

QUESTION #33 – Will we work in heaven or will heaven be an eternal retirement?

There are those who take the position that when one goes to heaven, one enters into a state of eternal lounging on some permanent welfare program, in which they just lie around and do nothing and are the recipients of the blessings of God. Some base this on a verse like Hebrews 4:10. Hebrews 4 is not teaching that at all. It is teaching that one may rest from his works in salvation and enter into a permanent salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

We must remember that when God initially created Adam, He put him in the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it (Gen. 2:15). In other words, God created man to work before the fall. Work was part of His plan and was part of a perfect life in Eden.

We would certainly conclude that when we are in heaven, we will want to be like God and what we know about God is that He is always working. Both God the Father and God the Son are always working (John 5:17). When Jesus was here on earth, He said the will of God was for Him to accomplish the work God gave Him (John 4:34).

Now if God is a God who continually works and Jesus Christ is the God/Son who continually works and we are in heaven with them, it stands to logical reason that we, too, will have work to do.

We know this is true because of what Jesus said in passages like Matthew 25:23 and Revelation 2:26. Obviously what is offered as a reward for faithfulness in eternity is not retirement but management work.

I want us to carefully observe the words of Matthew 25:23. Jesus says He will say, “enter into the joy of your master.” He will say that in the context that the individual is given responsible work to do in His Kingdom. This is talking about a real management position and doing a real job, which is a joyous part of eternity.

According to Luke 19:11-27, there will be believers who will have the job of managing and running the universe. We could assume that this would include having specific goals and responsibilities. This is an active work, not a passive work.

Based on this we conclude that there will be real work we will do in heaven and we will love doing the work. The work will be joyful and fulfilling and it certainly will bring glory to God. Because the curse will be lifted, there will be no thorns and thistles in the work (Gen. 3:18-19).