Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Eternal Rewards and Motivation
Scripture: 1 Corinthians 3
Code: BQ92211

If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he shah suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire. (1 Corinthians 3:14-15)

Believers who have right motives, proper conduct, and effective service build with gold, silver, and precious stones. They do constructive work for the Lord and will receive corresponding rewards. **He shall receive a reward**. That simple and hopeful promise is the message of eternal joy and glory. Whatever our service to God's glory, He will reward.

When a pastor preaches sound, solid doctrine he is building constructively. When a teacher teaches the Word consistently and fully, he is building with good materials. When a person with the gift of helps spends himself serving others in the Lord's name, he is building with materials that will endure testing and will bring great reward. When a believer's life is holy, submissive, and worshipful, he is living a life built with precious materials.

The Lord's reward for all His faithful followers are varied and wonderful, and all of them are imperishable (1 Cor. 9:25), The New Testament refers to them as crowns. *"For those who have true saving faith and thus are faithful to live in hope until Jesus comes,* there will be 'the crown of righteousness' (2 Tim. 4:7–8). *Because the faithful proclaim the truth*, *there is promised* a 'crown of exultation' (1 Thess. 2:19–20). *Because of the service of the redeemed*, *the reward given* is 'the unfading crown of glory' (1 Pet. 5:4)." For all who love the Lord there will be "the crown of life" (James 1:12). *Each of these is best understood as a Greek genitive of apposition (i.e., the crown which is righteousness, the crown which is exultation, the crown which is glory, and the crown which is life. All refer to the fullness of the believer's promised reward*.

Many humanly impressive and seemingly beautiful and worthwhile works that Christians do in the Lord's name will not stand the test in "that day." It "will become evident" (v. 13) that the materials used were wood, hay, and straw. The workmen will not lose their salvation, but they will lose a portion of any reward they might be expecting. They **shall be saved**, **yet so as through fire**. The thought here is of a person who runs through flames without being burned, but who has the smell of smoke on him—barely escaping! In the day of rewards, the useless and evil things will be burned away, but salvation will not be forfeited.

It is easy to fool ourselves into thinking that anything we do in the Lord’s name is in His service, just as long as we are sincere, hardworking, and well meaning. But what looks to us like gold may turn out to be straw, because we have not judged our materials by the standards of God’s Word—pure motives, holy conduct, and self-less service.

We should be careful not to waste our opportunities by building with worthless materials, for if we do we will become worthless workmen. Paul warned the worthless materials, for if we do we will become worthless workmen. Paul warned the Colossians, “Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self–abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind” (Col. 2:18). When we rely on human wisdom, or even supernatural visions, rather than God’s Word, we are carnal, following a “fleshly mind.” We can be sure that any doctrine or principle or practice developed from such fleshly sources will at best be worthless.

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