

Session 3 Understanding Eternal Rewards—Biblical Principles (Pt. 2)

I. REVIEW

This is session three of an eight-part series on a subject that Jesus talked about more than anybody else did in the Bible. It is one of the subjects He emphasized the most in all of His teaching. It is not number one, but it is at the top. Fifty different passages by the mouth of Jesus on heavenly rewards, fifty. Very few subjects did He repeat with that kind of emphasis, yet the Body of Christ mostly ignores this subject, and many are illiterate of it. There is so much in the Scripture on it.

Well, just a quick review of what we covered last week, a very quick review. If you are here for the first time and you want to catch up with this, all the notes and the videos on the website. Why should a believer desire eternal rewards?

A. Why believers should desire eternal rewards.

1. **Love:** Rewards are about Jesus expressing how He feels about the way we loved Him.

First of all, my favorite definition of rewards or of the purpose of rewards is that it is Jesus expressing how He feels about the way you loved Him in this life. He is so enthusiastic about the small ways we love Him! He wants to reward us for it. He wants to express it.

2. **Partnership:** Rewards are about working in close proximity to Jesus as He rules the earth.

Rewards are about partnership, about working in close proximity to the Lord. I want more eternal rewards because I want to work in closer proximity to Him. I want to be closer to Him. Now we all will have access to His presence by the Holy Spirit, but Jesus in His physical body will only be one place at one time. I want to be occasionally working close to Him.

3. **Righteousness:** Rewards are about the Lord celebrating our choices for righteousness.

He gives responsibilities and authority according to how we said yes to Him in humility and obedience, etc. Rewards are about Jesus celebrating righteousness. He is so zealous for righteousness that it is impossible that righteousness could be done in this age without Him wanting to celebrate it and make it known in the age to come. His name is called righteousness.

4. **Truth:** Rewards are about the truth concerning our loving obedience being openly manifested.

Number four, the truth. Jesus said, “I am the way, I am the truth, the life.” When we are in His presence, whatever is true about us will come to light. Our small, weak love, which we often just dismiss, will come to light in His presence because it is true. Though our love is weak, it is still real. It is real to Him, though it does not seem that real to us. The truth of it will come to light.

5. **Not a secular paradigm:** Rewards are not about gaining superiority or status before others.

Number five, I understand when people say, “I am not interested in eternal rewards.” What they mean is the secular paradigm about showing their superiority or their status over others. That is not the biblical reason for which rewards are offered. So though I have had many believers say, “I do not want them,” they are thinking of the secular paradigm. I understand that, but there is the biblical paradigm, and that is exciting. I just gave a snapshot of some of it.

B. Principles mentioned in our last session

We looked at seven principles of how to interpret eternal rewards, because the eternal rewards are described in just really brief phrases. It is like Jesus is saying, “Go, look at the Word. Go, ask the Holy Spirit to show you. There is a lot more behind that simple phrase, and it is for you to discover because it is within the book. It is by the Holy Spirit I will give you more insight.”

So I have identified fifteen principles. We looked at seven last week, and we are going to look at eight tonight. It is my personal experience that through these fifteen principles I am more equipped to see the larger framework of what eternal rewards are about and their implications because I look at them through the grid of these fifteen different principles. If you do not do that, you just see the simple phrase. You know the example I have been using is: Jesus says to the overcomer, “I will give them a white stone with their name on it.”

You might think, “Well, that is nice. I am sure it is a pretty, little rock. It has my name engraved upon it, cool.” No! It is far more glorious than you can imagine.

1. Principle #1: Eternal rewards are expressions of grace.

Principle number one that we looked at: eternal rewards are expressions of the grace of God. It is impossible to deserve the measure of the rewards that He gives us. His rewards are far beyond anything we deserve. We take a step of obedience, and He gives us a mile of reward. So there is no sense of earning it at all. We developed that a bit last week.

2. Principle #2: Eternal rewards are given according to works.

Principle number two, eternal rewards are given according to our works. There is a strong correlation between what we do and how He rewards us. Though our works do not earn the love of God, they express the love that He has put in us. Our good works express love and express grace; they do not earn grace or earn love. As a matter of fact, our record of good works—and by the way our good works are very small, typically very small. Giving someone a cup of cold water, helping encourage somebody, serving in little ways, most of our service is very, very little things—our record of our service is our love gift to Him, the gift of gratitude we offer Him on the last day. There is no element of deserving or boasting in it.

3. Principle #3: All of our works are written in God’s books.

Principle number three, we looked at in our last session. All of our works are written in God’s books, meaning they are so valuable. The small, little cup of cold water we give someone is so valuable to God, He writes it in His book. Our names, our actions, our conversations are important to such a degree that He writes them in the book because they have a lasting value. The only ones that are in the book are the good ones, by the way, for the redeemed. The other ones have been forgiven. I believe that there is never going to be a book burning in heaven. Those books are eternal.

They are like biographies. I will be able to go up to King David’s life and read the larger statement of his life, not just 1-2 Samuel, but what all the books say about him. All the different people through history, I mean I am guessing there is going to be several billion believers, and they will all have a bio in the heavenly library. I want to see some of the stuff you did that you forgot about that He remembered, that cup of cold water you gave twenty years ago that you do not even remember you gave it. That money you gave fifteen, twenty years ago, those kind words you spoke to somebody discouraged, you do not remember them, but they are written in the book. I want to read your biography. We have billions of years. We got plenty of time. I will read it a couple of times.

4. Principle #4: There are many types of eternal rewards.

Number four, there are many types of rewards. I mentioned at our last session that in Revelation 2-3 there are eighteen distinct rewards identified, eighteen. When you examine the gospels as well as the teaching of the apostles, there are another ten or fifteen rewards that you could possibly identify. I mean, it depends on how you categorize them. There are somewhere between twenty or thirty distinct rewards, again depending on how you categorize them.

Why so many? Because our life in the New Jerusalem will have many diverse facets to it. We are not just going to be floating on a cloud, playing a harp. We will have many, many facets to our life in the New Jerusalem with our resurrected body, reigning on the earth when the New Jerusalem comes down to the earth. Just like your life now has many facets, in your physical resurrected body and your relationships you will have many more facets of life then. There are rewards that interface with many facets of our life. This expresses God's creative design; He is so creative. He is going to express the way He feels about the way you loved Him in many ways in your life in the age to come.

5. Principle #5: Eternal rewards are glorious.

Principle number five, eternal rewards are glorious. This is a really important one. I mean all of these are. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 2 that we looked at last week, "Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, it has never entered the imagination of anyone the measure of the glory of what He has prepared." So whatever the rewards are, they are far beyond the measure of glory that you can even imagine. So whatever you do, do not reduce these rewards, though in the Bible they are described in such simple phrases. Do not reduce them to something you can easily imagine. They are far more glorious than you imagine. That little white stone with your name on it has many dimensions of glory—I am confident of it—far beyond what we are thinking. The garments have many dimensions of glory far beyond what we are thinking. They are so glorious! They have to be commensurate with, they have to be befitting of, the life in the New Jerusalem. So you are not going to have kind of dull garments in a glorious, celestial, diamond-like city, walking around in dull garments. They are going to be commensurate with the city we live in and the King that we are married to.

6. Principle #6: We compare Scripture with Scripture to gain insight.

Number six, we can compare scripture with scripture to get insight into some of the implications. Like in the illustration I used, we go back to Exodus 28. This is God's idea. God said for Moses to make garments for beauty and garments for glory and put them on the priests. It was God's idea to make garments for beauty; that is in His heart. When He has garments for His eternal priesthood, they will be beautiful and glorious. So, we can go back to the Scriptures and get hints as to what this might be like in the age to come.

7. Principle #7: We can gain insight from the natural realm.

Principle seven was the last one we looked at last week: we can gain insight by looking at the natural realm. King David said that when we look at the natural realm—like the stars—we see the glory, the beauty of God. We see the thumbprint of God, the handiwork of His beauty, through the works of creation. So we can look at some facets of creation and as John Piper says, "Our eyes run up the beam of the beauty of creation to the original beauty." I love it!

We can see how glorious the facets of creation are. I can imagine the Holy Spirit saying, "Imagine what the new creation is like, if you think that is glorious." So whenever you think of rewards, see to it that you are

interpreting them through these seven principles plus the eight more that we are going to look at in just a moment.

- C. We must be careful not to reduce Jesus' rewards to something that we can easily imagine.
- D. "Blood-washed believers will be spotless in God's sight, but not all have the same service record. Salvation gets us to heaven, but works determine what we do after we get there." **(CS Lovett)**
- E. We must believe that God is the rewarder of those who seek Him (Heb. 11:6). Jesus called us to seek to gain treasure and to be rich in heaven (Mt. 5:12; 6:4, 6, 18, 20; 10:41-42; 16:27; 19:21; Mk. 9:41; 10:21; Lk. 6:23, 35; 12:21, 33; 16:11; 18:22; Rev. 2:9; 3:18; 22:12).

⁶He who comes to God must believe...He is a rewarder of those who seek Him. (Heb. 11:6)

²⁰Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven... (Mt. 6:20)

The writer of Hebrews said in Hebrews 11:6, "He who comes to God must believe He is a rewarder of those who seek Him." The reason I am pushing this is because Jesus told us, with real clarity and no timidity, to "lay up treasure for yourself."

Do not have some false religious humility, "No, I just want a little cabin on the edge of glory. I just love Him. That is enough for me."

The Lord would say, "No, I want to show you how I feel about the way you love Me. I am really rich, and I am really kind, and I am really generous. So let Me reward you and show you what I see and think about the way you loved Me."

There is a kind of "logic" that I have heard over the years of people saying, "Well, I really do not go for that. I do not care about that." I just want to be clear—I want to be nice about it but I want to be clear—that is a non-biblical mindset. Jesus made fifty references to this. It is one of the subjects He emphasized the most, not the most, but one of the most.

So my point is, do not allow some simple arguments that people give which are—I want to say it nicely—biblically shallow arguments—because it is really an important truth to Jesus and the apostles—to where they steal this truth out of your heart. There comes this kind of pseudo-nobility. A lot of believers saying, "You know, I am just not into that."

I say, "No, get rid of that." If they do not want to get rid of it, that is their business, but do not let them steal it from you with shallow, little arguments. As I have talked about this over the years, typically there are two basic arguments that I hear all the time. First is the idea that they are so noble they do not care about rewards because they do everything for love. The second argument is that, if we get rewards, it somehow diminishes or undermines the doctrine of grace. Those are basically the only two arguments I have heard over many, many years of discussing this. When I share these fifty verses from the lips of Jesus, I rarely get any good answer as to why those are not valid.

So most people just kind of listen to those and say, "I do not know about that. I just know that I am really noble and am just into grace."

I respond, "Those are really shallow arguments. Lay hold of this glorious reality."

My real point to you is do not let someone steal this from you by simple, shallow, little arguments that do not answer the biblical narrative on this subject, because this is an anchor in your soul and you do not want to lose

sight of it. Most believers I know do not have a grid for this, so they are easily tripped up and distracted from this glorious subject.

- F. Paul exhorted us to seek those things which are above—this includes eternal rewards (Col. 3:1-2).

II. PRINCIPLE #8: REWARDS BEFITTING GOD’S ROYAL FAMILY

- A. Rewards are glorious as befits God’s royal family.

⁹But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you...into His marvelous light... (1 Pet. 2:9)

Let’s go on now to the fifteen principles. We are at number eight. We looked at one through seven last week.

Number eight, the eternal rewards are befitting God’s royal family. They are befitting God’s royal family. What do I mean that? See, when you read these simple, little phrases from the lips of Jesus about rewards, think right from the beginning, “They are glorious like the New Jerusalem.” Also think, “Would my definition of that simple phrase be fitting to the royal family? Would a royal family have a reward like that, in their context?” Because, we are the royal family. That is not just a neat, little, kind of poetic phrase. This is reality. You are the aristocracy of the New Jerusalem. You are truly the royal family. You are truly the eternal companion of the King of kings. This is real. This is not just poetry. So ask yourself when you read the rewards and you are trying to imagine them, would what you are thinking befit the royal family? Would the royal family, even in the natural, be excited about what you are imaging as a gift? Because these are rewards for service, you need to have a high standard as there is a royalty dimension to it.

- B. The glory of the royal daughter in Psalm 45 symbolically points to the glory of the Bride of Christ.

¹³The royal daughter is all glorious within the palace; her clothing is woven with gold.
(Ps. 45:13)

Psalm 45 is talking about the Bride of Christ. This is a prophetic passage, Psalm 45. The royal daughter, that is the Bride of Christ, is all glorious within the palace. Everything about her is glorious in her life in the palace. Her clothing is woven with gold. Now this is a natural picture but it is pointing to something more than natural. Again, my point is all these descriptions of eternal rewards we are going to be looking at starting at in our next session have to be befitting of royalty in your imagination or what you are thinking is far too low. They have to be glorious enough to fit in the New Jerusalem, and royal and dignified enough to fit in a royal family or you are not thinking the right thoughts; that is the point I am trying to make.

- C. The redeemed are as a crown of glory and a royal diadem in God’s hand (Isa. 62:3).

³You shall also be a crown of glory...and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. (Isa. 62:3)

¹⁷...the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him ¹⁸...that you may know...what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,
¹⁹and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe... (Eph. 1:17-19)

Isaiah 62:3, God says that you will be a crown of glory, a royal diadem which is the same thing as a crown—it is another word for a crown—in the hand of God. So you are a person who will be living in a royal environment. Everything about you will be commensurate and be befitting to royalty. Your clothing, your dining—talk about fine dining! I mean the food is good, and it is all healthy, and you never watch any calories.

You never have to work out, and you never get sick, and it is fantastic, and it is free. The environment of the dining, do not think you are just going to get some little carry-out through a drive-through. I mean I am imagining the dining experiences in the palace in the New Jerusalem that is befitting of the King who loves to host banquets. Anyway, I am getting ahead of myself; that is for future sessions.

Ephesians 1, Paul said—now catch this! Think of eternal rewards with this very familiar passage—Paul prays that the Father of glory would give you living understanding, the spirit of revelation, that you would know the riches of the glory of being His inheritance. The riches of the glory of what you inherit by being His inheritance. The riches of the glory. So whatever your view of eternal rewards, whatever you are imagining those garments are and that residence and dwelling place and thrones and crowns, lift up the standard of what your imagination is, of what you are pondering

Now we are never going to get the details down clearly. We are never going to get all the specifics. The Bible does not give them to us. The Bible gives us enough, even in these kinds of phrases, that we have a framework to think big, think glorious, think royalty, think amazing, think splendor, think fascination. That is the grid of which you should be thinking.

I mean the garments! The fine dining! Just the way people come and go in life and the way people interact at various levels of society, the vehicles, the royal courts. I mean with the angels serving! The angels are such glorious radiant beings with such bright righteousness. They are the royal household; they are the court that serves the royal family. Oh, I just cannot wait! I mean, the more I read this, I say, “Okay, just stay steady, Mike. Do not get in a hurry.” This is what it is supposed to do. It is supposed to awaken in you a longing for that age. Again, just stay steady down here in this age. Okay.

- D. Solomon’s wisdom was manifested in the way he established the royal household (1 Kgs. 10). Jesus, the greater Solomon, will manifest His wisdom, glory, and power in His royal household. Angels are the servants of the Bride—they serve in the royal court, bringing splendor (Heb. 1:14).

⁴And when the queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, ⁵the food on his table, the seating of his servants, the service of his waiters and their apparel, his cupbearers, and his entryway by which he went up to the house of the LORD, there was no more spirit in her. ⁶Then she said..., ⁷“Your wisdom and prosperity exceed the fame of which I heard ⁹...because the LORD has loved Israel forever, therefore He made you king, to do justice and righteousness” ...¹³Now King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba all she desired, whatever she asked, besides what Solomon had given her according to the royal generosity. (1 Kgs. 10:4-13)

Solomon’s wisdom was manifested in the way he established the royal household. Now Jesus is the greater Solomon. He is the greater David, the greater Moses, the greater Joshua, the greater Elijah, the greater Solomon. You can go down the list. So we look at the biblical record of the splendor of Solomon in his royal household and take it up 1,000 degrees of glory or whatever and you are getting a glimpse of Jesus’ royal household.

Here is what it says in this amazing passage in 1 Kings 10. The queen of Sheba came up to Jerusalem to visit Solomon. She saw all the wisdom of Solomon. Now notice there are seven aspects highlighted. She saw the house, his residence and went, “Wow!” Not just the splendor of it, but also the architecture, the wisdom and the creativity behind it, and the functionality. Then she looked at the food at his table, not just the quality of the food, but the service and the coming and the going and the whole royal court related to food. Then she looked at the seating of the servants and how they were honored and how there was such dignity and honor and even

the way they were honored, not just verbally, but the gifts that were given and the way they were seated and the way they were presented.

Then she looked at the service of the royal court, which in the New Jerusalem would be the angels. Then she looked at their apparel, their garments. Then she looked at the cupbearers, even the most out-of-the-way detail that would not be the biggest thing a queen would look into. She said, “Even the smallest details, the entry ways, the ways you go into the house, the big foyers and the grand entrances and the stairways,” she went on, “everything is amazing.” She saw these and “there was no more spirit in her.” She was overwhelmed as these seven things are mentioned. I am sure there could be fifty on this list. She was overwhelmed.

She said, verse 6, “Your wisdom exceeds”—your wisdom is far beyond what I was thinking—Your prosperity is remarkable. Then, in verse 13, King Solomon gave the Queen of Sheba all she desired, everything she asked, besides what he had already given her according to the royal generosity and that is the word, the “royal” generosity. So the queen was overwhelmed by his wisdom, his wealth and prosperity, and his generosity.

Beloved, I have good news for you! You are going to be overwhelmed by the King’s generosity and wisdom and His prosperity in the way that He conducts His royal household of which you are part. You are part of the royal family, and eternal rewards are a part of that. They are not the whole of it, but they are a part of it. Again, there are twenty or thirty of them identified in the Word of God. So principle number eight, whatever you are imagining these rewards are, they have to be befitting of a royal family and a royal court. If they are lower than what a queen and her court would accept, then you are thinking too low. Go higher!

III. PRINCIPLE #9: REWARDS ARE ETERNAL AND NEVER DIMINISH

- A. Heavenly rewards are eternal and imperishable—they will never diminish (Dan. 12:3; Mt. 6:20; Lk. 12:33; I Cor. 9:5; 2 Cor. 4:17; I Pet. 5:4).

³³***Provide yourselves...treasure in the heavens that does not fail. (Lk. 12:33)***

Principle number nine, rewards are eternal, and they never ever diminish. They are eternal, and they never diminish. Jesus said, “Provide for yourself treasure in heaven that does not fail.” Now, it would be easy for a lot of folks to run past that and think that it is great, without catching the more of the weightiness of this.

Not so many people in the earth have a lot of treasure. For that small percent of the people of the earth who have treasure, how to secure their treasure, how to multiply it, and how to keep it from being destroyed is a major, major concern to them. So if you are not a person with a couple million dollars, you probably do not think about it that much. People who have millions of dollars are consumed with the idea of how it is protected, preserved, and multiplied, asking, “How does this happen?”

Because a lot of believers do not think much about the reality of the treasure they are going to have, they do not think that much about what Jesus said about it. When you are making investments in this age, you want investments with the highest returns possible. You want investments with the lowest risks. You want investments with the most security, that are protected from theft, from political or economic corruption. You want investments protected from inflation, that are backed by the federal government, the Federal Reserve.

Well, beloved, Jesus is saying that you are wealthier than you know. And, because you do not know it, you do not think about it. Let me assure you of this: you have the highest return for your investment. Your little acts of obedience have the highest return of any investors in human history. There is no risk. You are totally secure. You are protected from theft, from all kinds of corruption. It is backed by the New Jerusalem Bank forever and

forever. It will never, ever diminish. You have a most glorious portfolio. That sounds cute, and the reason it sounds cute is because we are so unfamiliar with how real this is. Well, this is real!

When Jesus addressed the permanence of the treasure, He was talking to the mindset of wealthy people for whom their biggest fear in life was losing their treasure. He was saying, “No, this is more than you think.” Again, folks who do not have much money do not think much about this, but this is a huge point, a very, very big point.

- B. Our resurrected bodies will shine like stars forever. Their brightness will never diminish.

²**And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life...**

³**Those who are wise shall shine...like the stars forever and ever. (Dan. 12:2-3)**

Look here in Daniel 12. We will look at this verse many times in this series, Daniel 12:2, “Those who sleep in the dust”—that means physical death—“they will awaken”—that is the resurrection. “They will awaken to everlasting life, some of them, and others to everlasting damnation.”

Verse 3 is the point I am wanting to make. Those who awake in the resurrection, the godly who are wise, are going to shine. Here is the point I am making here, though there are many points to make in this passage: the brilliance and the splendor of the shining in their being will last forever. It will never ever diminish.

Do you remember the time when Moses, in the book of Exodus, saw the glory of God? His face shone with the brightness of the glory. They had to put a covering over his face because all of Israel was so troubled when they looked at him because he had a glory on his face that was supernatural, but it faded over time. Well, this will not fade at all. Our bodies will shine with a luster that continues forever and forever.

- C. The crowns are described as imperishable—not fading away (1 Cor. 9:5; I Pet. 5:4).

²⁵**...to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. (1 Cor. 9:25)**

The crowns are imperishable. There are no overthrows. The crown cannot be taken by a revolt, you know, in the area that you are ruling. It is imperishable. It is a permanent crown. It can never be lost once it is given.

- D. Treasure in heaven can never be destroyed or stolen (Mt. 6:20).

²⁰**...lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. (Mt. 6:20)**

A lot of treasures in the ancient world and even today can be destroyed by rust or moth. In just the natural processes of a fallen earth valuable things are diminished by rust or these things. That is what He is pointing to, the whole realm of creation’s diminishing the glory of valuables or that they can be stolen. Jesus said that this will never, ever happen. Not only is your investment secure, it will not be lost through inflation or an economic crash or any of these things. Nobody can steal it at all. No environmental corruption can slowly diminish its glory.

IV. PRINCIPLE #10: ETERNAL REWARDS ARE GIVEN IN VARYING MEASURES

- A. Believers will differ from one another in the measure of God’s glory that is expressed through them. There will be a vast difference in heavenly rewards, varying according to each one’s obedience.

⁴¹There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory. ⁴²So also is the resurrection of the dead. (1 Cor. 15:41-42)

Let's look at principle number ten. Eternal rewards are given in varying measure. In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul addresses this. He says that there is one glory of the sun, there is another glory of the moon, and there is another glory of the stars. "For one star differs from another star in glory, so also is the resurrection of the dead." This is a very profound statement. It says, "For one star differs from another star in glory." There are billions and billions of stars, and no two stars are the same just like no two human beings are the same. No two angels are the same, at least that we have any record of in the Bible. God's creativity is such that there is diversity in all of His creation. I mean just look at the human race. The angelic realm has so much diversity in it. The stars have billions and billions, the mass, the weight, the energy, the brightness of every star is radically, is so different from the stars that are near them.

1. The realm of "the resurrection" includes our body, garment, thrones, crowns, and more—each area of our life in the resurrection will express a measure of the glory of God.

So when he says in verse 42, "so also is the resurrection," I do not think he only means the resurrected body. I think he means so also is the whole realm of the resurrection. Body, garments, thrones, crowns, you name it, on and on and on, the whole realm of the resurrection, I believe that is what Paul is saying here, has diversity of glory. Each area of our life in the resurrection will have a different measure of glory. Your garments, your dwelling place, crowns, thrones, your interaction with people, your capacity to learn, your rule, your reigning, your responsibilities, all of them will differ just like they do in this age. It is not an accident; our diversity in this age is not because of the fall. Our frustration and our dullness and our sin are, but diversity was always in God's plan. It was in His plan, so that is not a mark of the fall. The fall has taken advantage of that and created strife among nations, etc.

2. There are many billions of stars, and each is unique. The Pistol Star is 10 million times brighter than our sun and has a mass 100 times greater. In the age to come, there might be several billion people in God's family. No two believers will have the same measure of glory.

There are billions of stars. I always like to highlight this one, the Pistol star, ten million times brighter than our sun. I mean, I like our sun. I am really impressed with it. I look up and I say, "Wow!" You know, today I could have said, "Hey, go a little bit softer. It is really hot out there." The Pistol star is ten million times brighter.

Paul said that as one star or one sun differs from another sun in glory, the whole realm of the resurrection will follow this principle. I do not believe there will be any two believers who will be identically the same in their responsibilities or their capacities for the glory of God, in their relationships, in their skills, their authority, their thrones, and their crowns. It really will be this way like it is in this age—the diversity—but with no sin in it. With total love and honor and unity and no jealousy, no competition, the diversity will dwell in context of perfect love and gratitude and humility.

- B. Some in the kingdom will be called least, and some will be called great (Mt. 5:19; 11:11; 18:4; Lk. 9:48; Rev. 19:5). That is, their life choices will be "called great"—by God, the angels, the saints. Jesus described a great diversity in how the life choices of some will be viewed in the age to come.

¹⁹Whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments...shall be called least in the kingdom ...but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom. (Mt. 5:19)

⁵Then a voice...saying, "Praise our God, all you His servants...both small and great!"
(Rev. 19:5)

Some in the kingdom will be called least. This is in the millennial kingdom. This is not just in this age. Jesus is talking about the age to come, about born-again believers. They will be called least, while some will be called great. Now here is my theory—though I do not know—that someone like David comes on the stage and someone might say, "He is great!" The way I interpret it is I think the Lord would say that his life choices were great. His life choices were great, and they were esteemed by God.

I believe, I am assuming, if God calls a godly man or woman's life choices great, then the angels do too. The angels will interface with the saints like they do now, but it will be open and face to face. Right now the angels are helping us and serving us all the time. Hebrews 1:14 says they are the servants, the royal court so to speak, the royal household that is serving the royal family.

I think the saints will know the stories of one another. Their lives are written in the books in the heavenly libraries. I do not think people will focus on who is least and say, "Oh, boy, you were least." The distinctions will be clear. Now that is a verse that is commonly overlooked, but it is a glorious verse.

In Matthew 5:19, I love the word, "whoever." Whoever breaks the least of these commands will be called least in the kingdom. It does not mean they stumble one time. It means they settle into compromise that they are aware of in an area of their life. They may think, "Ah, that is a small area. Nobody is paying attention." They settle into compromise. That is, I do not think it is a one-time stumble. That is not what it is talking about. It is talking about a consistent, "Hey, I am okay with this."

The Lord is saying, "Do not be okay with something and make it an acceptable part of your life if you are not sure the Word of God will back it up, because I am really clear what is happening."

You know right now in the Body of Christ there are all kinds of folks who are promoting doctrinal views of the grace of God where compromise is normal, and acceptable, and even celebrated. As long as a lot of people are applauding, who all go to church, people say, "Wow, it must be okay." Do not buy it! If it is not in agreement with the Word of God, do not settle into any small areas of compromise. Do not do it.

Stumble, yes. I am not telling you that you won't stumble. Get back up, repent, push delete. The Lord will mark it from your book, but be found as one reaching for full obedience all your days. In your weakness, sign back up for fullness; that is what He is talking about.

Here is the verse I like. He says, "But whosoever"—oh, I love it—"does the commands and teaches them will be called great." You can take a guy who apparently has no gifting, no money, no education, no platform, nobody recognizes him, no friends—there is not such a guy but just pretend that—and in the privacy of his heart he is trying to obey God with all of his heart. There is only one kid in the neighborhood who will even listen to him, and he speaks to that kid about the Word of God. The Lord would say, "You are going to be called great when you stand before Me."

The great equalizer is on the last day when the Lord says, "I do not care how big your impact was, if you did My commandment and you said it to others. You did not just go along with the popular flow of the conversation of the culture and just go ahead and wink at compromise. You were contending, even in your conversations with people, for obedience." The Lord says, "I will call your life great. I do not care how many people ignored you or how little impact you have; you will be called great." Beloved, this is the great equalizer, standing before the Lord on that day, because anybody can be great. Everyone in the church can ignore you, everyone in your

family reject you, you can have no money, no opportunity, and your life can be great forever. Beloved, this is amazing!

Man, I look at this, and I say, “I am going for it, man. I am going for that. I am going for that.”

Now in Revelation 19—this is around the throne, okay—Revelation 19:5. The voice says, “Praise our God, all you servants.” It acknowledges the small and the great among the family of God. Again, I believe it is great in stature, but also means in essence that God called their life choices great. It is not about being famous in this age; it is about being obedient before the Lord. That is what this thing is about. So I have a little bit more written here on that.

- C. In God’s family in the New Jerusalem, there will be different positions, responsibilities, capacities, and experiences. We see similar differences in this age. The distinctions in the age to come are related to our faithfulness, humility, obedience, and diligence, not to our gifting in this age.
- D. Everyone has the opportunity to be called great in the age to come. The judgment seat is the great equalizer. There will be no competition, envy, or comparison with others, since all will be preoccupied with God’s love and beauty, having a deep sense of gratitude.

There will be no competition, no envy, no comparing. I think people will be so preoccupied with the love of God and the beauty of Jesus and have such great gratitude because they will know the real story. Even if their life is called least, they will say, “I am in the kingdom. I am in the family. I am part of the aristocracy of the New Jerusalem. I got it made. I am in this thing.” I do not think there is going to be the grid of the jealousy, comparison, envy that we have in a sin-filled culture because we are going to be preoccupied with beauty and gratitude.

We still want to contend for a life of which God will say, “Your choices were great.” Again, do not imagine these are choices for really big events. These are just every-day choices of small things. Most of our life, ninety-nine percent of it, is the small little things we do through the day. So do not imagine that in a couple of years you are going to go on a mission trip and maybe a thousand people will get saved, and that will be your biggie at the judgment seat. The Lord would say, “No, no, that is not it. If you touch a thousand people on a mission trip, that is because I released the grace of God.” You are not going to be rewarded by the number; you are going to be rewarded by your heart response. That way everybody can contend for greatness.

- E. **Resurrected body:** God’s glory will be manifested in our resurrected bodies in varying measures. Our bodies will shine—some with a greater capacity—as one star differs from another in glory.

⁴³**“The righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.” (Mt. 13:43)**

²**...His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. (Mt. 17:2)**

There will be a diversity of glory in our resurrected bodies. Jesus talked about in Matthew 13. Our bodies will shine like the sun. I believe everybody, every person, will have a different capacity like the angels do. Jesus is the ultimate, but we will reflect Jesus’ glory in different measures like we do now, but it will be far more manifested. The diversity will be like it is in this age, and even like it is in the angelic realm. They have a diversity of capacity to express the glory of God.

You know, in Matthew 17:2, it adds that Jesus’ face and His garments shone bright, not just His body, but His face and His garments. So our garments will shine, too.

- F. **Garments:** I assume that each will have a varying measure of glory in their garments and that there will be many different types of clothing with unique design, fabric, brightness, coloring, fragrance, etc. The saints' garments may be diverse to suit different occasions.

I believe, and I have it written here, that there will be a varying measure of garments. I think you will have many types of garments. We will spend a whole session on garments. There is so much in the Bible about this. You are not going to have one glorious white gown T-shirt that is beautiful, but only one for billions of years. The King decreed that He wanted Moses to make garments for glory and beauty. That was in God's mind, not Moses' mind. That was not Moses' idea.

There will be many different types of garments. I have written here, different designs, fabric, brightness, color, fragrance, on and on. I believe there will be many diverse occasions calling for different garments. Your wardrobe will be beyond what you can imagine. Your face, your clothes, your body will shine in the glory of God.

- G. **Authority:** We will all have different work assignments with varying measures of authority and responsibility (Mt. 19:28, 30; 25:21; Lk. 19:17-19; 22:29-30; Rev. 2:26-27; 3:21). There are many different roles in the infrastructure of a nation. For example, in the USA, there are over 22 million people employed in the infrastructure—federal, state, or local.

¹⁷“...because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.”¹⁸ *And the second came...*¹⁹ *likewise he said to him, “You also be over five cities.” (Lk. 19:17-19)*

Look here, we will have different work assignments just like we do now. There will be different measures of authority and responsibility, many different roles in the infrastructure of a nation. I mentioned this last time, that there are twenty-two million people that have a role in the infrastructure of the government of this nation, twenty-two million from federal, state, and local, twenty-two million.

So when the Lord says, “kings and priests” and “ruling and reigning,” He is not saying that several billion people are all going to be kings over the same nation. There is going to be an infrastructure, and everyone is going to have their sphere of responsibility with authority that is commensurate with their responsibility. It is connected to our choices in this age. Look what He says here in Luke 19. He said that one man, one person, is over ten cities, one person is over five cities. There is a diversity that Jesus made clear. It is clear in many other places as well.

- H. **Angels:** There are also differing spheres of authority and capacities among angels—some are strong (Rev. 5:2; 18:1, 21). The Russian Orthodox Church parallels medieval angelology in identifying nine ranks of angels. From the highest-ranking to the lowest—*seraphim* (Isa. 6:2), *cherubim* (Gen. 3:24; Ex. 25:17-22; Ezek. 10:12-14, 28:14-16; Rev. 4:6-8), *thrones* (Col. 1:16), *dominions* (Eph. 1:21; Col. 1:16), *powers* (1 Pet. 3:22), *authorities* (Eph. 3:10; Col. 1:16; 1 Pet. 3:22mt 23), *principalities* (Eph. 3:10; Col. 1:16), *archangels* (1 Thes. 4:16; Jude 1:9), and angels (1 Pet. 3:22).

¹*I saw another angel...having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. (Rev. 18:1)*

¹⁶*For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. (Col. 1:16)*

The angels have the same diversity in the angelic realm. You can just look at that on your own.

- I. As there are different measures of glory among the redeemed, there will also be different measures of condemnation in hell (Mt. 10:15; 11:22, 24; 23:14; Mk. 12:40; Lk. 12:47-48; 20:47; Rom. 2:5-6).

¹⁴***Therefore you will receive greater condemnation. (Mt. 23:14)***

A matter of fact, this principle is also consistent in hell in the resurrection. In hell there is diversity of condemnation. Some people will receive a far greater condemnation than others according to their works. There are differences in terms of the power and the sphere of authority and the wickedness of demons. I mean some are murderous. I do not know the details of this, but some are far more powerful in their murder than others. I mean, I think they are all perfectly established in hatred and in wickedness, but there are different levels in the demonic kingdom and there are different levels in the resurrection of the damned as well.

So this principle of diversity in the age to come is a clear biblical principle. A lot of believers just kind of read over those verses or they ignore that. You do not want to do that because you want to be aware now what the Bible says about them. The Bible does not give us that much information, but the Bible gives us a lot more information than most believers know. I mean, there is a lot to know, although there is a whole lot more we do not know. I want to know it. Like I have told the Lord many times, “Lord, shock me now. Do not shock me then. Do not let me get there and then say, ‘Oh my goodness, I should have pressed into God when I was on the earth!’” I say, “Tell me now.”

That is what friends and family are all about—they tell you. That is the gift of God in principle, if they are faithful, that is. So do not be defensive. If somebody tells you some blind spot, give them ten dollars. Man, I do not care if it is 100 percent accurate! Let them tell you a little bit so you can clean it up. Even if they are saying it with a wrong spirit and half of what they are saying is wrong, still give them ten bucks. Say, “Thank you.” You are going to get a lot more out of it in the age to come if you make that change. Believe me it is a good. It is worth giving them twenty bucks, okay. I am actually not even joking, okay!

V. PRINCIPLE #11: JUDGMENT IS STRICTER FOR LEADERS

- A. There are stricter or higher standards of judgment for leaders at the judgment seat (Jas. 3:1).

¹***...let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. (Jas. 3:1)***

Principle number eleven, judgment—talking about believers now—is stricter for leaders. What James actually said is that judgment is stricter for teachers. I think that in principle it is more than the teaching ministry. I think it involves those that have a larger sphere of responsibility, whether it is teaching or shepherding. I do not just mean in the church org chart, but also in the kingdom, as many of God’s best teachers and best shepherds are in the marketplace teaching and shepherding and making disciples in the marketplace. So do not imagine you have to be on the church staff. Just know there is a stricter standard. What does that mean?

- B. At the judgment seat, Jesus will require a greater response of faithfulness, humility, and diligence from those who were given more in this age (Lk. 12:48). We measure faithfulness and diligence very differently for someone who is 5 years old compared to someone who is 50 years old.

⁴⁸***...For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more. (Lk. 12:48)***

Jesus will require a greater response. Look at Luke 12:48. He says, “For everyone to whom much is given”—that is leadership. He has given a greater gifting, greater resources, greater platform, greater favor to impact

people. People get excited about their greater finances, their greater gifting, their greater profile. They get excited. The Lord would say, “Well, there is another side to this. It is good to be thankful, but do not be thankful and presumptuous. Because, if I give you a greater gifting, greater finances, greater impact, greater favor, more alliances with more people working with you and supporting you, I am going to require more from you. I am going to require a more consistent diligence. I am going to require a greater humility in your responses. I am going to require a more consistent generosity out of you, etc.” That is not the whole list. Then He goes on and repeats it, “Of the man or woman to whom much has been committed”—again they have been given a sphere of influence, finance, gifting, personality, whatever, whatever—He says, “I will ask more.”

Now the principle is simple to understand. If I were to call a five-year-old to be diligent and a fifty-year-old to be diligent, I would ask more from the fifty-year-old in their diligence. I would ask for a greater response of faithfulness and diligence and humility than I would the five-year-old. A five-year-old can be very responsive in a right way, but the measure of it is going to be far smaller than the one who is trained and seasoned in life. Their mind is mature. They have a lot of kingdom experiences. They are going to have a lot greater capacity for humility, for diligence, for having the right perspective. The Lord is going to require of them to have it.

Some folks have been in the kingdom for years, and they are still just, you know, really indulging in self-pity all the time, thinking about how bad they have it. The Lord might say, “Man, you have been with Me for years. I am going to ask you to respond to Me according to someone who has walked with Me for forty years, who has been hearing teaching for twenty, thirty, forty years, someone through whom I have done miracles. You just cannot just be self-indulgent in your bitterness and your self-pity. You have to respond to Me because I have given you more over the years.”

He is going to say that to different people on the last day. For some of them, it is going to shock them. They are going to say, “Well, you know, they did not like me very much at the church.”

The Lord would say, “I liked you.”

“Well, they did not pay attention to me. No one did.”

“I paid attention to you.”

“Well, I did not have anything.”

“Yeah, you have the Holy Spirit, and I put people in front of you all the time, broken and poor people. You just ignored them because you were always licking your wounds all the time.”

VI. PRINCIPLE #12: SOME WILL SUFFER LOSS AT THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST

- A. Some will suffer the loss of rewards that could be received (1 Cor. 3:15; 2 Jn. 8; Rev. 3:11; 16:15). Suffering loss does not involve physical suffering, but forfeiting potential rewards—by neglecting God’s will or refusing to repent of sinful activities, or not persevering in our calling.

¹⁵***If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved... (1 Cor. 3:15)***

⁸***Watch out that you do not lose what you have worked for but that you may be rewarded fully. (2 Jn. 8, NIV)***

Let’s move on to the next point, principle twelve. Principle twelve, some will suffer loss at the judgment seat. I do not think it is a reward they had gained and then the Lord said, “Sorry, I am taking that from you.” You know, using the Olympic analogy that Paul is using of the bema seat where the athlete gets the gold, silver, or the bronze medal—that is kind of the temporal application of it—He is not going to say, “Hey, you won the

bronze metal, but I am taking it back now because you did something a few years later.” I do not think that is what it is. I think the loss of reward is the loss of rewards that could have been potentially received. I think it is the loss of what would have been. That is real.

The loss does not involve physical suffering. I have had people ask, “Suffering? Is it like purgatory? Do we have a little time out down in the hot section?” No, no, it is not talking about physical suffering. I believe it is talking about the forfeiture of the potential rewards.

Look at 2 John 8. I gave you a few verses, actually. We will look at this hopefully a bit more. I am hoping to spend a whole session of the eight sessions on this whole idea of loss. There is so many rewards to cover, and we only have five sessions to go, so okay. 2 John 8, watch out, he says, that you do not lose what you have worked for, that you may be rewarded fully. Do not get in a trajectory after going in the right way, walking in the spirit, growing in your humility, growing in wisdom, your diligence is increasing, and then you stumble in compromise, you get into bitterness, and, ugh, you start licking your wounds. You are feeling sorry for yourself. Or you get into condemnation, and you just put yourself into timeout for two years. In that sense that you pause, you are losing that which was well within your reach. That is the idea I believe he is talking about.

- B. Jesus warned believers not to allow anyone to take their crown—perhaps by allowing themselves to be influenced by those who promote a view of Scripture that leads to compromise, resulting in losing their crown or other rewards that they could have gained.

¹¹Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. (Rev. 3:11)

Look at Revelation 3:11. Jesus says it really strongly in verse 11, “Hold fast that no one take your crown.” A crown, somebody takes it? Like, what? Now He is not saying you have your crown and you are just enjoying yourself one day, and some unsuspecting believer sneaks up behind you and steals it and runs to the other park or something. He is not talking about that. He is not talking about someone taking your crown off your head in the New Jerusalem.

Here is what I think He means, and I have it written here. I think that if you allow somebody to influence you with their teaching, their views of Scripture that promote compromise—I mean it is almost always compromise in the grace of God. I have said it like a broken record. I am most concerned by the distorted grace message that is exploding in the church in the last ten years. It is grievous beyond measure how many fiery saints are getting captured by religious rhetoric with the word “grace” in it, where they start drifting into compromise. They have a group of people applauding so they must be right—you accept that persuasion and settle into compromise, beloved, that teacher stole your crown from you because you gave yourself to that way of thinking. That is what I believe He is talking about.

Jesus said it in Matthew 16 a little differently, “Blessed is he who watches and keeps his garments lest he walk naked and they see his shame.” Again, we will look at this in more detail, I am thinking, in the last session. Session eight I am going to reserve for the whole bit of loss. I believe they do not lose their salvation. That is not what it is talking about. It is talking about the forfeiture of that which could have been theirs.

There are quite a number of verses on it which are mostly unknown in the Body of Christ or just ignored. They will not go away when we stand before the Lord; they will be there. So it is the same old thing, “Lord, shock me now! Do not shock me then! I love Your leadership, whatever You say it is right. I am going to go with what You say. So I want to learn it now, I want to teach it now, and I want to live as though what You said is true.”

VII. PRINCIPLE #13: THE FULLNESS OF REWARDS FOR OVERCOMERS (REV. 2-3)

- A. Jesus mentioned 18 eternal rewards in Revelation 2-3 for overcomers. Who are these overcomers? If these rewards are automatically received *in fullness* by all without regard to being faithful, then the warnings associated with not gaining specific rewards are “empty,” with no real loss for those who do not repent in the ways Jesus indicated. It seems that most of the 18 rewards will be received by all believers *in part* and that only overcomers will receive them in the *fullest* measure.

Principle thirteen, the fullness of rewards for overcomers. I am going to be brief on this because I will leave it for you to read here. Jesus mentioned eighteen rewards in Revelation 2-3. In Revelation 2-3 He tied these rewards specifically to specific actions. He said that if you do this—you overcome this issue—you will get this reward. So the question is, who are these overcomers, because Jesus put forth the idea being an overcomer related to a very specific issue to overcome that was predominant in that culture at that time in that part of the Body of Christ. Who are these overcomers? If everybody automatically is the overcomer, then Jesus’ warnings of “You better repent,” are empty. They do not mean anything if everybody is automatically overcoming anyway. Some Bible teachers do present that every believer is the overcomer and get all these rewards in fullness. However, Jesus’ specific warnings and exhortations, “You need to repent of this and overcome,” mean nothing with that point of view. I think that point of view is a wrong one and is one that steals motivation. I think that overcoming has very specific elements of response to it. You can look a little bit more of that on your own.

- B. Overcomers are spoken of in two different contexts in the New Testament (1 Jn. 4-5; Rev. 2-3).

Look at John’s teaching. John the apostle presents overcomers in two different contexts.

1. **Context #1: Overcoming worldly unbelief:** All believers are overcomers in this general way. In this context, John wrote of overcoming the world by believing in Jesus and refusing the heresies that John confronted in his epistle, namely, that Jesus was not God and did not come in the flesh (1 Jn. 5:4-5). The issue here is to *overcome heresies* by believing in Jesus.

4For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. 5Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? (1 Jn. 5:4-5)

Context number one, he talks about overcoming the world or overcoming unbelief. He ties this in with overcoming unbelief. All believers are overcomers by this definition. In this context, John wrote of overcoming the world. The way he identified overcoming the world was by believing in Jesus and refusing the heresies of that day that He was not the Son of God and He did not come in the flesh. He wrote that if you believe in Him as who He says He is, you have overcome. In this context here in 1 John 5, he is talking about overcoming heresy and unbelief.

2. **Context #2: Overcoming unfaithfulness:** Not all believers overcome in this specific way. John wrote of overcoming areas of unfaithfulness in a believer’s life as specifically defined in different ways in each of the seven letters to the churches in Revelation (Rev. 2-3).

Number two, the second context is the one we are referring to in the book of Revelation. This is John writing again, but it is from the lips of Jesus. It is talking about overcoming unfaithfulness. Not all believers overcome unfaithfulness. There are many believers who continue unfaithful in an area of their life until the end, but they are still believers and they are still in the eternal city. Now, what I mean by they are overcome by an area of

unfaithfulness is that the Lord has convicted them, the Lord has highlighted it to them, He has told them over and over, but they have just settled into a pattern where they are not going to change it. They say, “Lord, I love You; You love me. Just deal with it.”

He would say, “Okay, we will deal with it,” but that is called not overcoming.

- C. **Summary:** We **overcome unbelief** and the world on the day we are born again (1 Jn. 5:4-5).
As believers, we **overcome unfaithfulness** after we persevere in obedience to the end of our life.

So we overcome the world in unbelief the day we are born again. As believers, we overcome unfaithfulness as we persevere to the end of our life. So there are two different contexts of the overcomers. You can read more of that on your own.

- D. The application of rewards to overcomers—three different interpretations

1. **The eternal reward view:** It rightly teaches that the 18 rewards in Revelation 2-3 are given in fullness to overcomers in eternity related to their faithfulness in loving and obeying Jesus.
2. **The all believers view:** It teaches that all believers are overcomers who inherit the fullness of all 18 rewards by virtue of simply believing in Jesus for salvation. Faith in Jesus rather than faithfulness to Him is emphasized by this view. I do not believe this is the best interpretation.
3. **The loss of salvation view:** It teaches that failing to overcome in the specific ways highlighted in Revelation 2-3 disqualifies one from the rewards that are supposedly synonymous with salvation. This implies that one must overcome all spiritual immaturity to avoid losing their salvation. For example: to the church in Ephesus, overcoming meant recovering their first love for Jesus (2:4). According to this view, someone would lose their salvation if they died before faithfully renewing their first love. To the church in Pergamos, overcoming meant resisting all immorality (2:14). According to this view, a sincere believer who died before fully overcoming in their struggle with pornography loses their salvation. To the church in Sardis overcoming meant being watchful and holding fast to what God gave them in previous years (3:2), and to the Laodiceans it meant overcoming lukewarmness to the end (Rev. 3:15).

VIII. PRINCIPLE #14: REWARDS HAVE CORRESPONDENCE WITH OUR RELATIONSHIPS

- A. Our history with people will be cherished (1 Thes. 2:19; cf. Lk. 16:9; 2 Cor. 4:14; Phil. 2:16).
The rich man in Hades remembered his family (Lk. 16:23-28)—others will also be able to do this.

¹⁹*What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? (1 Thes. 2:19)*

¹⁴*knowing that He...will also raise us up with Jesus and will present us with you. (2 Cor. 4:14)*

¹⁵*that you may become blameless ...you shine as lights in the world, ¹⁶holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not...labored in vain. (Phil. 2:15-16)*

Principle fourteen, this is an exciting one. This is really an exciting one. Our rewards have some correspondence with our earthly relationships. Meaning, the people we know, we interface with, we serve, the

people we support and give money to, the memory of it and the cherished value of that will be alive in our relationships in the age to come, and that is a beautiful thing.

Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 2:19, “What is our hope? What is our joy? What is our rejoicing? It is you.” He went on, in effect, “When we stand before the Lord, and we see you, we say, ‘Oh Lord, you know Bill! He walked with God; he came all the way through, yes!’” We will hug each other. The Lord will honor Paul in part for Bill’s progress as well as honor Bill and the love they had. That will be real. Our relationships in this age are not all forgotten.

The reason I am saying this is that when we understand eternal rewards it needs to be in a relational context as well. You will know these people. The Lord will remember this teaching right here. I will talk to some of you, and we will remember this conversation in our resurrected minds in the age to come. We will remember this. I hope one of you comes up to me and says, “Hey, you know that one thing you said? I did it, and it was right. Unbelievable.” We will high-five each other with our resurrected bodies and say, “Man, we did it!” Something like that, I do not know how it works.

Look at 2 Corinthians 4:14. Paul said, “Knowing this, He will raise us up with Jesus. Look, He will present us with you.” The people you are connected with in the kingdom in one way, not your entire presentation standing before the Lord, but there is a corporate dimension of people standing together in their generation in their ministry assignment. They rejoice and they stand together in an element of the report at the judgment seat on the last day. I mean, we stand as individuals, but we are presented together as a facet of our rewards on that day, what we did together. God gives churches and ministries mandates and assignments. They celebrate together when they stayed faithful to those assignments. That is a beautiful reality.

- B. Jesus speaks of *friends* receiving us, after death, into their eternal homes. He was exhorting His people to spend their money to make friends who would welcome us in heaven after we die. The godly use of money will enhance your relationships in the age to come with those you helped.

...make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail [physical death], they may receive you into an everlasting home. (Lk. 16:9)

This is an interesting one, Jesus taught a parable, and then He gave the application. He said, as it were, “Let Me tell you what that parable means.” He said, “Make friends for yourself by giving your money, so that when you fail”—physical death—“the people you bless will receive you in their eternal dwellings in the age to come.”

The money you are giving to somebody over there to do the work of the ministry is touching people. The people that are being touched by that missionary you are supporting, they are going to actually connect the dots and invite you over for dinner. They are going to invite you to their dwelling and say, “Hey, you do not even know this: you supported Bill and Bill touched me. Thank you.” Because all of the story will be told, all of the dots will be connected.

So Jesus was exhorting His people to spend their money in a way to make friends. The godly use of money will enhance our relationships because people will have fond remembrance of the money we gave. They will, with affection and fondness, remember and say, “Thank you.”

You may say, “I do not even remember giving that.” Like, this is amazing! This is beautiful!

- C. By financially supporting people, we become fellow workers, or partners, in their labors, including their rewards (3 Jn. 6-8).

⁶*...If you send them forward on their journey in a manner worthy of God, you will do well...*
⁸*We therefore ought to receive such, that we may become fellow workers for the truth. (3 Jn. 6-8)*

John talks about “your fellow workers” when you support people in a way that is worthy of the Lord financially. They are your fellow workers, not just in their labors, but in their reward.

D. We can receive a prophet’s reward by receiving and supporting a prophet.

⁴¹*He who receives a prophet...shall receive a prophet’s reward. And he who receives a righteous man... shall receive a righteous man’s reward. (Mt. 10:41)*

Jesus talked about receiving a prophet’s reward, receiving a righteous man’s reward. That is done by supporting and standing with prophets and righteous people. There may be a person in your neighborhood, not a part of your ministry at all, but they are taking a stand and you are standing with them. You can inherit some of their reward by standing with them, not backing away, but standing and taking some of the pressure. You say, “Brother, you know I do not know you that well, but the stand you are taking, it touches me. I am standing with you.”

The Lord says, “You do that, you are going to share some of their reward.” Not their full reward but some of it.

IX. PRINCIPLE #15: THE WAY WE JUDGE OTHERS IMPACTS HOW WE ARE JUDGED

A. The measure of judgment with which we judge others influences the standard of judgment that we will receive (Mt. 7:2). Thus, we can determine some of the way in which we are judged by Jesus.

²*For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.” (Mt. 7:2)*

Finally, principle fifteen, the way we judge others will impact how we are judged. Now that is not the total standard, but it does impact the way we are judged. What do I mean by that? Jesus said in Matthew 7:2, “With what judgement you use against other people, that is the standard that will be used against you.” So if you are harsh and you are overly strict, there is going to be an element of that judgement coming your way. Now, not the whole of our judgement will be that way, but He said, “I will let your words determine some of what you believe is right.” If you are zealous about putting that person in their place, but you are doing something similar—the same principle but a different application—then let it be known by your own words that is a standard you think is worthy of negative judgement because you said it with your own mouth against her. So it will be applied on your account; it will be in the conversation. People do not lose their salvation over it.

I want to stand before the Lord saying, “Man, I was tender. I was merciful to people.”

The Lord might say, “Yeah, you vocalized that. We have a lot of that written in the book here. You were tender, and you were merciful. Ooh, a couple times, but you repented of it. You went to the guy and said you were sorry, so it is off the books. That is good. That is good.”

You see, what you are really doing when you are judging that gal over there, you are saying with your own words, “That is a standard of zealous righteousness I cannot live with.”

The Lord says, as it were, “Okay, then we will take you into account on that standard. Though it may be a different application, I am going to hold you accountable because they are your own words.” That is a real issue.

- B. We are only to judge or point out negative things to people with the goal of restoring them. We must judge others with the *right spirit*, in the *right process*, and with the *right information*.
¹ ***...if a man is overtaken in any trespass...restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness... (Gal. 6:1)***
- C. We are to judge or evaluate people with the “law of liberty,” instead of being harsh and exacting.
¹²***So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty.*** ¹³***For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment. (Jas. 2:12-13)***

In James 2:12, James says, “So speak and so act as those that will be judged by the law of liberty.” James is warning them to talk and act by the law of liberty. Judge people by the law of liberty because that is the law that you want to be judged with.

- D. In a parable, Jesus described how a wicked servant increased judgment on himself by his words.
²²***And he said to him, ‘Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. (Lk. 19:22)***

In one of the parables, one of the servants charged his lord. The lazy servant said, “You are an unfair king, an unfair judge.”

The lord replied, “Okay, out of your own mouth, if that is what you say about me, then you are going to receive a judgment that is according to your own words.”

Now I do not know how all this works or how it all plays out. There are enough passages on it that say our judgments play into it in part. I mean, our judgments do not nullify the gift of righteousness and the free grace of God, our entrance into heaven, nothing like that. When it comes to rewards, and we get more or less, the way that we considered others worthy of judgment by our own words, the Lord will say, “I will take some of that into account when I measure you.” So I just want to be really careful.

The good news is you can get in a bad mood and say, “That brother! blah-blah-blah,” and you can repent of it. Get it off the record. Say that it was wrong. Go to the guy you said it to and say, “You know, that was really wrong.”

The Lord would say, “Okay, it is off the record then. If that is how you want to be about it, it is off the record.” So if you get in a funny mood, go clean it up.

Amen and amen! Let’s stand before the Lord. I really hope you will go and study this stuff, because this is kind of rapid fire, you know, these two sessions, fifteen principles. Like, what? I want this to kind of germinate in your heart and your understanding.

Ask the Holy Spirit, “What part of this is really You, Lord?” I always tell people not to accept anything that you cannot see with your own eyes in your own Bible. Find out how much of what I said is really here. Then say, “I have to let this grow in me. If this is what God says in these Bible verses, then I want to be ready, I want to be prepared for that day.”

Father, we say yes to Your leadership. We love Your leadership. Lord, we say we thank You for the grace of God. We ask You again tonight: wash us with the grace of God. Lord, I want to renounce attitudes and words and compromises 100 percent.

When we pray, we want to be specific, not general like I just was.

Lord, we want to be really specific. We love Your leadership! We love Your leadership!

So we are going to take a few moments and just wait on the Lord here. I am going to invite people to come for ministry.

Holy Spirit, just come. We ask You for your manifested glory even right now. Come and touch us now, Lord.