

What About Rewards ?

During my previous 'dispensational years'

when I thought I was 'rightly-dividing' everything in the entire Bible

I believed there were 2 distinct judgments

- one for only the saved, called the Judgment Seat of Christ, sometimes referred to as the 'Bema' Seat
- and a different judgment for only the lost, called the Great White Throne Judgment.

I thought that various degrees of rewards would be given to us, for our good works according to how much time, effort, and money, etc. we had invested on getting the gospel out, while we were living on earth. Since my mid-Acts-hyper-dispensationalists blinders have been removed, I can see clearly now. I have studied and realized that I was grossly wrong.

If we are not motivated to obedience by God's GRACE then we do not truly possess God's grace because that is what the Bible says it does:

Titus 2:11-10 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation
hath appeared to all men,
12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts,
we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

Many professing Christians can quote Eph 2:8-9 but look at verse 10:

Eph 2:8-10 For by grace are ye saved through faith;
and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:
9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.
10 For we are his workmanship,
created in Christ Jesus unto good works,
which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

If anyone who claims to be a believer is not producing good works then they ought to heed God's warning to 'give diligence to make their calling and election sure' (2 Peter 1:10) even as God said (through Paul):

2 Cor 13:5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves,
how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

The question is not, Should we do good works? The answer to that is yes.

The question is, Will we be rewarded by how much/long/hard we worked

OR will we be rewarded by grace through the finished work of Christ?

First, let us see 'in scripture' that **FAITH is a WORK:**

1 Thess 1:3-4 Remembering without ceasing your **work of faith,**
and labour of love,
and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ,
in the sight of God and our Father;
4 Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.

.... and again **FAITH is a WORK.** Notice its **purpose** and its **source:**

2 Thess 1:11-12 Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and **the work of faith with power:**

12 **That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Real 'living' faith and works 'in scripture' are **inseparable:**

James 2:14 What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? (No, it is dead without works)

James 2:17 Even so **faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.**

James 2:20 But wilt thou know, O vain man,
that **faith without works is dead?**

James 2:24 Ye see then how that **by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.**

James 2:26 For as the body without the spirit is dead,
so **faith without works is dead** also.

The faith is not 'our' faith but the faith of Christ in us.

Gal 2:16 **Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ,** even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be **justified by the faith of Christ,** and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

We are given God's righteousness by the faith of Jesus Christ:

Phil 3:9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through **the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:**

The works are not 'our' works but the works of Christ in us. Our works on earth are the 'physical evidence' of the 'spiritual work' of Christ in us.

Should we expect God to reward us for what HE does?

Should we not give credit where credit is due? To GOD be the glory!

Phil 2:13 For **it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.**

Paul worked more for the Lord than anyone else. But God certainly revealed to him that all the work he did was because of God's grace:

1 Cor 15:10 But **by the grace of God I am what I am;** and **his grace which was bestowed upon me** was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: **yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.**

In the parable of the hired workers Jesus clearly taught that every man received the exact same reward no matter how long a time he worked:

Matt 20:1-16 For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard.

- 2 And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.
- 3 And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace,
- 4 And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way.
- 5 Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise.
- 6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?
- 7 They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.
- 8 So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their **hire**, (Greek word <misthos> also translated 'reward' 24 times, 'hire' 3 times, and 'wages' 2 times) beginning from the last unto the first.
- 9 And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, **they received every man a penny.**
- 10 **But when the first came,**
they supposed that they should have received more;
and they likewise received every man a penny.
- 11 And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house,
- 12 Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day.
- 13 But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny?
- 14 Take that thine is, and go thy way:
I will give unto this last, even as unto thee.
- 15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?
Is thine eye evil, because I am good?
- 16 So the last shall be first, and the first last:
for many be called, but few chosen.

No one could 'rightly' complain of the same 'good' reward that each one got.

'All' that are saved receive 'all' that God has. By God's grace no one gets more than another one. We are accepted in Christ, and that is enough:

Eph 1:3-6 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

- 4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:
 5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,
 6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

The reward for having Christ is 'full' for every person who has Him:

2 John 1:7-9 For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

8 Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.

9 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

Do not be deceived by doctrines of men who teach that God will reward individual efforts differently. Listen to GOD's word. Jesus is full of grace and truth (John 1:14). So all who are in Him will have 'a full reward'. The reward is 'complete' for all true believers because we are all 'perfect' in Christ:

Col 2:8-10 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

10 And ye are complete in him,
 which is the head of all principality and power:

The Greek word <sygkleronomos> is written 4 times, and translated

1 time each: 'joint-heirs' (here in Rom 8:17),
 'fellowheirs' (Eph 3:6),
 'the heirs with him' (Heb 11:9),
 'being heirs together' (1 Pet 3:7).

God's children have assurance by God's Spirit of our inheritance with Christ:

Rom 8:16-17 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit,
 that we are the children of God:

17 And if children, then heirs;

heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ:

if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

What is Christ's inheritance? It is 'all things' full and complete:

Heb 1:1-2 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time
 past unto the fathers by the prophets,

:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by **his Son, whom he hath
 appointed heir of all things,** by whom also he made the worlds;

So our inheritance, as God's elect, together with Christ is 'all things':

Rom 8:32-33 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us
 all, how shall he not **with him also freely give us all things?**

33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?

It is God that justifieth.

This is the same inheritance as all those who were 'in Christ' before us (Rom
 16:7), the believers of Israel (Acts 26:18, 20:32; Col 1:12; Heb 9:15):

Eph 3:6 That **the Gentiles should be fellowheirs,** and of the same body,
 and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

Jesus said the inheritance was everlasting life (Matt 19:29) or wrath:

John 3:36 He that believeth on the Son hath **everlasting life:**

and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life;

but **the wrath of God** abideth on him. (Dan 12:2, 2 Pet 2:12-13)

Be careful to notice that 'in scripture' the 'Judgment Seat of Christ'

includes people that have 'done bad' which is the **UN**believers:

2 Cor 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that **every one** may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Good or bad right or wrong serve the Lord or the devil (John 8:44):

Col 3:24-25 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: (Eph 1:11,14) for ye serve the Lord Christ.

25 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.

The reward of the righteous (the blessed) is eternal life in God's kingdom.

The reward of the unrighteous (2 Pet 2:13) (the cursed) is eternal death:

Matt 25:31-34,41,46 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

32 And before him shall be gathered **all nations:**

and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

The 'reward' we 'labour' for is everlasting life (Matt 19:29, John 6:40, 47).

We do not 'work' to 'get' it but because we 'have' it. It is the gift of God:

John 6:27 Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

Again, "the reward of the wicked" is death (Psa 91:8, Isa 3:11, Heb 2:2).

The 'reward' for the righteous is God's gift (Eph 2:8-9) of everlasting life:

Rom 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; (Rom 8:6)
but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The day of judgment (Acts 17:31, 2 Pet 3:7) will include 'rewards'
for both the righteous and the wicked (Rev 11:18):

Ecc 3:17 I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work.

The godly are contrasted with the unjust, mainly "them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness" and despise 'dominion' (being ruled) (2 Peter 2:9-12). The 'natural brute beasts' made to be taken and destroyed (2 Thess 1:7-10, Rev 11:18) will "utterly perish in their own corruption":

2 Peter 2:13 And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you;

Notice again, the 2 types (good or evil) and the 2 ends (life or wrath):

Rom 2:5-11 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath

and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

7 To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: (James 2:5; 1 Pet 1:4)

8 But unto them that are contentious,

and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness,
indignation and wrath,

9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil,
(Prov 11:19, 12:28) of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;

10 But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good,
to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:

11 For there is no respect of persons with God.

The bottom line is this: If God 'owes' us a 'debt' of 'rewards' because of the 'work' we did for Him (Rom 4:4) then that is not a free gift of His grace. God does not owe us for what He does through us rather, we owe Him:

Rom 11:6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works:
 otherwise grace is no more grace.
 But if it be of works, then is it no more grace:
 otherwise work is no more work.

The timeless truth of God is just 2 ends like He told Israel (life and good, or death and evil (Deut 30:15,19). It is not multiple degrees of reward:

Rev 20:11-15 And I saw **a great white throne**, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.
 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is **the book of life**: and **the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.**
 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and **they were judged every man according to their works.**
 14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.
 15 And **whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.**

It is not various rewards for different works based on personal merit:

Matt 16:27 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.** (Psa 62:11-12; Prov 24:12; Isa 3:10-11; Jer 17:10, 32:18-19; 2 Cor 11:15; 1 Pet 1:17, Rev 2:23)

The holy servants of God will all be rewarded the same: LIFE in the end:

Rom 6:22 But now being made free from sin, and become **servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness**, (Eph 5:27, Heb 12:14 "without which no man shall see the Lord") **and the end everlasting life.**

This is David Dowell saying, "Think about it!"
 Copyright © 1-12 *The Magnified Word* All rights reserved