

Rewards in Heaven for Christians

Rewards for Christians – When Do We Receive Them

The city of Corinth was famous for the Isthmian Games, a festival of athletic contests and events similar to the Olympic games. At the end of each contest or event, the athletes would appear before a large, ornately decorated platform called the bema. On this platform, the emperor sat on the judgment seat and gave out rewards to the victorious athletes for their years of dedicated and disciplined training and their perseverance and endurance in the heat of competition and battle. **Rewards** (see Rev. 22:12).

(In 2 Corinthians 5:10), Paul gives the Corinthians a similar image of the bema in relation to the future judgment of Christians when he states, “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.” Paul is saying that all Christians will stand before the Bema Seat; (see Article), of Christ. At the bema seat, Jesus Christ will bring to light every deed, good or bad that each believer has done on earth since he or she became a Christian. Every Christian will be rewarded based on his words, deeds, and faithfulness (see 1 Cor. 3:11-14).

1 Cor 3:13-15 “Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is”. “If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward”. “If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.”

Jesus illustrates judgment and regards in the parable He gives (in Matt. 25:14-30). A man who is about to go on a journey entrusts his possessions to three of his servants, each according to his ability. These three servants represent Christians; the master represents Christ; and the possessions represent the time, talent, and treasures that Christ gives every Christian. In the parable, two of the servants are faithful with what the master gives them, but one is unfaithful. When the master returns and calls his servants before him, the two faithful servants are rewarded with more and are given rule or charge over many things. However, the unfaithful servant loses what he had been given and is cast into “outer darkness” (Matt. 25:30).

In this parable, those who are faithful with the time, talent, and treasures that Christ gives them will be rewarded with crowns (1 Cor. 9:24-27), and the opportunity to assist Christ in governing the Millennial Kingdom (Rev. 20:4). But those Christians who are unfaithful (Matt. 25:28-30), will have their rewards taken from them and given to those who were faithful, and they will be cast into “outer darkness,” the place where there shall be “weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

(In Revelation 22:12), Jesus Christ says, “I come quickly and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” Are you ready to stand before the bema seat of Christ? Out of your love for Christ and appreciation for the gift of salvation, serve God faithfully now, and you will be rewarded later. The hope of winning crowns from Jesus Christ and reigning with Him should convince a Christian that running a faithful race is worth the effort. Being awarded any one of these crowns or opportunities to rule will be an honor beyond anything we can imagine. Let’s go for it!

Reigning According to Faithfulness: In (Luke 19:11-27), we find the parable of the ten minas. This parable testifies to the quantitative element in our Christian service. Ten servants were given a mina each. The first one invested that mina, and at the coming of his Lord he had earned ten minas. Note the commendation and the injunction of the Savior in Luke:

Luke 19:17 “Well done, my good servant!” his master replied. “Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.” Because this servant had magnified his substance, he was given the authority of ten cities during the Millennium. The same is said in verse 18 of the 2nd servant, who had taken his mina and gained five minas. To him was given authority to reign over five cities.

The unfaithful servant, who simply returned to the master the mina he had been given, received nothing; in fact, the mina he had was taken away, which may well indicate that the unfaithful servants of Christ, though saved (“but only as one escaping through the flames” (1 Cor. 3:15), do not have any special award, but will live a rather barren existence during the Millennium.

Faithful servants, however, will be given a place of true leadership in Christ’s kingdom, a position of leadership directly in proportion to the degree of faithfulness in Christian service. What a challenge to believers to be faithful in whatever way they can in this life, for in their service for Christ they are laying up for themselves treasures in heaven that will one day determine their station and position for a thousand years.