

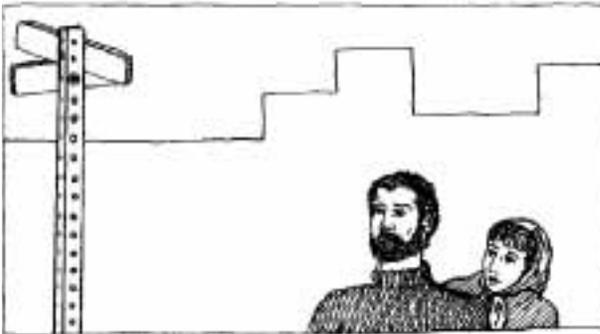
Lesson
8

Expect Rewards

Do you know of a street or building that has been named to honor a person? Look around you and see that streets, buildings, planes, airports, boats, towns, villages, rivers, and other things have been given the names of people. This is done to reward and pay tribute to them. They have been rewarded because they have done something to help their people or their community.

The Nobel prizes are awarded each year to those whose work has helped all humankind. An ambassador from another country was highly honored by being given the golden key of our capital city. All of these are great and priceless rewards. No salary can be compared to such honors. And yet all these rewards will one day pass away.

But what about rewards that come from God? If we know how to pay tribute to each other, will not God do much more for all those who love Him? Of course He will! Just the thought that Christ will honor us before His Father should keep us faithful to the end. “So then, let us rid ourselves of everything that gets in the way, and of the sin which holds on to us so tightly, and let us run with determination the race that lies before us” (Hebrews 12:1). We can expect rewards!



In this lesson you will study . . .

Present Rewards
The Lord's Presence
Satisfaction
Future Rewards
Known Rewards
Unknown Rewards

This lesson will help you . . .

- Realize that God has prepared wonderful rewards for those who will share the good news about Jesus.

PRESENT REWARDS

Objective 1. *Give examples of rewards we can expect as we do personal evangelism.*

Personal evangelists do not work for reward. Reward is not the goal. They work because God has loved them and Christ has saved them. They reach people in obedience to Christ's command. The work because sharing the good news becomes part of their new nature in Christ. They work because they love other people and want them to have the same hope and the same meaning in life that they have found in Christ Jesus.

Yet, even though rewards are not the goal of the Christian worker, it has pleased God to give many rewards. In my opinion, there is no other work in the world more rewarding than personal evangelism. The rewards are present and future, temporal and eternal, material and spiritual.

The Lord's Presence

One of the greatest present rewards in personal evangelism is our assurance of the continual presence of the Lord. After His death and resurrection, Jesus sent His disciples throughout the whole world to share His good news with all people. The task was indeed great. There were many difficulties. The disciples probably wondered how they, just ordinary men filled with fear, could ever cover the world with Christ's good news.

But even before they could express their fear, Christ went on to assure them of His continuous presence. "Go, then ... And I will be with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).

Jesus has all power in heaven and on earth. His power knows no limit, no barrier. Death and the grave were not able to keep Him. He does not need any passport, for there is no country where He cannot go. To have such a Person always in our daily life and service is surely the greatest reward that we can ever have. This reward helps us have confidence in our Lord and Savior.

God always makes it possible for faithful workers to do His will. He sent Moses to deliver the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt. All the people were in the great desert. Moses knew the work was too heavy for him. He began to have doubts and questions. How could he possibly carry this nation all by himself? It was impossible. Moses, after realizing his weakness, went to God. God promised that His continuous presence would be with them all the way through that great desert until they reached the Promised Land. In reply to God, Moses said, "If you do not go with us, don't make us leave this place" (Exodus 33:15).

For Moses, the only way he could do his work was to be assured of the continual presence of God. The only way for us to be able to share our Christian life and experience with success and courage is to have the constant presence of the Owner of the harvest with us day and night.

The apostle Paul was put in prison. He knew many hardships because he proclaimed the good news of Christ. When he appeared before the judge to present his case, no one stood with him. And yet, writing to Timothy he could still say, "But the Lord stayed with me and gave me strength. So that I was able to proclaim the full message for all the Gentiles to hear" (2 Timothy 4:17).

Do you want to have this full confidence in your daily life and service for Christ, even in times of loneliness and hardship? The reward is truly great, but there is one condition. You must go first. For the promise is: "Go . . . And I will be with you always" (Matthew 28:20).



For You To Do

- 1 What wonderful promise did Jesus give His disciples when He sent them out to share the good news?
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- 2 How can we receive the same promise?
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- 3 Who stayed with the apostle Paul when he was put in prison?
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- 4 How was Moses able to lead the Israelites through the desert to the Promised Land?
.....
- 5 What should be our goal in sharing the news about Christ?
 - a) Rewards
 - b) Bringing people to Christ

Satisfaction

If there is any reward that a worker likes to have, it is certainly the joy of a job done well. It is better than a high salary. Jesus gave us a good example of this in the story of the three servants (Matthew 25:14-30). All three were given some work to do, each one according to his ability. But only two of them had the great joy of hearing “Well done, you good and faithful servant.” The third one came with fear and trembling, because he had not done what was expected of him. He received no reward.

For four years, I served as a schoolteacher in my country. One year, I was given a class of beginners. There were about 70 children in the class. All came from the villages, and not one of them could speak a word of the French language. I had to start from nothing!

At the end of the school year, they could understand French and talk to each other in the French language. They could even read and write French. It was amazing! For me, there was no greater reward than to feel the joy of a job well done.

This is also true in personal evangelism. When we see a new convert living a Christian life, singing hymns, speaking to a group of young people, or doing personal work of sharing Christian experiences with someone else, this is indeed a reward that cannot be measured in terms of earthly riches. It is rewarding to know that we have been used to rescue a soul from eternal loss, and that the angels in heaven are rejoicing. Jesus told Peter,

And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times more and will be given eternal life (Matthew 19:29).

Many early African Christians in my country went through hardships. Some of them were cut off from their families and friends. They suffered a great deal. But the Lord was faithful. They were brought into a new family, the family of God. They have been blessed with all sorts of good blessings. Everywhere you go in this world, as a Christian, you will find brothers and sisters in Christ. You may not speak their language. The color of your skin may be different. But you will know and feel love uniting you all. If you lose one friend in this world for accepting Christ or

for sharing your personal Christian experience, you will be rewarded with many friends in God's big family.

Abraham left his home, his friends, his family, and his fields to obey God. As a reward, he was given a beautiful land. He was made a father of many nations. Indeed, he was blessed with all kinds of earthly and heavenly riches. One of his servants spoke to Laban,

The Lord has greatly blessed my master and made him a rich man. He has given him flocks of sheep and goats, cattle, silver, gold. . . camels, and donkeys. Sarah, my master's wife, bore him a son when she was old. (Genesis 24:35-36).

If we obey Christ's command to go everywhere proclaiming the good news, if we let Him use us, we will be like those who wept as they went out carrying the seed. We will come back singing for joy as we bring in the harvest (Psalm 126:6).

The 70 disciples Jesus sent out came back rejoicing at what they were able to do in the Lord's name. Indeed, there is no greater satisfaction than to be used of God in bringing other people to Him.



For You To Do

6 What happened to Abraham when he left his home to follow God?

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7 What reward can personal evangelists expect when they go out carrying the seed?

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8 Put an **X** by the rewards you have received since you have accepted Christ as your Savior.

- a New brothers and sisters in Christ
- b The joy of seeing someone come to Christ through my testimony
- c Satisfaction in serving Jesus
- d Many new friends who love Christ
- e God's presence with me always

FUTURE REWARDS

Known Rewards

Objective 2. Explain the kinds of rewards we can expect in the future if we share our Christian experience.

Besides our present rewards that we can enjoy right now, many future eternal rewards are also promised to those who follow Christ's command to share the good news.

The first of the two kinds of future rewards are those that are clearly revealed to us in the Word of God. These are the *known* rewards. We will consider some of them.

1. "Those who have taught many people to do what is right will shine like the stars for ever" (Daniel 12:3). Scientists tell us that stars are very far from the earth, and that it would take months for spacecraft traveling at the speed of light to reach the nearest ones. And yet from here on earth, we can see them shining! Isn't it wonderful to know that one day you and I will shine like stars forever in God's kingdom if we have led many people to Christ.

2. We will reign with Christ! Christ has saved us so that we can have eternal life. This in itself should make us leap for joy. There is no greater gift or reward than that. But He has also promised us His throne. Yes, we will reign with Christ. We will be like Christ. We will live with Him forever. He made this clear before leaving His disciples to go back to His Father.



3. The Lord has also promised many crowns to all those who love Him. Let us list them:
- a. A crown of righteousness (2 Timothy 4:8)
 - b. A crown that will last forever (1 Corinthians 9:25)
 - c. A crown of life (James 1:12)
 - d. A crown of glory (1 Peter 5:4)

All of these rewards will be ours if we do the work the Lord has given us to do. We must do it with zeal and faithfulness until the end. Remember that you are not wasting your time as some people may say to you. You are not running after the wind. You have fixed your eyes on heavenly things. For this world and all its riches will disappear. But our work for the Lord will stand forever.



For You To Do

9 What must we do if we want to shine like stars?

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10 What does it mean to say that we will reign with Christ?

- a) We will share in His heavenly kingdom.
- b) Many people will bow down and worship us.

11 The most important work we can do is what we do for the Lord, because that work

- a) will soon be over.
- b) will stand forever.

12 Read 2 Timothy 4:8; 1 Corinthians 9:25; James 1:12; and 1 Peter 5:4. What is the subject of all of these verses?

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Unknown Rewards

In His revelation to John, Jesus said, “I am coming soon! I will bring my rewards with me, to give to each one according to what he has done” (Revelation 22:12).

Speaking to His disciples, He said this:

Happy are you when people hate you, reject you, insult you, and say that you are evil, all because of the Son of Man! Be glad when that happens and dance for joy, because a great reward is kept for you in heaven (Luke 6:22-23).

The apostle Paul reminded the Corinthians of the great promises of God:

What no one ever saw or heard, what no one ever thought could happen, is the very thing God prepared for those who love him (1 Corinthians 2:9).

We do not know all the rewards God has planned for us. One of the joys of heaven will be to see what He has prepared for us. A greater joy will be to see in heaven men and women, boys and girls with whom we have shared the good news of Jesus Christ! What a day that will be!



For You To Do

13 We know it is worthwhile to serve Jesus even when it causes us hardships because

- a) God will punish those who persecute us.
- b) we will be rewarded if we suffer for His sake.

14 What is the most wonderful reward we will receive when we get to Heaven?

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Congratulations! You have now finished the course. May the Lord bless you as you seek to share His good news with all those to whom He sends you. And as you share, you may want to reread some lessons to remind yourself of the steps involved in personal evangelism. When you are discouraged, read this final lesson again. And never forget that Jesus Christ is with you at all times! He will help you.





- 1 He promised always to be with them.
- 2 By being faithful in sharing with others what Christ has done for us.
- 3 The Lord.
- 4 God was with them.
- 5 b) Bringing people to Christ
- 6 He received more than he ever had before.
- 7 They can expect to come back rejoicing.
- 8 I have put an **X** by each of these rewards. I expect you have, too.
- 9 We must teach many people to do what is right.
- 10 a) We will share in His heavenly kingdom. (We will all worship and glorify Him forever!)
- 11 b) will stand forever.
- 12 The crowns we will receive because we love and serve Jesus.
- 13 b) we will be rewarded if we suffer for His sake.
- 14 The joy of seeing there those people who accepted Jesus because we shared His good news with them.

Now you are ready to fill out the last half of your student report for Lessons 5–8. Review these lessons, then follow the instructions in your student report. When you send your answer sheets to your instructor, ask about another course of study.

One Final Word

This is a special kind of book because it was written by people who care about you. These are people who have found good answers to many of the questions and problems that trouble almost everyone in the world. These people believe that God wants them to share with others the answers they have found. They believe that you need some important information in order to answer your own questions and problems and find the way of life that is best for you.

They have prepared this book in order to give you this information. You will find this book based on these fundamental truths:

1. You need a Savior. Read Romans 3:23, Ezekiel 18:20.
2. You cannot save yourself. Read 1 Timothy 2:5, John 14:6.
3. God desires that the world should be saved. Read John 3:16-17.
4. God sent Jesus who gave His life to save all those who believe in Him. Read Galatians 4:4-5; 1 Peter 3:18.
5. The Bible shows us the way of salvation and teaches how to grow in the Christian life. Read John 15:5; John 10:10; 2 Peter 3:18.
6. You decide your eternal destiny. Read Luke 13:1-5; Matthew 10:32-33; John 3:35-36.

This book tells you how to decide your destiny, and it gives you opportunities to express your decision. Also, the book is different from others because it gives you a chance to contact people who prepared it. If you want to ask questions, or explain your needs and feelings, you may write to them.

In the back of the book you should find a card called *Decision Report and Request Card*. When you have made a decision, fill out the card and mail it as indicated. Then you will receive more help. You may use the card to ask questions, or make requests for prayer or information.

If there is no card in this copy of the book, write to your ICI instructor and you will receive a personal answer.