

Relationship With God Is the Best Gift Ever Freely Given

Relationship in the kingdom of heaven is not a reward for a life well lived; it is a gift freely given. Relationship as a child of God is given unconditionally. This can be hard to accept. We want to feel as though we earned it.

While good fathers do not reject children, they also do not enable children who chose to be wayward. The father allowed the prodigal son to make bad choices. He did not chase after him and bail him out. Neither did the father restore the son's loss. The father tells the older son, "All I have is yours." The prodigal son's relationship remained, but his inheritance was gone. Spent. Squandered.

God's approval is reserved for excellent behavior. God will not approve or enable self-destruction. We receive the "reward of the inheritance" if we "work heartily" in "whatever" we do, as though we were working directly for God. Because we are.

It is amazing grace in action. We are freely given the gift of being in God's family. But then the life we are given to steward really matters. Our choices have consequences. No matter how "great" or "small" (by the world's standards) our opportunities may be, if we do them as unto the Lord, we are promised great rewards. We serve a God who is so generous that He gave His only begotten Son. We can't really imagine the rewards our incredibly generous Father has in store for His children who obey His commands and follow His ways.

We are children of the King. That ought to color everything we say and do—all our work, decisions and attitudes. He has given us the blessing of life, of choices, perspective and action. Let us love Him with all we have. {eoa}

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