

Are You Investing in Heaven?

Most of us invest in our future. We plan, save and strategize to be debt-free and to have something for our retirement years. Yet not many people even consider investing in eternity. The retirement years are few, but eternity is a long time. It would be prudent to have an eternal perspective and invest in our lives beyond this temporal existence.

The most important investment we can make in heaven is to bring people with us. We can take nothing with us when we die—except for other souls. Jesus stated that if a man has one hundred sheep and one goes astray, He will go after the one and rejoice much when the one is found (Matt. 18:12). Jesus went on to explain in verse 14, “Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish” (KJV). He was showing the importance of one soul that is saved—how precious that one soul is to God.

It takes effort to share the gospel with others, and many times there is opposition to our witness. It is easier for us as Christians to read our Bibles, go to church and then do little else. But God wants us to have His perspective and try to influence as many people as possible in order for them to come into the kingdom.

God desires to bless people, and it is up to us to open our mouths and share the way of salvation. Jesus told us in Mark 16:15, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” This is not a suggestion but a command. As Charles W. Spurgeon said, “Soulwinning is the chief business of the Christian; indeed, it should be the main pursuit of every true believer.”

It is interesting that as people get close to death, it is usually easier to talk to them about the afterlife. It is an unfortunate fact that many times it takes a tragedy, severe

illness or some other catastrophic event to be able to have a conversation with someone about God and the afterlife. I suppose many people think any discussion about God will cramp their lifestyle, so the conversation is put off until they are faced with something serious.

Usually people will make some preparations for death. We may prepare a will or set up a trust fund. We carefully consider our final plans, visit with our families and say all the important things we need to say to our loved ones. Some people desire to see a priest or person of the cloth when they are on their deathbeds.

If a person does not know Jesus, I have observed there is usually an overwhelming fear that comes over them as they approach death—and they should be glad it does, as this fear places them in a position to listen and be open to the truth (Job 33:15-22). Jude 23 tells us, “And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire.” That is the only time some are willing to talk about and listen to the way to heaven.

But if we are already a Christian, then we know we are ready to leave this life. We have peace with God in our hearts because we are trusting in Him. As Christians, we have full assurance of our salvation and our eternal destiny (Is. 51:6; Acts 17:31; Heb. 5:9; 1 John 2:25).

The one thing a Christian normally desires more than anything else before they pass on is to be certain their families are also Christians. The rich man came to realize when he arrived in hell that his brothers needed to repent of their sins or they too would end up in that horrible place of torment (Luke 16:30). He was concerned for them and didn't want them to suffer as he was suffering.

But we cannot force God's love and forgiveness upon anyone. We can only share His plan of salvation, and each person must decide for themselves. We need to pray that people will

discover the truth before it's too late—like it was for the rich man in hell. When we arrive in heaven and see those whom we helped influence to see the light and accept the Lord, it will be a most valued reward.

As Christians, do we have an eternal perspective? Are we concerned about those who do not know the way of salvation? Are we doing things that will count for eternity? Will we choose to live for God, or will we choose to live for ourselves? We are not giving up anything of value to live for God, and He even rewards us if we do. It is not a loss but much gain.

It is actually scriptural for us to desire the rewards God promises. Jesus told us in the Sermon on the Mount that we will obtain rewards (Luke 6:23). But as Charles H. Spurgeon wrote, “At the mention of the word reward, some will prick up their ears and mutter, ‘Legality.’ Yet the reward we speak of is not of debt, but of grace. It is not enjoyed with the proud conceit of merit, but with the grateful delight of humility.”

David Shibley writes, “Every now and then I run across people who will say, ‘Well, I’m not doing this for rewards. It will be reward enough just to be in heaven.’ This misses the whole point—and it’s bad theology. Heaven is not a reward; it is part of our redemption gift package when we come to saving faith in Jesus Christ. Further, to place little value on what heaven says has great value insults the very Lord who offers these rewards.”

The Bible states there are many rewards given in heaven to those who were obedient on the earth:

- Psalm 19:11: “And in keeping of them [commandments] there is great reward.”
- Psalm 62:12: “For thou renderest to every man according to his work.”
- Proverbs 11:18: “But to him that soweth righteousness

shall be a sure reward."

- Proverbs 13:13: "But he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded."
- Jeremiah 31:16: "For thy work shall be rewarded."
- Hosea 4:9: "And I will punish them for their ways, and reward them their doings."
- Matthew 5:11-12: "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you ... for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven."
- Matthew 6:1, 4: "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. ... And thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly."
- Matthew 16:27: "And then he shall reward every man according to his works."
- Mark 9:41: "For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward."
- Luke 14:13-14: "But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."
- 1 Corinthians 3:8: "And every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour."
- Colossians 3:24: "Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ."
- Hebrews 11:6: "He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."
- Revelation 11:18: "Thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name."
- Revelation 22:12: "And my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

Perhaps one of the greatest rewards we could be given in

heaven will be time allowed with Jesus. To be able to walk and talk with Him would be the most precious gift of all.

Could it be that the more time we spend with Him in prayer here, the more time we will have with Him in heaven? It is not that we could ever earn it, but the Bible does say, "He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6). In addition, Galatians 6:7 says, "For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

If we sow time with Jesus here, will we reap more time with Him in heaven? Just a thought!

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How do we keep an eternal perspective during our time on earth? Watch Francis Chan talk about it at .