed be "profitable for all things, having the 'promise of life' that now is, and of that which is to come."

2.. Much emphasis is put on the fact, that when we put God's Word first in our life, then anything that we forsake in our life in order to obey and do His Will in all things, we will receive a 'just requital' for it from the Lord. (Ephes.6:8).

3.. Some examples are given of those 'just requitals' received from God, for those who "acknowledge Him in all their ways", since it is part of "our inheritance in Christ".

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