



How Do Eternal Rewards Work?

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1. Salvation and rewards are different.

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23 NIV

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. Ephesians 2:8-9 NIV

...he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, Titus 3:5 NIV

Salvation

- Past
(1 John 3:2)
- Free
(Ephesians 2:8-9)
- Can't be lost
(John 10:28-29)
- Same for all Christians
(Romans 3:22)
- For those who believe
(John 3:16)

Rewards

- Future
(Revelation 22:12)
- Earned
(1 Corinthians 3:8)
- Can be lost
(2 John 1:8)
- Differ among Christians
(1 Corinthians 3:12-15)
- For those who are faithful
(1 Corinthians 9:27)

2. We will reap what we sow.

Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for you reap whatever you sow. If you sow to your own flesh, you will reap corruption from the flesh; but if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap eternal life from the Spirit. So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. Galatians 6:7-9 NRSV

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, their 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 person's work. If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames. 1 Corinthians 3:11-15 NIV

*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, **whether good or bad.** 2 Corinthians 5:10 NIV*

3. What does God reward?

▪ Good works

*...because you know that the Lord will reward each one for **whatever good they do**, whether they are slave or free.*

Ephesians 6:8 NIV

*God "will repay each person **according to what they have done.**" ...but glory, honor and peace **for everyone who does good:** first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. Romans 2:6, 10 NIV*

▪ Denying ourselves

*Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? 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 they have done.***

Matthew 16:24-27 NIV

▪ Showing compassion to the needy

*But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. **Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.***

Luke 14:13-14 NIV

▪ Treating our enemies kindly

*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 children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Luke 6:35 NIV*

▪ Sacrificial and generous giving

*Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, **and you will have treasure in heaven.** Then come, follow me." Matthew 19:21 NIV*

▪ Those who endure difficult circumstances while trusting him

*You suffered along with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions. So do not throw away your confidence; **it will be richly rewarded.** You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, **you will receive what he has promised.** Hebrews 10:34-36 NIV*

- **Those who live faithfully and with good motives**

*Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful. I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait until the Lord comes. **He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of the heart. At that time each will receive their praise from God.*** 1 Corinthians 4:2-5 NIV

- **Those who persevere under persecution**

*Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, **because great is your reward in heaven.** For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets.* Luke 6:22-23 NIV

- **Those who make wise and productive use of the resources and opportunities he has given them**

*His master replied, **“Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!”*** Matthew 25:21 NLT

4. How will we be rewarded?

a) Affirmation & Celebration

*His master replied, **“Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!”*** Matthew 25:21, 23 NLT

b) Rulership & Authority

*Peter answered him, “We have left everything to follow you! What then will there be for us?” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, **you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.** And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first.”* Matthew 6:19-21 NIV

¹⁷ “Well done, my good servant!” his master replied. “Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, **take charge of ten cities.**”

¹⁹ His master answered, “**You take charge of five cities.**”

²⁶ He replied, “I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what they have will be taken away.”

Luke 19:17, 19, 26 NIV

c) Treasures

“...Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven... for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Matthew 6:19-21 NRSV

See also:

1 Corinthians 6:13; Revelation 2:26-28; 2 Timothy 2:12; Revelation 20:6

Read about crowns - symbolizing “ruling power”:

James 1:2; Revelation 2:10; 1 Corinthians 9:24-25; 1 Thessalonians 2:19; Philippians 4:1; 1 Peter 5:1-4; 2 Timothy 4:6-8; Revelation 4:10, 3:11

5. Biblical Life Metaphors

- **Life is a _____.**

Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him. James 1:12 NIV

- **Life is a _____.**

From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked. Luke 12:48b NIV

- **Life is a _____ Assignment.**

And remember that the heavenly Father to whom you pray has no favorites. He will judge or reward you according to what you do. So you must live in reverent fear of him during your time here as “temporary residents.” 1 Peter 1:17 NLT

But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for him to return as our Savior.

Philippians 3:20 NLT