

# GRACE GAZETTE

Volume II

Issue 1

*Published occasionally for Zion's mourners*

*Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees. And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.*

*Hebrews 12:12-13*

---

## REWARDS

*Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? (Matthew 19:27)*

Nothing seems more logical to men than that they should be paid for any work that they perform. In fact this very concept is both scriptural, "*the laborer is worthy of his reward*" (1 Tim.15:18) and is at the heart of our free enterprise system. The LORD has made it plain that HE expects no one to serve HIM for nothing. In answer to Peter's question HE said, "*And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.*" (Matt 19:29). One thing that is certain is that the LORD will reward those that belong to HIM. Yet in this parable which follows Peter's question HE sets forth a completely different set of principles upon which HE is pleased to reward HIS people and corrects some of the errors which the flesh is prone to indulge in concerning this reward. HIS purpose is to give us a different perspective than Peter initially had. Peter's line of thinking represents the thinking of the natural man; but the LORD would have HIS people to think as new creatures, not with the oldness of the letter but with the newness of the spirit. (see Rom. 7:6)

**HIS reward is not based on the effort of the laborer nor the amount of time spent in service.** In scriptural terms it is a reward not reckoned of debt but of grace (see Rom.4:4). The emphasis that He places on the reward given is the fact that those who labored the least received the same as those who labored the most. Now the flesh recoils at such an idea as we see the early laborers upset because they did not receive more. No one was defrauded by the goodness of the Vinekeeper, but his grace was magnified because he gave more,(than was deserved or expected), to those who came late. Are we not all latecomers? What could we ever do to deserve even one day in the presence of our GOD? Is it not of HIS goodness and grace alone that we have any claim to eternal life? When we come to the place of understanding that we deserve nothing but destruction then we can appreciate even the crumbs that fall from the master's table (see Mat.15:25-28), and our perspective of service changes from duty to privilege.

**HIS reward is greater than the service rendered.** Those who came late didn't deserve what they received. The grace of our LORD is beyond our understanding. HIS goodness is immeasurable and HIS mercy is everlasting. The preachers of dead religion try to motivate men to serve GOD by promising them earthly and heavenly rewards. They appeal to the desire of the flesh for recognition and wealth to stimulate the dead to follow the LORD. They tell men that by being faithful, winning souls, or performing sacrificial acts of giving (time and money), they will earn blessings here and add wealth to their heavenly treasure chest above. Those who serve CHRIST for rewards are like those that followed HIM for the fish and loaves, they soon grow weary and walk no more with HIM or murmur that the effort is too great for the payment received. (see Mat.20:11)

**HIS reward is viewed as a treasure not earned by those who know themselves to be unworthy.** Those that came late were not in a position to bargain for what they would be paid. They depended on the goodness of the Vinekeeper. They were not disappointed with what they received because they knew it was only because of the kindness of the Vinekeeper that they were given the privilege to work in the vineyard. When a sinner is brought out of darkness into light he learns the value of eternal life. Those who have not seen the glory of CHRIST do not comprehend what a priceless treasure it is to be given the privilege to become the sons of GOD. The redeemed, however, are overwhelmed with gladness and it becomes their joy to serve their FATHER regardless of the reward. In fact their thoughts are so far removed from what they will be paid for that service that they can testify with Job, *"though HE slay me, yet will I trust in HIM."* (Job 13:15) and with Peter who said, *"LORD, to whom shall we go, thou hast the words of eternal life."* (John 6:68)

**We are called to serve HIM not for what we can obtain but because we are sons.** (see Gal. 4:6) I remember as a young boy in church being constantly exhorted to serve the LORD for rewards, yet no reward ever seemed grand enough to stir me up to follow HIM. Now that HE has awakened me from the sleep of death and called me by HIS grace, no service I could ever render seems worthy of that calling. I am no longer stimulated by the song, "Will there be any stars in my crown?" rather I am more concerned that I might bring shame to HIM who called me and *"after I have preached to others I myself should be a reprobate."* (1 Cor. 9:27) Therefore let us look *"unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."* (Heb 12:1-2) What greater reward can there be?