Oct. 1, 2020

Greeting to all . . .

 I hope this letter finds you in good health and spirit. Last month’s letter, “Beyond the Tribulation”, I know it was rather long and I apologize but there is so much information in scripture that separating it into a two-month topic could not very well keep your mind on the timeline of events. With that said, let’s continue with our next “Bible Scripture Letter”.

Ever heard the saying “You can’t take it with you” or “Death and Taxes are the only sure thing”?. Well, the Bible proves all those sayings wrong. As Christians, we know that when we die, we will be present with our Lord -  **2 Corinthians 5:8** and we will be seeing Our Lord God face-to-face - how awesome is that. So, what do we take with us to heaven when we die? Our deeds. What we did for Him while living here on earth. Our deeds equal our “Rewards,” and Our God does not forget our deeds. **Hebrews 6:10** says: for God is not unrighteous to forget your work and the love which you showed toward his name.

 Our “Rewards” will be waiting for us in heaven and that’s what our Bible Scripture Letter for this month is about. So, let’s go see what scripture has to say.

**Rewards**

**Bible Scripture Letter #6**

*(Verses are taken from English Standard Version – ESV)*

When I first read about rewards, I wondered why rewards were given in heaven? Just being in the present of Our Lord God would be good enough for me. The Bible mentions rewards in heaven multiple times, too many to mention, but at the end of this Letter, I’ll give you a website where there is more scripture than what I have written about “Rewards”.

Most Christians including myself, do or did not fully realize that we are all going to have to give an account to Jesus for everything that we have ever done here on this earth – all of the good with all of the bad. This is not to say our salvation is lost, no-remember we are already in heaven and it’s at this time we will receive rewards.

 Other questions I had were what types of rewards and when would we get them? In this Bible Scripture Letter, I’ll give you some answers to **Types of Rewards**, **Why,** and **When** per scripture.

**Types of Rewards**

1. Crown of Righteousness – Those seeking Heaven as their home

**II Timothy 4 : 8**

* Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

2. Crown of Glory - Those in ministry serving the Lord as Pastors, elders, deacons, team

 leaders and so on.

**1 Peter 5 : 4**

* And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

3. Crown of Life – Those who trump over persecution, temptation, martyrdom by given them

 life for their faith

**James 1 : 12**

* Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.

**Rev. 2 : 10**

* Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.

4. Victor’s Crown - Focusing on God. Having self-discipline on the good that Our Lord has

 given us and away from the evil in the world.

**1 Corinthians 9 : 25 – 27**

* **25** Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.
* **26** So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air.
* **27** But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

5. Crown of Joy– Awarded to those who bring others to Christ.

**1 Thessalonians 2 : 19 – 20**

* **19** For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you?
* **20** For you are our glory and joy.

**Why** are we are given rewards

Rewards will be given for faithfulness or loss of unfaithfulness depending on how one has used his life for the Our Lord God. If you do a lot with what God has given you; you will get a greater reward in Heaven meaning as our deeds increase, our reward increases as well. You might ask, how will this be so? Your rewards will be tested by “Fire”. Fire is used in Scripture as a symbol of judgment.

**1 Corinthians 3 : 13**

* **13** each one’s work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done.

Christians have always been persecuted then and now, but Paul and Matthew give us insight as to what we are to expect. Paul tells us we are in Christ but our wages (rewards) differ to our labor we perform while on earth.

**1 Corinthians 3 : 8**

* He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor.

**Matthew 5 : 11 - 12**

* **11**  “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.
* **12**  Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

And finally, God makes good on His promise that our labor in the Lord is not in vain

[**1 Corinthians 15 : 58**](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor%2015.58)

* Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

**When** will these rewards come to be?

God will give rewards in heaven at the [bema](https://www.gotquestions.org/judgment-seat-Christ.html), or the judgment seat of Christ, based on our faithfulness in service to Him. This is a judgment to determine our rewards. The sins of believers will not be an issue at this judgment. All has been forgiven.

**1 Corinthians 3: 13 – 15**

* **12**  each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done.
* **14** If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward.
* **15**  If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

[**2 Corinthians 5:10**](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Cor%205.10)

* For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

This next paragraph I had it in my notes. I don’t remember where I got it but I saved it because it explained very clearly the purpose of the Judgment we are to receive.

*It is not punitive. It is not to judge believers for sin of any kind, confessed or unconfessed. “Scripture teaches that for the believer God’s justice has already been fully and forever satisfied at the Cross in relation to the believer’s sins. If God were to punish the believer judicially for his sins for which Christ has already rendered payment, He would be requiring two payments for sin and would therefore be unjust. Such a concept (punishment for sin) erroneously disparages the all-sufficiency of Christ’s death on the cross.” Christ paid the penalty for the believer’s pre- and post-conversion sins. The believer will forfeit rewards which he could have received, but he will not be punished in the judicial sense of “paying” for his sins.*

As promised, here is a website where you’ll find additional verses about “Rewards.”

https://www.openbible.info/topics/reward

Your Brother in Christ, Tony Gonzalez

**1 Peter 3:15**

but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, **always being prepared to make a defense** to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,