

The Believer's Reward (Part 2)

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[0:00] We're going to look again tonight at what we started last time we did this and Tom and Diane were gone.

! And that is looking at the believers reward as far as scripture is speaking to us about what the believers reward is. And so I'm not going to review all of what we did but remember that we as we began to kind of close it out last time we looked at the idea in Romans chapter 8 that he said that if the spirit of God bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.

And if children then heirs of God joined heirs with Christ if so be we suffer with him that we also may be glorified together. Remember we said in that passage that when he says we understand the idea we're join heirs with Christ.

Christ as the son of God as the eternal one is rightful heir to the things of God. But we through that spirit of adoption being made adult sons share in that inheritance as well.

But we also took a look at that phrase that says we are heirs of God. And we reflected back if you will and remember to Genesis chapter 15.

[1:39] Speaking of Abraham whenever whenever he came back from delivering Lot Melchizedek and all those things. Then right after that God appeared to spoke to Abram and said to Abram I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward.

You know sometimes we're so earthy when we think of reward we think of material things. We think of earthy things. But in this case I really think that what what the scripture is is pointing us to and we'll see more of that this evening.

Is the fact that the reward the greatest and grandest reward we'll receive when we get to be with the Lord is God himself. All right. And so we we looked at that in and detail last time.

Adam Clark said with such powers as God created the soul of man that nothing less than himself can be a sufficient and satisfactory portion for the mind of this most astonishing creature.

I thought that was a good statement he makes. What else could be any more grand than having God himself as our as our reward. Now Matthew chapter 6 verse 19 through 21 tells us there are treasures in heaven that are earned now by the saints while on earth.

[3:07] Jesus says there lay not up yourselves treasures in heaven or excuse me treasures upon earth where moth and rust doth corrupt where thieves break through and steal.

But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where your treasure is there your heart will be also. So there he talks about the fact that there are things we lay up for ourselves as treasures in heaven. You know and and the idea pictured here is that that the thing that we reflect that that grabs our heart's attention is the thing that's most precious to us.

And so the idea here is don't don't set your affections on the things of earth. Fix your treasure on the things of heaven and that will grab our heart and that will be the the the focus of our life and of our living.

Now the means of the means of laying up those treasures are numerous. And but there's one that scripture points to that brings the greatest of rewards and that remember is our works.

[4:21] So I want us to go to Revelation chapter 22 and verse 12. That's kind of where we wound up last week. And I want to go a little bit further with that because there's some really grand things here.

I think that we can lay a hold of in Revelation chapter 22. Well, let me get to it here.

Revelation chapter 22. Look at verse 12.

And behold, I come quickly and my reward is with me to give every man according to his work.

Excuse me. Given to every man according as his work shall be.

I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gates of the city.

[5:30] Now, he said, he said, I come quickly and my reward is with me to give to every man as his works shall be.

The rewards that Jesus will distribute is what he speaks of here. The word to give is to put away by giving or to give up or to give over. Keep that thought in mind here.

All right. To give is to put away by giving as if it's something you have. Give it up or to give it over to someone. The reward, of course, of the dues paid for the work.

It's the wages, in other words. As his work shall be, of course, that's a picture of the works that will provide reward for us. Jeremiah speaks of that in Jeremiah 17, 10, when he says, I, the Lord, search the heart.

I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways and according to the fruit of his doing. Now, again, in chapter 22 of Revelation, verse 14.

[6:35] Keep this in mind. I think this interesting. He said, blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter into the gates of that city.

All right. Blessed are they. Happy are they who are obedient is the idea here, that they may have right to the tree of life. The original, in the original context there of that passage, it really comes out to mean that they may have authority over the tree of life and authority founded on right, this right being founded on the obedience to the commandments of God and that obedience produced by the grace of God working in them.

That's an interesting statement coming out of the original. That we may have authority over the tree of life. Now, I got to thinking about that.

What is that idea of having authority over the tree of life? Remember back in Genesis chapter 3 in the garden that God had placed Adam there and created Eve and they were to live and be fruitful and multiply in that garden that God gave them.

They could eat of every tree of the garden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In the midst of the garden, remember, was the tree of life. You remember what happened after they had sinned, after God confronted them about their sin and dealt out the consequences of that sin.

[8:09] Do you remember what God did next? He put some guards around that tree. Well, he cast them out of the garden.

He didn't cast them, but he directed them out of the garden because Scripture replies that God had said, you know, in the trying God, considering that we need to remove him from the garden of Eden, lest he in his condition eats of the tree of life.

The idea there is that if Adam and Eve had eaten of the tree of life in that fallen condition, they would have gone through eternity in that fallen condition.

And that's the reason God cast them forth out of the garden to protect them from eating of that tree of life at that point. Now, here in Revelation 22, the Scripture says that, blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have authority over the tree of life.

And the idea there is that we then may have the right to eat of the fruit of the tree of life. What grander thing is there?

[9:28] A picture of the fall, but a picture of the redemption and what it produces as a result of the fall. So, we have authority over that tree of life.

But get the idea here. All of that is brought about by the grace of God. Again, from the original, that they may have authority over the tree of life and authority founded on right.

So, we have a right to the tree of life. This right founded on the obedience to the commands of God. But that obedience then, produced by the grace of God that works in the believer.

So, without grace, there's no obedience. Without obedience, there's no authority to the tree of life or right to it. With no authority to the tree of life, there's no right to it.

And without right, no enjoyment. Okay? So, the picture is this. God's grace through Christ produces the good. All right?

[10:33] Then rewards the good as if it all had been our own doing. Now, think about that just a minute. That's what grace is.

He looks at us and sees us as the redeemed. And grace, that work within us and for us, brings us to the point that those things that we do in obedience to His command.

All right? Are done through the grace of God at work. But when God looks at it, He looks at it and applies it to our good so that it looks as if we're the ones that conducted that good. Because we did. But it was through the work of grace and the Spirit of God. But that's the work of God in His love for us and His grace. Thus, we have reward and we have right to partake of the tree of life.

Now, go back to verse 12 of Revelation 22. Something I want us to consider here. Verse 12.

[11:43] Behold, I come quickly. And my reward is with me to give every man according as his work shall be. I want us to think about that phrase.

My reward is with me. When we went through this in Copan years ago, that statement brought a question to my mind.

My reward is... I'm coming quickly. Behold, my reward is with me. What is that reward? Is He talking about? Is that reward simply something He will give?

Or was it His reward that He has received that He will give? Now, think about that just a minute.

Passage isn't clear about that.

He said, my reward. He didn't just say reward is with me to give. He said, my reward is with me to give every man according to His work.

[12:41] All right? What is it? Which one is it? Look in Philippians chapter 2 just a minute.

Philippians chapter 2. Familiar passage to you.

In verse 5, speaking of this, letting the mind of Christ be in us, and talks about the self-emptying of Christ and the removal of His outward form of deity.

Now, remember that because it's important for us to consider that. Verse 5, Let this mind be in you which also was in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Again, what Paul is speaking of there is, it's not the fact that Jesus emptied Himself of being deity. He can't do that.

I mean, He's God. He always has been God, and He always will be. God in the flesh in this case.

But what Paul is speaking of there is that outward expression of deity.

[14:07] Remember, you know, from eternity past, in the heavens, Jesus the Son, had that outward form of deity, expression of deity.

What Paul reflects here in Philippians is that when He came incarnate in the flesh, He found that that outward expression of deity was not something to be held onto at all cost.

He stripped Himself of that outward form of deity, put on the outward form of a servant, being found in fashion like a man.

Now, wherefore, next verse, God hath highly, well, excuse me, put on that outward form, and that, of course, became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Wherefore, so you see, as that God-man, if you will, He became obedient to the will of the Father, and that was unto death, the death of the cross.

[15:10] As a result of that, then, God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

So we see here, God the Father exalted the Son, highly exalted Him, gave Him the name that is above every name, and, of course, remember the name speaks of the character of the individual named.

All right? So in reality, you look there, and you see that God has given Him that inward nature, that inward characteristic that is above every name.

All right? And above everyone else, if you will. So, we can look at that as part of the reward of Jesus that He possesses. But turn over to John chapter 17 with me.

Let's put it all in perspective here. Again, remember that that passage in Philippians 3, or Philippians 2, rather, is the picture of Jesus performing His earthly ministry in, or as humanity, or in His humanity, under the power and direction of the Spirit of God.

[16:36] Yes. But as man, because He removed that outward form of deity, put on the form of a servant. All right? Now, in John chapter 17, in that prayer on the way to Gethsemane, verse 1,

these words spake Jesus and lifted up His eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour has come.

Glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee, as Thou has given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou has given Him.

And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent. I have glorified Thee on the earth.

I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.

Hmm. Interesting statement here, is it not? Now, you put that together with Philippians 2, 9, and realize what He's saying here.

[18:01] I like what the translation of Kenneth Wiest in his New Testament writes that. He said, I have glorified You on the earth, having carried through to completion that which You have given Me to do.

And now glorify Me, Father, beside Yourself with the glory which I was constantly having with You before the universe existed.

So He looks at the glory that was His in eternity past, before the creation. and now He says, Father, return that glory to Me.

The picture that You have here is Jesus praying to the Father, looking at His death, burial, and resurrection, and consequent ascension back to the Father.

it's the idea that Jesus was saying, I want to, I want to, if you will, strip off this outward form of humanity and once again clothe myself with that outward expression of deity that I had with you before the world was.

[19:19] All right? To me, that is, that is, that is, really, the most glorious aspect of the return of Christ to the heavens is that He then always has been God, now God in the flesh, but now, back into the heavens, He's going to have that outward expression of who He is inwardly, that's God, and will be worthy of all the expression of praise and honor and glory that we see Him being given in the heavens as we look at that through Scripture.

And then we see, if you will, the previous displays of God's, of the glory of Christ, and that, of course, mostly on the Mount of Transfiguration. Remember Peter, James, and John bidden to come with Jesus, and there they see Him with Moses and Elijah and Him clothed in His glory.

What a picture that they experienced there of who the Christ really is. So, question is, has the Father given to the Son the glory of the Father which He requested?

Well, He has not to this point. Well, He has to this point, because He ascended back to the heavens. All right? But how will we know? How will we know that that glory exists in Him?

Look at Matthew chapter 16. Matthew chapter 16. Verse number 27.

[21:09] For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father, with His angels, and then He shall reward every man according to His works.

There we see Jesus pictured in the glory of the Father, that He requested, if you will, back in John chapter 17, coming and saying that He will reward every man according to His works.

So, again, it asks the question, it begs the question, what then is that reward? in chapter 19 of Matthew's gospel, verses 27 and 28.

Then answered Peter, you know, here's the humanity of the disciples, if you will. Then answered Peter and said unto him, behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee, you know, Jesus had been speaking about what some will receive when they get to heaven, how they will be glorified, but here Peter says, what about us?

What about us? We have forsaken everything and followed you. What shall we have therefore?

[22:34] What's our reward of that? Notice what Jesus said. Verse 28, Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon the twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

And every one that hath forsaken houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands for my name's sake shall receive one hundred fold and shall inherit everlasting life.

Then he goes on to say that many there are first shall be last and the last shall be first. So we see the picture there of Jesus sitting on the throne of his glory and in chapter 24 of Matthew chapter 24 of Matthew in verse 30 we see Jesus sitting in the with his power and great glory.

And then back in Revelation 21 take note of something with me if you will. Revelation 21 Jesus giving John a picture of the New Jerusalem the dwelling place of the Lamb of Christ or the Bride of Christ excuse me and then in verse 22 take note Revelation 21 verse 22 I saw no temple therein that's in the New Jerusalem for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it and the city had no need of the sun neither of the moon to shine in it for the glory of God did lighten it and the Lamb is the light thereof the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it and the gates of it shall not be shut by day or night by day for there shall be no night there and they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it so you see the glory of

God in the person that city so you see the reality of the glory of God now back upon the Lord Jesus as far as that outward expression is concerned don't you wonder what it's really going to be like of course our mortal minds cannot really fathom the idea of what it's going to be like when we stand in his presence as he is now yeah alright now we got a little bit of time left go over to 2nd Corinthians chapter 4 apostle Paul gives us another perspective of this in 2nd Corinthians chapter 4 let me see where

[26:06] I want to begin here yeah I'll go ahead in verse 8 we are troubled on every side yet not distressed we're perplexed but not in despair persecuted but not forsaken cast down but not destroyed always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body for we which live are always delivered under death for Jesus sake that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh but outward man perishes yet the inward man is renewed day by day for our light affliction which is but for a moment works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory while we look not at the things that are seen but at the things that are not seen but at the things that are not seen for the things which are seen are temporal but the things which are not seen are eternal now you're wondering where

I'm at here I am too back up verse 3 is where I wanted to go just read that to you just so you'd have that in your mind alright 2nd Corinthians chapter chapter 4 verse 3 and I don't want to get there yet I do want to go to chapter 3 though no chapter 4 verse 3 but if our gospel be hid it is hid to them that are lost alright we've known that quite well in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not lest the light of the glorious gospel of

Christ who is the image should shine unto them for we preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus ourselves and ourselves for your your servants for Jesus sake for God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness has shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ Christ now take that phrase with me if you will notice it in verse five we don't preach ourselves but we preach Christ Jesus because it's God who commands the light to shine out of darkness that he has shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ he talks about the light of the!

of the! of the light of the knowledge of the glory of God and that seen in the face of Christ Jesus now that takes us back to chapter 3 go back there with me if you will 2 Corinthians chapter 3 verse 5 Paul says not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves but our sufficiency is of God who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament not of the letter but of the spirit for the letter killeth but the spirit giveth life but if the ministration of death written and engraven in stones was glorious so that the children of

Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance which glory was to be done away how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious for the ministration of condemnation be glory how much more does the ministration of!

[31:03] righteousness exceed in glory even that which was made glorious had no glory in that in this respect by reason of the glory that excelleth for if that which is done away was glorious much more that which remaineth is glorious now picture he's looking at is this you remember when God gave the law and that's what he's referring to here as the ministration of the law of death when God gave the law Mount Sinai you remember what happened there all right God brought the people of Israel to the base of Mount Sinai they were not to touch the mount lest they die!

but then the glory of God the glory of God was displayed in such marvelous manner that the people were fearful cloud lightning thunders but Moses was made to go up into the mountain and to commune with God fellowship with him if you will unheard of in that day and time that would ever happen people of Israel watching all this go on so that was a glorious aspect of the giving of the law the spectacular things that went on there to the view of the people of Israel the sounds creating fear

within them and Moses then being bid to come up and commune with God glorious thing but when God gave them the law remember he gave them that law as the condemnation of death because it spoke of the holiness and righteousness and expectation of God which man could never keep okay and because man could never keep that it spoke of death that was the law but notice Peter says or Peter Paul says here that if that was glorious then that which was to replace that put that away and become a new thing that would last forever that is even more glorious when he compares law to grace that's the picture that he comes up with now I want you to take notice if you will interesting thing here this is where this is where it gets really good and

I know we're not going to get it done now he says in verse 7 again if the ministration of death written engraving and stones was glorious so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance which glory was to be done away how shall then the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious you remember what happened there back over in Genesis chapter Exodus 22 or 32 rather Exodus chapter 32 and 33 God bids Moses to come up to Mount Sinai and there he communes with him and God God gives to him the law tables of stone that that that had the law written on that and then time was come for

Moses to depart he hears the sound of of war in the camp and the ungodliness and wickedness of the people and there then remember God deals with that by bringing death to many of the people of Israel now take note something here in chapter 33 time to rush through this so we can kind of get to some ending spot here they resumed the journey to Canaan all right Lord said unto Moses depart go up hence thou and thy people which thou hast brought up out of the land of Egypt unto the land which I swear unto Abraham Isaac and to Jacob saying unto thy seed will I give it and said I will direct you with an angel all right unto the land flowing with milk and honey look in verse seven Moses took the tabernacle now it's not the tabernacle of meeting if you will just a tent here he took that tabernacle and pitched it without the camp afar off from the camp and called it the tabernacle of the congregation came to pass that everyone which sought the

[36:16] Lord went out into the tabernacle of the congregation which was without the camp and it came to pass when Moses went out into the tabernacle that all the people rose up and stood every man in his door looked after Moses until he was gone into the tabernacle to me that's just an amazing thing they know Moses going into that place so they all go to their tent doors and watch to see what happens here they know that Moses entered into the tabernacle the cloudy pillar descended and stood at the door of the tabernacle and the Lord spoke with Moses all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand at the tabernacle door and all the people rose up and worshipped every man in his tent door the Lord spake unto Moses face to face as a man speaks to a friend and he turned again into the camp of his servant

Joshua the son of Nonna a young man departed not out of the tabernacle Moses said unto the Lord see thou sayest unto me bring up this people and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me yet thou hast said I know thee by name and thou hast also found grace in my sight now therefore I pray thee if I have found grace in thy sight show me now thy way that I may know thee that I may find grace in thy sight and consider that this nation is thy people in other words Moses just saying God you call me to lead these people you said you would be with me but now he said I need you to show me your way I need you to show me how you operate I need to know to presence shall be with thee

God said that to Moses and I will give you rest and he said to him if thy presence go not with me carry us not up hence for wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight is it not that thou goest with us so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth.

And the Lord said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken, for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name. Now, Moses gets brave, takes it a little further.

It's good to know how God operates, it's good to know his presence is going to be with us, and that he knows me by my name. And verse 18, but he said, I beseech thee, show me your glory.

[39:14] Now, Moses didn't want that just to see a spectacle of who he is. Remember the glory of God, when we look at the, think of the glory of God, it's all the intrinsic inherent attributes that God possesses in himself.

Moses is saying, God, I need to know who you are, and what you are. I need to see you as you are. Show me your glory. God said, all right, here's what I'll do. I'll make all my goodness pass before thee, and I'll proclaim the name of the Lord before thee, and will be gracious to whom I'll be

gracious, will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.

Now, verse 20, he said, thou canst not see my face, for there shall no man see me and live. But God says, remember, here's what I'll do. He said, behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock, and it shall come to pass when my glory passeth by, I will put thee in the cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by.

And I will take away my hand, and thou shalt see my back parts, but my face shall not be seen. In other words, what God was pleased to do was to show Moses his back.

[40 : 39] And as it's a reflection, a reflection, if you will, of the glory of God. Not God in his Shekinah glory, but just a reflection of the glory of God.

That's the back parts. All right, I like to call them the non-consuming aspects of the glory of God.

Now, you remember what happens. God takes him up there, tells Moses, Moses, you take, this time you take with you two tables of stone, and bring them up, and we'll write another set.

All right? So he does that. And he and God commune. God gives the new tables of the law. And then, notice what happens, if you will.

You remember it well. Verse 5. The Lord descended, it's in chapter 34, I'm sorry. The Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord.

Notice capitalized letters, the name Jehovah. Jehovah, self-existent one that reveals himself to man. I will proclaim the name of Jehovah. In other words, this is what that name includes.

[41 : 48] And the Lord, that's Jehovah, passed by before him and proclaimed, the Lord, the Lord God. All right? Jehovah, Elohim.

Elohim, the strong, faithful, covenant-keeping God. All right? The Lord, the Lord God, merciful, gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiven iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty.

Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the children's children, unto the third and the fourth generation. Moses made haste, bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped.

Now, great picture here, but we don't have time to grab it all. But realize with me, what happened here? When Moses left that place, he did not realize that his face glowed from the glory of God.

When the people saw it, saw the face of Moses, they had to hide themselves from that, because they could not and would not look upon his face that reflected the glory of God.

[43 : 03] He had to then veil himself of that, so that the people could not see him. The reason why his face shone the second time he went up on Sinai and not the first is because this second time God revealed to Moses a reflection of his glory.

All right? And that glory, the mercy, love, grace, and so forth, that his name includes, was a picture of what God wanted to provide for the nation of Israel as God's covenant nation, but they refused to let that happen.

So thus Moses veils himself, and this is what Paul goes on to say in that passage in 2 Corinthians, that their face was hidden from that glorious truth of what God had intended for them.

That was because of their hard-heartedness and their sinfulness and their unwillingness to repent and turn to God and let it all happen. But to us, he said, we look as if we look in a mirror.

We see our reflection, but we see in that the glory of God more and more. What a picture that is for us.

[44 : 31] And so as we apply that to the idea of the reward of the believer, I really believe that what that reward is for us is simply the idea of us.

When we stand in the presence of God, when he comes for the church, we receive that glorified body. Peter says, we will, it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when we get there, we will see him and we'll know him.

And the only way, the only way we'll be able to see him is through the glorified body that we receive.

And we don't, we have no clue as to, as to the, the complete aspects of what that's going to be.

Oh, we can't, we can't even conceive it in our mortal minds. But knowing that we'll have that glorified body clothed, or I like the word enswathed in the glory of God, we'll see him for all that he is.

[45 : 50] And that, by the way, unveiled. All right? Unveiled. Nothing, nothing, not our humanity, nothing. Hindering us from seeing him for who and what he is.

Is that not reward enough? Amen.