

Bible Doctrines (The True-Good-Beautiful)

T/G/B

- Eschatology
- Thanatology
- Ecclesiology
- Israelology
- Dispensationalism
- Doxology
- Hodology
- Soteriology
- Hamartiology
- Natural Law
- Anthropology
- Angelology
- Pneumatology
- Christology
- Paterology
- Trinitarianism
- Cosmology
- Theology Proper
- Bibliology
- Natural Theology

Psalm 73:22-25. The believer’s amphibious animal/Godlike capacities.

3 Parts to Bible Class: the need to move for the Whole Truth, the Total Truth.

Part I: Spiritual foundations: the metaphysical foundations of love, the supreme Christian virtue/ethic.

Part II: Philosophical foundations: the error of making the linguistic sign the ground of reality.

Part III: Doctrinal development. EP: The WT, TT re: judgment passages addressed to believers.

Part I: Spiritual foundations: philosophical exegesis of 1 Cor 2:9, “those who love Him.”

1. The greatest virtue in the Bible/Christianity is love. It is not only the greatest virtue, it is the root, hinge, and efficient cause of all other virtues, cf., 1 Cor. 13. Without love, there is no virtue.
2. Ergo, it is imperative for every believer to grasp the universal, univocal understanding of love that is so vital to fellowship with and growth in God, and enjoyment of a relationship with Him.
3. Neither the Bible, nor Hebrew or Greek lexicons, nor English dictionaries provide universal, univocal definitions. A universal definition applies to the word regardless of where it is found. Compare 1 Cor. 13 with John 3:19 and 2 Tim 4:10, then compare these passage with 1 Cor. 2:9.
4. There are 4 causes to all things: final cause, formal cause, material cause, and efficient cause. Our focus will be on the formal and efficient causes of love on the human side.
5. The formal cause of love is the intellect, cognition. The intellect provides the content. One cannot love what one does not know. But knowing something is not love in and of itself.
6. The efficient cause of love is the will. The will is the appetite of the soul and it operates in two spheres: sense/animal appetite love and intellective/spiritual appetite love.
7. The locus of love is in the will. The will is the efficient cause that garners the powers, focus and attention so that all other actions move to a perceived good—licit or illicit. The more a person loves something, the more he will bring all of his powers to move to the perceived good.
8. Theologically speaking, the human race can be divided into two camps: those who love and God prefer God to self and those who prefer self to God. Evil consists of turning the will to another good that is perceived as a greater good than God (self, pleasures, mammon, the world).
9. Again, love for God is viewing God (not His gifts) as the greatest good in life. This is characterized by a desire to move closer and closer God for no other reason than He is the greatest good.

Prayer: The need for the HS to raise the mind and the will for 2nd person fellowship.

5: Hermeneutics

4: Language-62

3: Epistemology 32

- Existence 50

- History 50

2:Metaphysics 32

- Trans. 50

1: Reality

- Logic 32,

- Truth 32

Philosophy of Language (62): The Linguistic Sign

Outline

- ✓ Introduction
- ✓ What is philosophy of language?
- ✓ Theories of meaning
- ✓ Plato (428-348 BC)
 - Cratylus
- ✓ Aristotle (384-322 BC)

Modern theories of meaning

Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913)

Gottlob Frege (1848-1925)

Bertrand Russell (1872-1970)

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951).

Martin Heidegger (1889-1976).

W. V. O. Quine (1908-2000).

Noam Chomsky (1928-)

Realist view of meaning.

Foundation of meaning.

Communication of meaning.

Elements of language.

Function of language

Meaningful God-talk.

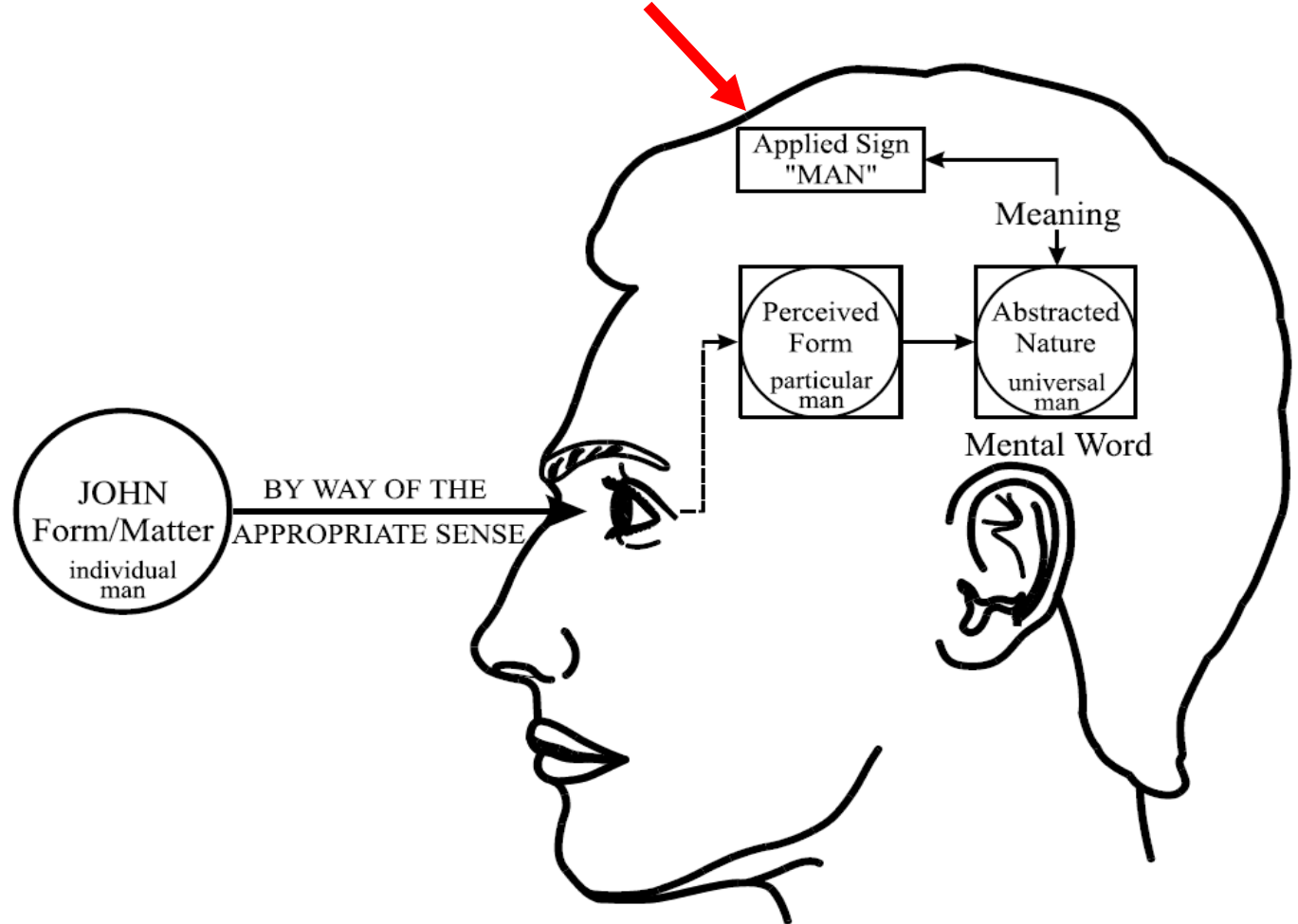
Analytic Philosophy

Conclusion.

Analogy.

Metaphysical analogy.

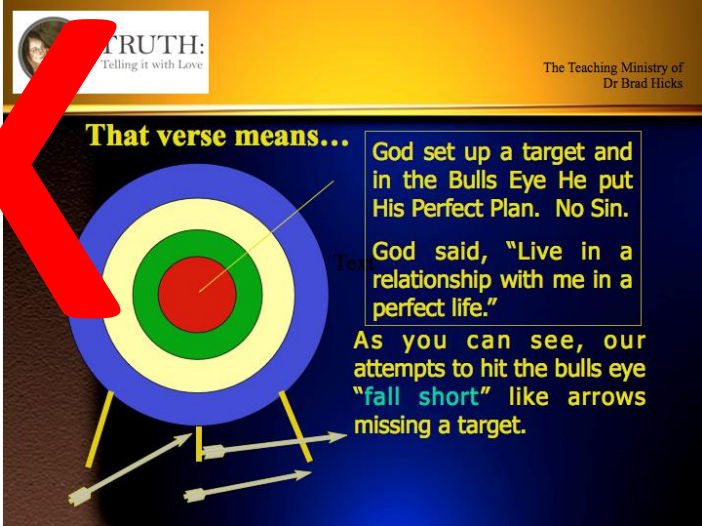
Current focus: the linguistic sign



By Thomas Howe

1. It is a grave error to ground reality/meaning in the linguistic sign. Recall that the linguistic sign, according to the Realist, is the nametag given to an object that has been abstracted directly from reality and resides in the pre-linguistic mental word.
2. It is not like the modern error of constructing reality on words is new. This fallacy harkens back to the *Cratylus*, which was a hot topic 500 years before the incarnation of Christ. However, due to anti-intellectualism (rejection of philosophy) countless pastors and believers continue with fallacious exegesis, which results in false views of God, creation, man, and the spiritual life. Thus, corrupting the very Word of God they claim to live through the insidious nature of anti-intellectualism. Moreover, believers are left with notions that they enjoy because they bring some positive experience.

3. Consider the Greek word for sin, ἁμαρτία (ἄ = not + μαρτία = mark), which according to many “Bible-only” exegetes means merely “to miss the mark. i.e. the bullseye’s of the target.” Yes, it is used in secular Greek in that way, but that is not central Biblical meaning. It is not as if people are trying to hit the mark, see Rom. 3:9-23. Were Adam and Eve trying to hit the mark? What about David with Bathsheba? What about those of Sodom and Gomorrah? What about those in Romans 1? When we confess our sins, are we confessing how we tried to hit the mark but missed? “Falling short” has nothing to do with attempts to hit the bullseye.



4. While such *Cratylean* exegetical fallacies are becoming better known in contemporary Evangelicalism than in previous generations, the solutions offered fail to provide an *objective* solution due to lack of understanding of abstraction and the pre-linguistic mental word. After a discussion of the fallacies of *hamartia*, note the advice given by Ligonier ministries:

“Therefore, a good word study will evaluate many contexts to determine the range of meanings and/or overlapping meaning available to the writer/speaker during a specific time period. This is the function of a dictionary. A good interpreter then takes the available range of meanings for a word and applies this to the context to get the proper specific meaning of the word in the context”

(<http://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/word-study-fallacies/>).

5. While there is obvious value in studying words in the various contexts, the advice to discover meanings in dictionaries is at best subjective. The problem is recognized, but apart from the abstraction as per philosophical realism, there is no anchoring into objective reality and no objective meaning for biblical realities.
6. Without understanding philosophy of language, the Bible believer continues to produce subjective word studies out of linguistic signs. All dictionaries do is provide options for our theological grids. We simply drill down to universal definitions for true objectivity.
7. Consider how easy it is to reject God's Word once one is not committed to the Total Truth, Whole Truth.

Overview of rewards and inheritance and disinheritance in the Millennium

Judgment Seat of Jesus Christ:

1 Cor. 3:10-15; 2 Cor. 5:10-11; Rom 14:10-12; Matt 6:19-21;

2 Jn 1:8; Rev. 19:7-9: → **Gain** or **loss** of rewards

Rapture
↑
Church Age

Tribulation
7 years

Gaining Rewards= partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the millennial and eternal states: Col 3:22-24; Matt. 5:1-13; 6:4, 6, 18; 1 Tim. 6:17-19; Lk 19:17; 22:29-30; 1 Cor. 9:7-9; 2 Tim 2:12a; 4:8; 2 Pet. 1:2-11; Rev 2:7, 10, 26; 3:11, 21.

Loss of rewards/inheritance: Matt. 22:12-14; 2 Tim 2:12b; Gal. 5:19-21; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; Mat. 10:33; 24:51; 25:14-30.

The Millennial Kingdom (1,000 yrs)

New Heaven & New Earth

Revelation 21:4 "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

Revelation 22:14 Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.

Eternal Kingdom

Part III: Heaven 57 (EP: EP: The Whole Truth, Total Truth regarding judgment passages address to the believer)

1. In the Old and New Testaments, Jesus is portrayed as meek, gentle (Matt. 11:28-30), forgiving (John 4:14), and as the Lamb of God (Rev. 5:6) who offers the water of salvation to anyone who is thirsty without cost (Rev. 21:6).
2. However, the same Jesus is also depicted in the New Testament as demanding or strict with regard to the believer's life and works (Rev. 2:1-5, 8-10, 12-16, 18-26; 3:1-5, 7-12, 14-21).
3. The same Bible that says that the Word of God is alive and powerful is the same Bible that says that it holds us accountable for our lives, Heb. 4:12-13. He gives us His Word. We will have to give Him our word about our lives.

4. God employs three motivations for the Christian.
 - a) #1: Love: A supernatural desire to please God in all of the details of life, Eph. 5:10; Gal. 2:20. Such a believer sees and seeks God as his supreme good of his life to the extent that he lives to please Him in all things. His love for God causes him to bring all of his powers to draw closer to God to please Him in all daily things. This person lives in the enjoyment of pleasing God regardless of the consequences.
 - b) #2: Rewards: A supernatural desire for recognition and honor that testify to love and faithfulness to the Lord (2 Tim 4:8; Rev. 3:21).
 - c) #3: Fear: Fear of punishment in time, shame at the JSJC, and certain restrictions or sanctions throughout all of eternity (John 15:6; 2 Jn 8).

5. There are three positions regarding the warning passages about sin in the Bible that are addressed to believers
 - a) The Reformed position: the warnings are for those who are “professors” of Christ but not “possessors” of Christ. This is a also dominant position in our camp.
 - b) The Arminian position: the warnings are for true believers who can lose their salvation. This is found in Wesleyan tradition.
 - c) The Partaker/inheritance position: the warnings are for true believers, but the warnings refer to judgment in time and lose of rewards at the JSJC, the Millennium, and the eternal state. This is my position.

6. Let's examine the various passages and note each of the three views.

a. Galatians 5:19-21. Note the virtue of love in 5:14 (for concurrence).

1) Overview of the 3 positions

- Reformed: the person was never really saved.
- Arminian: the believer loses his salvation.
- Partakers: the believer loses inheritance.

2) What the linguistic sign "practice" (πράσσοντες) tells us about these sins.

3) Consider this implications of this passage as far as what is expected of a believer's character and the eternal ramifications.

- a) The 3 sexual vices. See 1 Thess. 4:3; 1 Cor. 6:18.
- b) The 2 religious vices.
- c) The 8 vices with regard to others.
- d) The 2 vices associated with alcohol.

- b. 1 Corinthians 6:9 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites,¹⁰ nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.
- 1) Reformed: refers to unbelievers, if someone is in one of these categories, then that just proves they were never saved.
 - 2) Arminian: refers to believers who lose their salvation.
 - 3) Partaker/Inheritance: 'inherit the kingdom' is different from entering the kingdom.
 - 4) Does it "make sense" to tell Corinthians that they should not be deceived about unbelievers going to Hell? Is it possible for a believer to be a homosexual, a fornicator, or covetous? If so, then do they lose their salvation.

c. Matthew 22:1-13

- 1) Reformed: refers to unbelievers, who are cast in Hell because they were not clothed in righteousness of God. However, how is it that unbelievers are even in the Kingdom? Or that they are called friend, servant, or guest? According to the Reformers, this man did not persevere and therefore was shown not to be a true believer.
- 2) Arminian: they use this passage to prove one can be saved and still lose salvation.
- 3) Partaker/Inheritance: he is a believer because he responded (22:10) and is actually at the wedding banquet; Jesus said no one can even get in the Kingdom except he is born again (Jn 3:10); the nature of the garment is found in Rev 19:7-8, which precedes this event; the text actually says “the darkness outside [of the banquet hall]” and should be distinguished with darkness associated with Hell; the binding refers to exclusion from activity of reigning with Messiah. Consider the implications.

d. Hebrews 5:11-6:12

- 1) Reformed have exercised great ingenuity in attempts to deal with this passage and making it say these individuals were never true believers.
- 2) Arminians: few passages have had greater impact on Arminian thinking than this fearful warning. Between the first two views, the Arminian view is far more biblical as far as seeing the passage as a reference to believers.
- 3) Partaker/Inheritance: refers to genuine believers who are warned about the real possibility of apostasy and divine discipline. After he gives a grave warning to believers, he says in effect 'but I am sure I do not have to worry about you apostatizing.'
- 4) Consider the eternal implications of not really advancing in the spiritual life.

7. Four truths regarding God's judgment of the believer.

- a. #1: All believers are perfectly loved and accepted in Christ forever regardless of what they do or don't do with their lives. This is the grace of God. Every believer is free from condemnation with regard to his sins
- b. #2: Even though the believer is permanently and perfectly loved and accepted by God, God is very demanding regarding the believer's stewardship. There is a punishment in terms of negative consequences of losing rewards. The warnings are explicit regarding a final and eternal accountability for believers' lives.
- c. #3: The believer who keeps walking in the light and advancing in love for God has no need for concern. Even if he experiences some regret, he will receive the final commendation "Well, done," and thus will be filled with joy and gratitude.
- d. #4: As far as wiping every tear, this occurs after the Millennium. In eternity there will be no tears, all will be happy, but some cups will be more full than others.

8. More passages on judgment (not condemnation) of the believer.

Hebrews 10:26 For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷ but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. ²⁸ Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on *the testimony of* two or three witnesses. ²⁹ Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? ³⁰ For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The LORD will judge His people." ³¹ It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. ¹¹ Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord,

Romans 14:10 But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. ¹¹ For it is written: "As I live, says the LORD, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God." ¹² So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.

Matthew 18:33 `Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' ³⁴ "And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. ³⁵ "So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."

Matthew 6:14 "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ "But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

Matthew 24:45 "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? ⁴⁶ "Blessed *is* that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. ⁴⁷ "Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. ⁴⁸ "But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' ⁴⁹ "and begins to beat *his* fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, ⁵⁰ "the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for *him* and at an hour that he is not aware of, ⁵¹ "and will cut him in two and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 10:32 "Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. ³³ "But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.

1 Peter 1:3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

9. God is serious regarding the stewardship of our lives.

- a. We are live as God's people. This must define our lives. We are the people of God and are not to live like unbelievers. It is unfortunate that some "grace movements" do not take sin seriously in an attempt to be more accepted by the world.

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for *God's* own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰ for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. ¹¹ Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul. ¹² Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may on account of your good deeds, as they observe *them*, glorify God in the day of visitation.

b. We should fear being disqualified!

Corinthians 9:24 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain *it*.²⁵ And everyone who competes *for the prize* is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a perishable crown, but we *for* an imperishable crown.²⁶ Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as *one who* beats the air.²⁷ But I discipline my body and bring *it* into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

- ✓ Self-control, contextually, refers to sex and food, see 1 Cor. 6:13, 18.
- ✓ Why is it that an athlete's control of his body is lauded, but if one does it for God, he is mocked? Is Paul to be mocked?
- ✓ Disqualified from service in the Millennium.
- ✓ Note the following chapter.

- c. We are to live to please God in all that we do (CCL), not people. Note the concurrence (no conduit system in sight).

Ephesians 6:5 Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; ⁶ not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, ⁷ with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, ⁸ knowing that **whatever good** (ἐάν τι ποιήσῃ ἀγαθόν) anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether *he is* a slave or free. And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

d. We are to be motivated by the Lord and inheritance rewards.

Colossians 3:18ff Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. ¹⁹ Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them. ²⁰ Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord. ²¹ Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. ²² Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. ²³ And whatever you do, do it heartily (ἐκ ψυχῆς), as to the Lord and not to men, ²⁴ **knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance**; for you serve the Lord Christ. ²⁵ But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality. Masters, grant to your slaves justice and fairness, knowing that you too have a Master in heaven.

- ✓ The inheritance is consistent with the vast prophecies and promises in the Bible. The inheritance refers to estates on earth. The inheritance that God grants us is on Earth, which will be restored to man from dominion of Satan.
- ✓ Note the warning in verse 25, which is addressed to believers.

- e. We are to look forward to promised rewards for treating our enemies in grace. Also note the virtue, becoming what we are designed to be.

Luke 14:13 "But when you give a feast, invite *the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind.* ¹⁴ "And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for **you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.**"

Luke 6:35 "But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and **your reward will be plentiful**, and you will become sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil.

- ✓ Note that three *actions* are in view of becoming like the Most High in character: loving, doing good, and giving. Unbelievers, by nature are not loving, good, or giving like God.

- f. We are to place treasures in Heaven above our earthly possessions when it comes to giving to the poor.

Matthew 19:20 The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept; what am I still lacking?" ²¹ Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be complete, go *and* sell your possessions and give to *the* poor, and **you shall have treasure in heaven**; and come, follow Me." ²² But when the young man heard this statement, he went away grieved; for he was one who owned much property.

- ✓ The Catholics are wrong in saying that giving away possession earns Heaven. There were those Christ did not ask to give up possessions (Zacchaeus, Joseph of Arimathea, Ananias)
- ✓ However, they are right with their emphasis on works for virtue, which the Reformers had a real allergy to. They had a right to reject works for salvation but wrong in rejecting them for sanctification—due in part to Augustinian/Platonic ontology.

10. Note the eternal perspective of believers living in the first century regarding earthly possessions and eternal rewards.

Hebrews 10:31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. ³² But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings: ³³ partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated; ³⁴ for you had compassion on me in my chains, and **joyfully accepted the plundering of your possessions**, knowing that you have **a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven.**

- There is a play on the words “possession.” Temporal possessions vs. eternal possessions are in view.
- Christians were persecuted, jailed, and had their property confiscated.
- Heb. 13:14, For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come

11. God's judgment on us will extend to our motives.

1 Corinthians 4:5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.

- The motives of individuals will be revealed.
- However, do not automatically think that enlightened self-interest is a bad thing. It all depends if that interest is in God.
- Note the strong language against judging others' motives, especially other believers with reference to the Christian life. Why do we feel the need to say they are doing things with a false motive because they are not like us?
- The praise will be different and according to the opportunities God provides.

12. Instead of becoming vengeful when we are persecuted, Christ wants us to orient to the next life and know that great rewards await us in Heaven.

Luke 6:22 Blessed are you when men hate you, And when they exclude you, And revile *you*, and cast out your name as evil, For the Son of Man's sake. ²³ Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward *is* great in heaven, For in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.

13. Christians are exhorted to lay up treasures in Heaven by sharing their possessions with others.

1 Timothy 6:17 Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. *Let them* do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share,¹⁹ storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of eternal life indeed.

- Note the temptations that come with wealth.
- Note the enjoyment of wealth here and the future bestowment of riches in the kingdom, a wealth that is more secure (Mat. 6:19-21).
- Note the emphasis on works again.
- Note the “for themselves” (ἐαυτοῖς).

14. Note the various incentives related to the Kingdom.

Matthew 25:23 "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave; you were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'

Luke 19:17 "And he said to him, 'Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, be in authority over ten cities.'

Revelation 2:26 "And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—

Revelation 3:21 "To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

Luke 22:29 and just as My Father has granted Me a kingdom, I grant you ³⁰ that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

15. Consider God's value system revealed in His act of giving rewards.

Matthew 19:29 "And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, shall receive many times as much, and shall inherit eternal life.

Matthew 6:3 "But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴ "that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.

Matthew 6:16 "And whenever you fast, do not put on a gloomy face as the hypocrites *do*, for they neglect their appearance in order to be seen fasting by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. ¹⁷ "But you, when you fast, anoint your head, and wash your face ¹⁸ so that you may not be seen fasting by men, but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

2 Corinthians 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, ¹⁸ while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Revelation 2:7 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.'

Revelation 2:10 'Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.'

16. Consider the nature of the various crowns that are offered as rewards.

a. Crown of life for faithfulness in suffering.

James 1:12 Blessed *is* the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

Revelation 2:10 "Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw *some* of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

- b. Incorruptible crown for determination, discipline, and victory in the Christian life.

1 Corinthians 9:24 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain *it*.²⁵ And everyone who competes *for the prize* is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a perishable crown, but we *for* an imperishable *crown*.²⁶ Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as *one who* beats the air.²⁷ But I discipline my body and bring *it* into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

c. Crown of glory for faithful pastors

1 Peter 5:1 The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: ² Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; ³ nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; ⁴ and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

- d. Crown of righteousness for progressive sanctification and being ready to meet Christ at His return

2 Timothy 4:6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

17. Consider what Bible says about our attitude toward our crowns.

- a. Our crowns will be laid at Christ's feet, which highlights the fact that they are not just for our recognition, but for God's glory. Our eternal good and God's glory is always tied together.

Revelation 4:10 the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying:

- b. God tells us to guard our crowns.

Revelation 3:11 "Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.

- c. Unlike salvation, rewards can be forfeited that are already in our account.

2 John 1:8 Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for, but *that* we may receive a full reward.

Matthew 25:28 'Therefore take away the talent from him, and give it to the one who has the ten talents.'

18. Some believers will be ashamed of their lives when the Lord returns,

1 John 2:28 And now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming.

19. While all believers will be happy in Heaven, there will be an eternal differences in glory and happiness as well as in responsibilities and privileges. The vast differences in rewards will be noticeable throughout all of eternity. The differences are all forged in this life

John Bunyan, 'and why should not he who does most for God in this world enjoy most of Him in that which is to come?—because by doing and acting the heart and every faculty of the soul is enlarged and more capacitated whereby more room is made for glory. He that is the most in the bosom of God and that so acts for Him here—He is the man that will best be able to enjoy most of God in the kingdom of heaven.'

20. Note more Scripture on heavenly investments.

Philippians 4:15 And you yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone; ¹⁶ for even in Thessalonica you sent *a gift* more than once for my needs. ¹⁷ Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account.

1 Timothy 6:18 *Instruct them* to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, ¹⁹ storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.

Luke 12:33-34 "Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. 34 "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Mark 10:21, Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me."

21. Note the predicted curse of materialism of our age in which the orientation is to possessions, power, and comfort in this life rather than orienting our hearts to them in the future with Christ.

Revelation 3:15 'I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I would that you were cold or hot. ¹⁶ 'So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. ¹⁷ 'Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, ¹⁸ I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire, that you may become rich, and white garments, that you may clothe yourself, and *that* the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes, that you may see. ¹⁹ 'Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; be zealous therefore, and repent. ²⁰ 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me. ²¹ 'He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

Jeremiah 2:11 "Has a nation changed gods, When they were not gods? But My people have changed their glory For that which does not profit. ¹² "Be appalled, O heavens, at this, And shudder, be very desolate," declares the LORD. ¹³ "For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, The fountain of living waters, To hew for themselves cisterns, Broken cisterns, That can hold no water.

Ezekiel 28:4 "By your wisdom and understanding You have acquired riches for yourself, And have acquired gold and silver for your treasuries. ⁵ "By your great wisdom, by your trade You have increased your riches, And your heart is lifted up because of your riches--

Ecclesiastes 2:1 I said to myself, "Come now, I will test you with pleasure. So enjoy yourself." And behold, it too was futility.

Ecclesiastes 2:8-11 Also, I collected for myself silver and gold, and the treasure of kings and provinces. I provided for myself male and female singers and the pleasures of men-- many concubines. ⁹ Then I became great and increased more than all who preceded me in Jerusalem. My wisdom also stood by me. ¹⁰ And all that my eyes desired I did not refuse them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, for my heart was pleased because of all my labor and this was my reward for all my labor. Thus I considered all my activities which my hands had done and the labor which I had exerted, and behold all was vanity and striving after wind and there was no profit under the sun.

Ecclesiastes 5:10 He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves abundance *with its* income. This too is vanity. ¹¹ When good things increase, those who consume them increase. So what is the advantage to their owners except to look on? ¹² The sleep of the working man is pleasant, whether he eats little or much. But the full stomach of the rich man does not allow him to sleep.

Deuteronomy 31:20 "For when I bring them into the land flowing with milk and honey, which I swore to their fathers, and they have eaten and are satisfied and become prosperous, then they will turn to other gods and serve them, and spurn Me and break My covenant.

Hosea 8:14 For Israel has forgotten his Maker and built palaces; And Judah has multiplied fortified cities, But I will send a fire on its cities that it may consume its palatial dwellings.

Hosea 13:4 Yet I *have been* the LORD your God Since the land of Egypt; And you were not to know any god except Me, For there is no savior besides Me. ⁵ I cared for you in the wilderness, In the land of drought. ⁶ As *they had* their pasture, they became satisfied, And being satisfied, their heart became proud; Therefore, they forgot Me.

Psalms 52:7 "Here is the man *who* did not make God his strength, But trusted in the abundance of his riches, *And* strengthened himself in his wickedness."

Amos 5:11 Therefore, because you impose heavy rent on the poor And exact a tribute of grain from them, *Though* you have built houses of well-hewn stone, Yet you will not live in them; You have planted pleasant vineyards, yet you will not drink their wine.

Micah 6:12 For her rich men are full of violence, Her inhabitants have spoken lies, And their tongue is deceitful in their mouth.

Hebrews 13:5 Let your character be free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you,"

1 Timothy 6:7 For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. ⁸ And if we have food and covering, with these we shall be content. ⁹ But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang.

23. Note the great evil and heresy of the health, wealth, and prosperity movement, which emphasizes the pleasure, possessions, and power in this life over the next life. The prosperity gospel is nothing short of a Christianized form of materialism. Note what the Bible says about this life and the next.

Acts 14:22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting *them* to continue in the faith, and *saying*, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."

2 Timothy 3:12 And indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

Job 21:7 "Why do the wicked *still* live, Continue on, also become very powerful? ⁸ "Their descendants are established with them in their sight, And their offspring before their eyes, ⁹ Their houses are safe from fear, Neither is the rod of God on them. ... 13 They spend their days in prosperity, And suddenly they go down to Sheol.

Psalms 94:3 How long shall the wicked, O LORD, How long shall the wicked exult?

Jeremiah 12:1 Righteous art Thou, O LORD, that I would plead *my* case with Thee; Indeed I would discuss matters of justice with Thee: Why has the way of the wicked prospered? *Why* are all those who deal in treachery at ease?

Matthew 5:45 in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and *the* good, and sends rain on *the* righteous and *the* unrighteous.

Luke 15:1 Now all the tax-gatherers and the sinners were coming near Him to listen to Him. ² And both the Pharisees and the scribes *began* to grumble, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."

John 9:1 And as He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. ² And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind?" ³ Jesus answered, "*It was* neither *that* this man sinned, nor his parents; but *it was* in order that the works of God might be displayed in him.

Luke 16:19-15—the rich man and Lazarus.

Luke 6:20-26 And turning His gaze on His disciples, He *began* to say, "Blessed *are* you *who are* poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. ²¹ "Blessed *are* you who hunger now, for you shall be satisfied. Blessed *are* you who weep now, for you shall laugh. ²² "Blessed are you when men hate you, and ostracize you, and cast insults at you, and spurn your name as evil, for the sake of the Son of Man. ²³ "Be glad in that day, and leap *for joy*, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for in the same way their fathers used to treat the prophets. ²⁴ "But woe to you who are rich, for you are receiving your comfort in full. ²⁵ "Woe to you who are well-fed now, for you shall be hungry. Woe *to you* who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep. ²⁶ "Woe *to you* when all men speak well of you, for in the same way their fathers used to treat the false prophets.

2 Timothy 3:12 And indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. ¹³ But evil men and impostors will proceed *from bad* to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

Philippians 1:29 For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

John 15:18 "If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before *it hated* you. ¹⁹ "If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. ²⁰ "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also.

Acts 9:15 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; ¹⁶ for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake."

Philippians 3:7 But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ,

2 Corinthians 6:4 but in everything commending ourselves as servants of God, in much endurance, in afflictions, in hardships, in distresses, ⁵ in beatings, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in hunger, ⁶ in purity, in knowledge, in patience, in kindness, in the Holy Spirit, in genuine love, ⁷ in the word of truth, in the power of God; by the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and the left, ⁸ by glory and dishonor, by evil report and good report; *regarded* as deceivers and yet true; ⁹ as unknown yet well-known, as dying yet behold, we live; as punished yet not put to death, ¹⁰ as sorrowful yet always rejoicing, as poor yet making many rich, as having nothing yet possessing all things.

2 Corinthians 12:7 And because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me-- to keep me from exalting myself! ⁸ Concerning this I entreated the Lord three times that it might depart from me. ⁹ And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. ¹⁰ Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

Luke 12:18 "And he said, 'This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹ 'And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years *to come*; take your ease, eat, drink *and* be merry.'" ²⁰ "But God said to him, 'You fool! This *very* night your soul is required of you; and *now* who will own what you have prepared?' ²¹ "So is the man who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

Matthew 16:26 "For what will a man be profited, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

24. Note the curse of materialism on the unsaved.

Matthew 19:24 “Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”

Luke 3:7-14 He therefore *began* saying to the multitudes who were going out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" ⁸ "Therefore bring forth fruits in keeping with repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father,' for I say to you that God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham." ⁹ "And also the axe is already laid at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." ¹⁰ And the multitudes were questioning him, saying, "Then what shall we do?" ¹¹ And he would answer and say to them, "Let the man who has two tunics share with him who has none; and let him who has food do likewise." ¹² And *some* tax-gatherers also came to be baptized, and they said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" ¹³ And he said to them, "Collect no more than what you have been ordered to." ¹⁴ And *some* soldiers were questioning him, saying, "And *what about* us, what shall we do?" And he said to them, "Do not take money from anyone by force, or accuse *anyone* falsely, and be content with your wages."

25. We must never forget that our greatest resource is the spiritual, not physical. Contentment comes from God, not this world or present circumstances.

Philippians 4:10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned *before*, but you lacked opportunity. ¹¹ Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. ¹² I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. ¹³ I can do all things through Him who strengthens me. ¹⁴ Nevertheless, you have done well to share *with me* in my affliction. ¹⁵ And you yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone; ¹⁶ for even in Thessalonica you sent *a gift* more than once for my needs. ¹⁷ Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account.

26. More passages on stewardship and money.

Acts 20:35 *"In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"*

Acts 20:33 *"I have coveted no one's silver or gold or clothes. ³⁴ "You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my own needs and to the men who were with me.*

1 Timothy 6:10 *For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang. ¹¹ But flee from these things, you man of God; and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness.*

James 1:26 If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his *own* heart, this man's religion is worthless. ²⁷ This is pure and undefiled religion in the sight of *our* God and Father, to visit orphans and widows in their distress, *and* to keep oneself unstained by the world.

Matthew 10:42 "And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you he shall not lose his reward."

Hebrews 6:10 For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints.

James 5:1 Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries which are coming upon you. ² Your riches have rotted and your garments have become moth-eaten. ³ Your gold and your silver have rusted; and their rust will be a witness against you and will consume your flesh like fire. It is in the last days that you have stored up your treasure! ⁴ Behold, the pay of the laborers who mowed your fields, *and* which has been withheld by you, cries out *against you*; and the outcry of those who did the harvesting has reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. ⁵ You have lived luxuriously on the earth and led a life of wanton pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.

Mark 12:41 And He sat down opposite the treasury, and *began* observing how the multitude were putting money into the treasury; and many rich people were putting in large sums. ⁴² And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which amount to a cent. ⁴³ And calling His disciples to Him, He said to them, "Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the contributors to the treasury; ⁴⁴ for they all put in out of their surplus, but she, out of her poverty, put in all she owned, all she had to live on.

1 Timothy 6:18 *Instruct them* to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, ¹⁹ storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.

Philippians 4:17 Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account.

Luke 12:33 "Sell your possessions and give to charity; make yourselves purses which do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near, nor moth destroys.

Proverbs 19:17 He who is gracious to a poor man lends to the LORD, And He will repay him for his good deed.

Matthew 10:42 "And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you he shall not lose his reward."

Hebrews 6:10 For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints.

Matthew 25:21 "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave; you were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things, enter into the joy of your master.'

2 Peter 1:10 Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; ¹¹ for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.

1 Corinthians 3:15 If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire.

James 1:12 Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life, which *the Lord* has promised to those who love Him.

1 Corinthians 9:24 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but *only* one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. ²⁵ And everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then *do it* to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.

2 Timothy 4:6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; ⁸ in the future 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.

1 Peter 5:1 Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as *your* fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, ² shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to *the will of* God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; ³ nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. ⁴ And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

Revelation 3:11 'I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, in order that no one take your crown.

2 John 1:8 Watch yourselves, that you might not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward.