

LESSON 8 Expect Rewards

Do you know of a street or building that has been named to honor a person? Look around you and see that streets, buildings, planes, airports, boats, towns, villages, rivers, and other things have been given the names of people. This is done to reward and pay tribute to them. They have been rewarded because they have done something to help their people or their community.

The Nobel prizes are awarded each year to those whose work has helped all humanity. An ambassador from another country was highly honored by being given the golden key of our capital city. All of these are great and priceless rewards. No salary can be compared to such honors. And yet all these rewards will one day pass away.

But what about rewards that come from God? If we know how to pay tribute to each other, will not God do much more for all those who love Him? Of course He will! Just the thought that Christ will honor us before His Father should keep us faithful to the end. Jesus encouraged His disciples, “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven” (Matthew 5:11–12).

The Plan

- A. Present Rewards
- B. Future Rewards

The Goals

1. Discuss rewards we can expect as we do personal evangelism.
2. Identify the kinds of rewards we can expect in the future if we serve Christ.

A. PRESENT REWARDS

Goal 1. Discuss rewards we can expect as we do personal evangelism.

Personal evangelists do not work for reward. They work because God has loved them and Christ has saved them. They reach people in obedience to Christ's command. They work because they love people and want them to have the same hope and the meaning in life that they have found in Christ Jesus.

Yet, even though rewards are not the goal of the Christian worker, it has pleased God to give many rewards. The rewards of personal evangelism are present and future, temporal and eternal, material and spiritual.

The Lord's Presence

One of the greatest present rewards in personal evangelism is our assurance of the continual presence of the Lord. After His death and resurrection, Jesus sent His disciples throughout the whole world to share His good news with all people. The task was indeed great, and there were many difficulties. The disciples probably wondered how they, just ordinary men filled with fear, could ever cover the world with Christ's good news.

But even before they could express their fear, Christ assured them of His continuous presence: “‘Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age’” (Matthew 28:20).

Jesus has all power in heaven and on earth. His power knows no limit or barrier. Death and the grave were not able to keep Him. To have such a Person always in our daily life and service is surely the greatest reward that we can ever have.

God always makes it possible for faithful workers to do His will. He sent Moses to deliver the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt. Moses knew the work was too heavy for him, so he began to have doubts and questions. How could he carry the nation by himself? It was impossible. Moses, after realizing his weakness, went to God. God promised that His continuous presence would be with them all the way through that great desert until they reached the Promised Land. In reply to God, Moses said, “‘If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here’” (Exodus 33:15).

For Moses, the only way he could do his work was to be assured of the continual presence of God. Likewise, the only way for us to be able to share our Christian life and experience successfully and courageously is to have the constant presence of the Owner of the harvest with us day and night.

The apostle Paul was put in prison and knew many hardships because he proclaimed the good news of Christ. But after appearing before the judge to present his case, he wrote to Timothy, “‘The Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it’” (2 Timothy 4:17).

Do you want to have this full confidence in your daily life and service for Christ, even in loneliness and hardship? The reward is truly great, but there is one condition. You must go first.

Application

1 What wonderful promise did Jesus give His disciples when He sent them out to share the good news?

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2 How can we receive the same promise?

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3 Who stayed with the apostle Paul when he was put in prison?

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4 How was Moses able to lead the Israelites through the desert to the Promised Land?

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5 What should be our goal in sharing the news about Christ?

a) Rewards

b) Bringing people to Christ



Satisfaction

If there is a reward any diligent worker likes to have, it is certainly the joy of a job done well. It is better than a high salary. Jesus gave us a good example of this in the story of the three servants (Matthew 25:14–30). All three were given tasks to do, each one according to his ability. But only two of them had the joy of hearing “Well done, good and faithful servant!” The third one received no reward because he had not done what was expected of him.

For four years, I served as a schoolteacher in my French-speaking country of Burkina-Faso. One year, I was given a class of beginners. There were about 70 children in the class. All came from the villages, and not one of them could speak a word of French. I had to start from nothing!

At the end of the school year, they could understand French and even talk to each other, read, and write in French. For me, there was no greater reward than to feel the joy of a job well done.

This is also true in personal evangelism. When we see a new convert living a Christian life, singing hymns, speaking to a group of young people, or doing personal work of sharing Christian experiences with someone else, this is indeed a reward that cannot be measured in terms of earthly riches. It is rewarding to know that we have been used to rescue a soul from eternal loss, and that the angels in heaven are rejoicing. Jesus told Peter, ““Everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life”” (Matthew 19:29).

Many early African Christians in my country went through hardships. Some of them were cut off from their families and friends. But the Lord was faithful. They were brought into a new family, the family of God and have been blessed with all sorts of wonderful blessings.

Everywhere you go, you will find brothers and sisters in Christ. You may not speak their language, and the color of your skin may be different from theirs. But you will know and feel love uniting you all. If you lose one friend for accepting Christ or for sharing your personal Christian experience, you will be rewarded with many friends in God’s family.

Abraham left his home, his friends, his family, and his fields to obey God. As a reward, he was made the father of many nations. Indeed, he was blessed with all kinds of earthly and heavenly riches. One of his servants spoke to him:

“The LORD has blessed my master abundantly, and he has become wealthy. He has given him sheep and cattle, silver and gold, menservants and maidservants, and camels and donkeys. My master’s wife Sarah has borne him a son in her


old age, and he has given him everything he owns.” (Genesis 24:35–36).

The 70 disciples Jesus sent out came back rejoicing at what they were able to do in the Lord’s name. Indeed, there is no greater satisfaction than to be used of God in bringing other people to Him.

Application

6 What happened to Abraham when he left his home to follow God?

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B. FUTURE REWARDS

Known Rewards

Goal 2. Identify the kinds of rewards we can expect in the future if we serve Christ.

Besides our present rewards that we can enjoy right now, many future eternal rewards are also promised to those who follow Christ’s command to share the good news. The first of the two kinds of future rewards are those that are clearly revealed to us in the Word of God. These are the *known* rewards. We will consider some of them.

1. “Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever” (Daniel 12:3). Stars are very far from the earth, and it would take months for a spacecraft traveling at the speed of light to reach the nearest ones. Yet from here on earth, we see them shining! Isn’t it wonderful to know that one day you and I will shine like stars forever in God’s kingdom, if we have led many people to Christ?

2. We will reign with Christ! Christ has saved us so that we can have eternal life. There is no greater gift or reward than that. But He has also promised us His throne. Yes, we will reign with Christ and be like Him.
3. The Lord has also promised the following crowns to all those who love Him:
 - A crown of righteousness (2 Timothy 4:8)
 - A crown that will last forever (1 Corinthians 9:25)
 - A crown of life (James 1:12)
 - A crown of glory (1 Peter 5:4)

All of these rewards will be ours if we do the work the Lord has given us to do. We must do it with zeal and faithfulness until the end. Remember that you are not losing time in serving Christ. Fix your eyes on heavenly things, for this world and all its riches will disappear. But our work for the Lord will stand forever.

Application

- 7** What does it mean to say that we will reign with Christ?
 - a)** We will share in His heavenly kingdom.
 - b)** Many people will bow down and worship us.
- 8** The most important work we can do is what we do for the Lord because that work will
 - a)** soon be over.
 - b)** stand forever.
- 9** Read 2 Timothy 4:8; 1 Corinthians 9:25; James 1:12; and 1 Peter 5:4. What is the subject of these verses?



Unknown Rewards

In His revelation to John, Jesus said, “I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done” (Revelation 22:12). Speaking to His disciples, He said:

“Blessed are you when men 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.” (Luke 6:22–23)

The apostle Paul reminded the Corinthians of the great promises of God: “No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him” (1 Corinthians 2:9).

We do not know all the rewards God has planned for us. One of the joys of heaven will be to see what He has prepared for us. A greater joy will be to see in heaven men and women, boys and girls with whom we have shared the good news of Jesus Christ. What a day that will be!

Application

10 We know it is worthwhile to serve Jesus even when it causes us hardships because

- a)** God will punish those who persecute us.
 - b)** we will be rewarded if we suffer for His sake.
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CONGRATULATIONS

You have finished this course. We hope that it has been a great help to you! Remember to complete the second Unit Evaluation and return the answer sheet to your instructor.

Check Your Answers

- 1** He promised always to be with them.
- 7 a)** We will share in His heavenly kingdom.
- 2** By being faithful in sharing with others what Christ has done for us.
- 3** The Lord.
- 8 b)** stand forever.
- 4** God was with them.
- 9** The crowns we will receive because we love and serve Jesus
- 5 b)** Bringing people to Christ
- 10 b)** we will be rewarded if we suffer for His sake.
- 6** He received more than he ever had before.