
Words of Truth

The Right Approach To Earning Things

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It does not take an in-depth study of the Scriptures to figure out that God wants man to earn things in this life and the life to come. Our God has revealed throughout both the Old and New Testaments that His approach is that you reap what you sow (Job 4:8, Job 34:11, Proverbs 1:31, Proverbs 12:14, Proverbs 14:14, Proverbs 22:8, Proverbs 24:12, Isaiah 3:10-11, Jeremiah 2:19, Jeremiah 4:16-18, Jeremiah 32:19, Ezekiel 22:31, Hosea 7:2, Hosea 8:7, John 5:28-29, and II Corinthians 5:10). Therefore, you can easily say that God wants you to earn your way.

Now, when you come to realize that you can earn things there is a temptation to get a certain attitude about that. A sense of ownership and accomplishment can easily lead one down the road of pride and arrogance. God does not want us to get an attitude of pride and arrogance (Proverbs 8:13 and James 4:6-10). As with all things regarding our God, there is a balance to be had in regard to this subject matter. God equips us with the right way to approach earning our way physically in this world and spiritually in the life to come. He doesn't want us to get the idea that we can do things all on our own. However, He also doesn't want us to feel like we cannot do anything either. There are some truths to discuss to get the balance right. You do have work to do and a reward comes from that work.

Works And Rewards

In regard to spiritual work, we know that faith without works is dead (James 2:14-26). We are expected to do good works (Matthew 5:14-16). In fact, we are encouraged to do spiritual work for a spiritual reward. Notice: *"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord... Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith... For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises"* (I Corinthians 15:58, Galatians 6:7-10, and Hebrews 6:10-12). The conclusion of those verses is simple; if you do the work aright you'll be rewarded for it.

In regard to physical labor, we know that we're expected to work to provide for ourselves (Ephesians 4:28 and II Thessalonians 3:10). By working, we are rewarded through having what we need. Notice: *"And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business,*

and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing” (I Thessalonians 4:11-12). Therefore, the Scriptural conclusion is that if you want to eat and have things in this life, you have to work for it.

Christians are people expected to do good works (Titus 3:14 and Hebrews 10:24). We are also a goal-oriented people in that our good works will bring us to a destination. As we've covered, this is our outlook in regard to both spiritual and physical things. Trying to finish the course for the reward at the end is good physically (Ecclesiastes 2:10) and spiritually (I Peter 1:3-9). Now, I've mentioned that there is a balanced approach to this. We know that God equips us to properly do all things (II Timothy 3:16-17) in life and godliness (II Peter 1:3-4). So, how does God equip us to labor for a reward while having a humble mindset about such?

Things God Reminds Us Of For Us To Keep The Proper Balance

From the beginning of the record of humanity, God puts forth the fact that He has provided us with the means to accomplish all that He desires of us (Genesis 2:4-24). You can work as hard as is humanly possible, but without God's aid we would have nothing to eat (Acts 14:17), breathe (Isaiah 42:5), the abilities we have (I Peter 4:11), etc.

Spiritually, consider this context: *“And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ”* (Ephesians 2:1-13). Isn't that clear enough? We are expected to do good works. We were created for such. However, without His grace, our good works would result in nothing.

Conclusion

We can approach life with the mindset of needing to earn our way here and to Heaven. What we cannot do is lose sight that without God we can achieve nothing. From the air we breathe to the blood of our Savior, God is the one that has equipped us for success. We've done nothing without Him. We wouldn't exist without Him. So work that you may achieve what you've been created to do. Just keep in mind that without His purpose and grace we're nothing no matter how much work we do (II Timothy 1:8-12).