

Does God Reward Those Who Give?

Introduction:

1. God is in heaven, and we are on earth. Sometimes, we get the idea that there is a “disconnect” between God and man. God is in heaven, and He is aloof, and distant, and uninterested in the affairs of planet earth. But, this simply is not true.
2. Consider a few verses in God’s Word: 2 Chronicles 16:9; Proverbs 5:21, 15:3; Hebrews 4:13.
3. In this dispensation of grace, God actually takes up residence **in** the believer and is with you in every single thing you do. Nothing goes unnoticed. 2 Corinthians 6:16
4. We asked the question two weeks ago, “Does God **notice** my giving?” The answer was that God definitely notices our giving. He is ever-watching. He notices the gift and even the heart attitude in which it is given. 2 Corinthians 9:7
5. Because of this fact, we can rest assured that there are rewards for those who exhibit the heart of Christ and are givers. Jesus said, “*It is more blessed to give than to receive.*” There is a blessing in receiving, but **more** of a blessing in giving. Acts 20:35
6. As we will see, this has been true throughout history. We see this principle all throughout God’s Word.

Rewards during God’s law program

1. God made a covenant with His people, Israel, when they came out of Egypt. We call this the Old Testament. God gave Israel a land, a religious center (the temple), a religious system (with various sacrifices offered), and religious leaders (priests and Levites).
2. God also gave to them specific commands regarding giving so that the nation and religious system could function. God required the people to bring their tithes (tenth) to the temple (Deuteronomy 26:12). After they did this, what could they expect God to do?
3. They could fully expect God to look down from heaven, bless them, and bless their land (proper rain and sunshine), and make them high above the other nations. Deuteronomy 26:15, 17-19; cf. Proverbs 3:9-10; Malachi 3:10-12
4. In the Old Testament, if a believer gave to the Lord obediently, he could expect rain for his crops, good fertile soil, and a bountiful harvest each year. God said, “I will bless you physically and materially in such a way that you won’t have room to store it all.”

Rewards during God’s kingdom program

1. Jesus came to earth to call Israel to repentance. Israel had forsaken God’s covenant, and they were very materialistic, very proud, and arrogant. Jesus announced that He was their Messiah and that the kingdom on earth was at hand. They’d better prepare themselves.

2. Jesus instructed the believing flock of Israel to divest themselves of all their earthly assets and give alms (Luke 12:33). They would enter a time period right before the kingdom arrived where a total 100% commitment must be made. Luke 18:22
3. There is example after example of believers doing this. But, Peter asked the Lord a very logical and practical question (Matthew 19:27). He said, "Lord, we have given you everything. Are there going to be any rewards?" How did Jesus answer? vs. 28-29
4. When Christ returns and the kingdom arrives, they can expect to receive back an hundredfold! How is that for interest? This is the context of verses like Luke 6:38.
5. I've heard preachers use this verse in an effort to get believers today to give to their ministries. But that verse has a context. It's funny - they don't live by Luke 6:30!
6. Kingdom giving required that a believer give it all to the Lord, but the believer would receive it back with manifold interest when the kingdom arrived. Matthew 16:27

Rewards during God's grace program

1. The Bible commands us to study the Word of God, and it instructs us as to **how** to study. It says that we must rightly divide the Word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15
2. You must know where you are at in God's program. You must know what God is doing today on the earth. If not, the Bible will prove to be a very confusing Book.
3. We are living in the dispensation of grace. God's Old Testament law was fulfilled and then nailed to the cross by Christ. God's kingdom program was temporarily suspended due to Israel's rejection of Christ.
4. Christ ascended into heaven as the rejected King, saved His chief enemy (Saul of Tarsus), and revealed to him a special time of grace that He would give to the world based on His cross work. This period of grace was a mystery until it was revealed to the apostle Paul.
5. We are living in this mystery time period of grace. No longer is God dealing with the world through a nation, land area, or religious system, but He is dealing with individuals solely through the completed work of His Son, Jesus Christ.
 - The moment we believe on Christ, God places us **into** Christ and makes us one with Him. He lives within us!
6. In the kingdom program, when they gave, their rewards would be reserved in heaven, and then Christ would bring those rewards to them on earth at His return.
7. But with the body of Christ (believers today), our permanent dwelling place will be in the heavens (Ephesians 2:5-7). When we give today, there is a twofold reward from God (Philippians 4:17):
 - We get to see and enjoy the **fruit** of our giving as people are saved and impacted with the truth of God. We receive the joy of seeing our giving making a difference in people's lives and our own lives.
 - We also know that our giving is abounding to our heavenly account. God notices our giving and will reward us accordingly in heaven. Philippians 4:18; 1 Timothy 6:17-19
8. Are there any promises that God gives to the grace giver in this time period? Philippians 4:19; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8

9. Is it any wonder that Jesus said, “*It is more blessed to give than to receive?*”
Jesus had the wisdom and knowledge to recognize this. Do we?
10. Your giving truly touches the heart of God. Paul said that God **loves** the cheerful giver, and he also said that our giving is “*wellpleasing to God.*”
- **Illustration:** Have your kids ever done something that just really warms your heart, makes you smile, and fills you with joy and pride over them?
 - When we give sacrificially and cheerfully to God’s work on earth, this is how God feels about it. He loves it, and is wellpleased.