



Teachings on Rewards

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The Lord Jesus Christ came to preach, among other things, the Good News, or “Holy Gospel.” This Good News was that the Kingdom of God was at hand, and it meant that God was ready to give His richest blessings.

The Lord Jesus Christ explained that the greatest blessing of all is the inheritance of the Kingdom of Heaven, and it is only for those who accept Him and do the will of God. The Lord Jesus Christ said that the Kingdom of God is “like a treasure,” and “like a pearl of great price.” (Matthew 13) In the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord Jesus Christ rewards those upon whom He bestowed the Beatitudes with a promise of the Kingdom of Heaven. (Matthew 5, 6) And when a woman praised Him, the Lord Jesus Christ replied, “Nay, blessed are they who know the will of God, and do it,” because theirs is the kingdom. (Luke 11: 28) He even explained that it is better to have bodily dismemberment than to miss the Kingdom. (Mark 9: 47)

The Lord Jesus Christ assured us that the reward is certain even if deeds are done secretly, saying, “Your Father who sees in secret shall recompense you.” (Matthew 6: 4 & 6) He further warned us not to perform these deeds only “to be seen by men.” (Luke 6: 32-34)

Is there then, a conflict between the motive of good deeds and the reward? No, for the Lord Jesus Christ speaks of a reward from God, and never from men. And no pretence will satisfy God, but only the genuine love and devotion to God will result in a life of blessing for us.

There is another factor in the Lord Jesus Christ’s teaching concerning reward. The Lord Jesus taught us that we never really earn or deserve this reward, for we all have gone astray. We are like workers in

God’s vineyard who were hired at the eleventh hour, and still receive the reward! The blessings of the Kingdom are really a divine gift to men who fall short of deserving them. God is a Father who is waiting to give His blessing in showering abundance to those who trust in Him.

Then what is the lesser or token reward or blessing of God here on earth? Did the Lord Jesus Christ promise material blessings? “Seek first His kingdom, and its righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you,” the Lord Jesus Christ tells us. (Matthew 6: 33) He promises in the Holy Gospel of St Mark 10: 29 a hundred fold for all material given up for His sake and the gospel. Thus we see that the Lord Jesus Christ did also promise material blessings on earth!

But the Lord Jesus Christ said that wealth is not always a blessing and has its risk to the soul! The Lord Jesus Christ said in this respect, “Keep yourselves from all covetousness.” (Luke 12: 15) Also, “You cannot serve God and mammon.” (Matthew 6: 24) He reiterated the same message in the Holy Gospel of St Matthew 6: 19 and in the Holy Gospel of St Mark 10: 25. The Lord Jesus Christ also made it clear that wealth is not the greatest blessing when He said, “A man’s life consists not in the abundance of the things which he possesses.” (Luke 12: 15) He repeated the same message in the Holy Gospel of St Matthew 16: 26, 6: 33 and in the Holy Gospel of St Luke 16: 11.

The same is true for the immunity from all physical ills. The Holy Book of Psalms 121: 7 reads, “The Lord shall preserve you from all evil.” The Lord Jesus Christ promise to His disciples, “Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall in any wise hurt you,” may be refuted



St Matthew



St Mark



St Luke



St John

by the many trials and affliction of Saint Paul, and by the Lord Jesus Christ's' prediction of the inevitable persecutions of the just in the service of the Kingdom. Both seemingly contradictory promises are true, for they both are God's words. We will have tribulation, but with the grace of God shall overcome because the Lord Jesus Christ overcame.

What, then, is the ultimate reward of God's obedience, if it is neither wealth nor safety? It is living a fuller and abundant life on earth, and attaining the Kingdom of God afterward, or in short, eternal life. The Lord Jesus Christ said, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." (John 10: 10) Similar sayings of the Lord Jesus Christ are referred in the Holy Gospel of St John 5: 40, 5: 12, the Holy Gospel of St Matthew 7: 14, 19: 7, 25: 46, the Holy Gospel of St Mark 10: 30, and in the Holy Gospel of St Luke 12: 29-31. This ultimate reward of the Kingdom of Heaven does not exclude other blessings in this present world. The Lord Jesus Christ declared that the richness of life also increases immeasurably in this present life. He did not promise prosperity but gave us the assurance of the heavenly Father's

providence; this teaching of God's providence has been one over which men have had great difficulty. The Lord Jesus Christ said not to be anxious, that just as God feeds the sparrows and clothes the lilies, so He would provide for our need, and will carry the pain of physical ill whenever we claim His promises. (Matthew 6: 25-32) The word 'need' is the key in this passage.

In the same passage, the Lord Jesus Christ seems interested not so much in our need, but in our trusting Him. "Be not anxious" He refrains. To the person who has made the kingdom his priority in life, anxieties are reduced proportionally. Rivalry and competition at work are replaced by service and love. Accidents and evil induced fears are reduced as the trust in the providence of God is increased, and calmness and inner peace become evident in such a rich life. This "peace that surpasses all human understanding" is one aspect of the earthly reward. (Philippians 4: 7)

The earthly reward of peace is evident in the Lord Jesus Christ's teaching to rejoice amidst persecution.



It may also be seen in St Mary's choice of the better part that will not be taken away from her. This peace reward is climaxed in His promise, "Come to Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and you shall find rest for your souls." (Matthew 11: 28)

Fuller life also means better social relations. In the Lord Jesus Christ, hate, suspicion, and antagonism are eliminated in personal relations, and replaced with love. The Holy Gospel of St Mark in 10: 28-30 emphasizes this human relations aspect. And the

relationship that transcends all relations is fellowship with God; this is the ultimate reward. St John correlates this relationship with the reward of eternal life as follows, "And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life." (1 John 5: 11-12) The nature of this relationship cannot be described in words, but each Christian must experience it for himself.

MEMO FROM GOD

To: **YOU**
Date: **TODAY**
From: **THE BOSS**
Subject: **YOURSELF**
Reference: **LIFE**

I am God. Today I will be handling all of your problems. Please remember that I do not need your help.

If life happens to deliver a situation to you that you cannot handle, do not attempt to resolve it. Kindly put it in the SFGTD (something for God to do) box. All situations will be resolved, but in My time, not yours.

Once the matter is placed into the box, do not hold onto it by worrying about it. Instead, focus on all the wonderful things that are present in your life now.

If you find yourself stuck in traffic; Don't despair. There are people in this world for whom driving is an unheard of privilege.

Should you have a bad day at work; Think of the man who has been out of work for years.

Should you despair over a relationship gone bad; Think of the person who has never known what it's

like to love and be loved in return.

Should you grieve the passing of another weekend; Think of the woman in dire straits, working twelve hours a day, seven days a week to feed her children.

Should your car break down, leaving you miles away from assistance; Think of the paraplegic who would love the opportunity to take that walk.

Should you notice a new gray hair in the mirror; Think of the cancer patient in chemo who wishes she had hair to examine.

Should you find yourself at a loss and pondering what is life all about, asking what is my purpose? Be thankful. There are those who didn't live long enough to get the opportunity.

Should you find yourself the victim of other people's bitterness, ignorance, smallness or insecurities;

Remember, things could be worse. You could be one of them!

Should you decide to send this to a friend; Thank you, you may have touched their life in ways you will never know!