

Heb. 11:6 (LD 24) "Reward Offered"

For the Children: If you do a job for a kind person, they might sometimes give you a little extra money, even though you only did what you were told to do. We are grateful for such kindness. But we cannot demand it. It's up to the person for whom we're working. When we work to serve the Lord, we do a really bad job of it. We certainly cannot demand any reward for it. However, the Lord graciously gives us a great reward, despite our sins, for the sake of His Son. Jesus won the reward for us. The only way to receive this reward is by faith in the Lord Jesus. This teaches us to be very thankful, so we want to serve Him all the more by living out of the faith He gives us! **Questions:** What is the point of a gracious reward that we haven't earned? How does knowing this encourage us to be more faithful to the Lord? Why do we need faith to receive the reward?

Introduction:

First Point: The Nature of Our Reward

- 1) **The One Who Pays Wages:** Scripture teaches that God "rewards" His people (Ps. 59:11, Is. 40:10, Rev. 22:12). Our text says that He is a "rewarder" of those that seek Him. Literally, He is "One who pays wages" to them. However, this does not mean that we have earned or deserve those "wages." For a "reward" may be given as an incentive, not just as something earned.
- 2) **Just Doing Our Job:** One reason we cannot say we have earned a reward from Him, is that even if we did all He requires of us, we would merely be doing our duty – as "unworthy slaves" (Lk. 17:10). A servant who does his duty deserves no reward for it.
- 3) **Not Doing Our Job Well:** Moreover, we have not done very well at doing our duty. Our duty is to obey all God's laws perfectly, all the time. We have fallen far short of that. Even our best deeds are stained with sin. The only "wage" we deserve in ourselves is death! See Gal. 3:10/Dt. 27:26.
- 4) **Rewards of Grace:** The "reward" we receive from God must therefore be the kind that we do not deserve – a free, gracious gift – designed to show God's approval and encourage us to keep serving Him. His approval is won by the good work of the Lord Jesus, the "wages" God pays us for our service have been earned by Him.
- 5) **Spurring Us On:** Some have argued that such a view of good works and rewards will make believers spiritually lazy and indifferent – since we are rewarded even if we do not do our duty. But this misses the point that the chief reward is God Himself (Ps. 43:4). That is a reward that only those who love God will want. Those who love God and desire this reward will be, by definition, those who strive to please Him. It is impossible for those in union with Christ NOT to desire and produce fruits of thankfulness for His free gift of salvation.

Second Point: The Means of Receiving the Reward

- 1) **Impossible Without Faith:** Faith is the only means of receiving the reward. For God Himself is the Reward, and faith is that which unites us with God. If we do not have faith, we cannot be united with Christ. Then we have only our own unacceptable works, which deserve no reward.
- 2) **Believing God's Existence:** It is impossible to please God without faith because faith believes that God exists. It is offensive to God that sinners deny His existence.
- 3) **Believing in His Promises:** It is impossible to please God without faith because faith believes God's Word, including its promises – like the promise of a reward in this life and the next. To reject those promises, and the hope of the life to come, is to accuse God of being a liar. Faith believes in these unseen realities of the present and the future.
- 4) **Believing in the Christ:** These promises find their fulfilment in Christ. He is the basis of our reward. The Father is well-pleased with us only because He was well-pleased with Him (Mt. 3:11, 17:5). He is also the Reward. Faith directs us above all to Him (Heb. 12:1-3), the Author and Perfecter of our faith. Unless we believe in Him, there will be no gracious reward for us.

Conclusion: