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## **RIGHTEOUS REWARD**

1- God is the righteous judge. Just. Fair. Perfect. He knows all. RC Sproul says the biggest problem for those in hell is not the devil, but God: "When we are saved we are saved from God, from exposure to His fierce wrath and punishment." Those in hell chose their end, and will be justly punished by degrees in accordance with their sin. You will get just what you deserve. Is there any hope for you?

**2- GOD IS THE RIGHTEOUS REWARDER.** His mercy and grace in Jesus Christ is available to you now, to secure your life after death. Romans 8:1, "*no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*" 1 Peter 1:3 those "*born again to an inheritance imperishable, undefiled, unfading and kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ, with joy inexpressible and filled with glory.*"

**The promise of heaven:** by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal, unimaginable inheritance of God's adopted children, transformed by His power (Philippians 3:20), "*the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father*" (Matthew 13:45). "*But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life*" (Revelation 21:27). So heaven proves the divine character of God, just and holy. Because you will be in heaven only by His grace saving you from sin and death, by virtue of the perfect work of Christ. Not because you deserve it, or did more good than bad, but only by God's grace, as you trust in Jesus alone.

**The reward of good works:** "Everyone in heaven will have a full cup, but not every cup will be the same size." The degree to which you experienced God's grace on earth, as you trust and obey Him, will be reflected in the degree to which you glorify Him in heaven. Hebrews 6:10, "*God is not unjust as to overlook your work and the love that you showed for His sake in serving the saints. And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have full assurance of hope until the end, not sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*" The wicked are warned about storing up God's wrath. God's people are admonished to "*store up treasures in heaven*" (Matthew 5). Any good works you do add nothing to your salvation, but you will be rewarded for them as they bring Christ more glory. Union with Christ is the point of the believer's life on earth, and is what will be revealed in heaven. Conversely, good works apart from Him will condemn unbelievers as hypocrites, even if done in His name, as Jesus will say "*I never knew you*" (Matthew 7). Live for your earthly life, pride of possession, place, position, power, then that will be your reward in itself, on earth, but not in heaven. Which lasts longer? Do you want more glory for yourself on earth, or for Christ in heaven?

**3- GOD HIMSELF IS THE ULTIMATE REWARD.** He is not only the righteous rewarder, He is the reward. This rightly gives all glory to God alone. It is said that the believer's good works are like a father giving his child money to buy him a present. Romans 11:33, "*who has given a gift to Him that he might be repaid? For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be glory forever. Amen!*"

**God is beyond imagining:** His reward will be the ultimate fulfillment of the realization of union with Christ. You in Him and Him in you, finally loosed from this earthly environment to the unimaginable reality of eternity in His presence. Colossians 1:27 "*the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.*" What God decreed before the ages, 1 Corinthians 2:9, "*what no eye has seen nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love Him.*"

**His personal perfect presence:** This is the ultimate reality for new creations in Christ. Ephesians 3:20 "*Him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Jesus Christ through all generations, forever and ever.*"

The Bible opens with "God there" (Genesis 1) creating the world for mankind's intimate fellowship with Him. It closes with "God there," and the absence of all evil, in the new heavens and new earth where God Himself will be with them as their God (Revelation 21) *and the name of the city shall be the 'Lord is there'* (Ezekiel 48). And the final scene is "*surely I am coming soon. Maranatha! Amen, come Lord Jesus!*" J.I. Packer says, "Heaven will be both rest and work, praise and worship and fellowship. Hearts on earth say in the course of joyful experience, '*I don't want this ever to end*' but invariably it does. The hearts of those in heaven say, '*I want this to go on forever.*' And it will. There can be no better news." Jesus saves!