

A Rewarding Life, Lesson 1, March 29, 2020

- What if told you that even the smallest decisions and actions you take now can affect your future Forever? Would that surprise you?
- You may think that that is not necessarily true, but Jesus plainly taught that **our actions now** will affect **our future forever**.

Matt 12:36

2. No one ever made more shocking statements about the Afterlife than Jesus of Nazareth.

- Let's take a brief look at one of statements Jesus made about the afterlife and see what we can learn from it. **Luke 6:22-23**
- First, notice there is a direct connection between something you do or go through for Him here on earth and something "Great" He will do for you in Heaven.
- Second, notice that the reward is specifically and purposely yours if you behave in one way (don't avoid persecution), and specifically not yours if you behave in another (run from persecution).
- This promise of reward in Heaven is not an isolated example of Jesus' teachings— He spoke on this subject clearly and often:

Mt. 16:27; Mt. 19:21; Lk. 14:14

- The implications of these passages are enormous!!!
- They suggest that God is keeping track of what you do for Him every day!!!
- They suggest that you have more to gain by serving Him than possibly you have ever imagined!!

3. Let's start with the basics and construct a ground work on which we can build.

Jesus' teachings show us that there are two keys that determine everything about our eternity:

1. First key is belief: What you believe determines your eternal Destination. **Jn. 3:36, I Jn. 5:11**

2. Second key is behavior: This is the key that unlocks the door to rewards. **How** you spend your everlasting life is determined by your behavior.

- **Belief determines** your eternal **destination**.
- **Behavior determines** your eternal **compensation**.

4. We have given to us in the Bible a timeline of our eternity. This timeline contains 5 events that either are will happen in your future no matter what you believe or how you behave.

--Jesus spoke quite often about these events.

1. First event is life: You are born and are here for a purpose and though didn't exist in the past you will exist forever in the future.

2. The second event in your forever life is Death:

- Jesus taught that after death our soul is either instantly with God in Heaven or instantly in a place of torment away from God based on what we've believed in this life.

3. The third event in our forever life is Resurrection:

- Something that is true for everyone, Christian or not, is that all will receive a bodily resurrection. **Jn. 5:28-29**

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4. The fourth event is Repayment:

- Believers and nonbelievers will be judged by Jesus Christ at two separate events:
 1. **Bema seat**—where believers will either be rewarded or suffer loss.
 2. **Great white Throne**—where nonbelievers will be judged by their deeds before being throne into Hell.
- The outcome of those judgments will determine either your degree of reward in Heaven or your degree of retribution in Hell.

5. The fifth event in our forever life is forever life:

- Jesus taught eternal existence awaits everyone
- Those who have rejected Him “will go away into ever lasting punishment”
Mt. 25:26 --Those who have chosen Him will experience eternal life in God’s presence.
- --But Jesus is the only person who came from eternity to earth and then went back into eternity.
- --He knows the whole truth past, present, and future and gives us a one of-a-kind perspective.

How foolish would it be for us not to listen to Him?