

HOW DOES GOD REWARD THOSE WHO SEEK HIM? (Hebrews 11:6)

- I. **Does God's love mean that everybody will be saved?**
 - A. The doctrine of universalism teaches that everybody will be saved eventually.
 - B. But if the Bible account of God is accurate, two different destinies are before us (Romans 2:4-8).
 - C. God could not be good and not punish evil (Genesis 18:25).
 - 1. Job 19:25;
 - 2. 2 Thessalonians 1:6-8.
 - D. Jesus is the Savior of all those who obey Him (Hebrews 5:9).
- II. **What is God's desire for us?**
 - A. Notice God's benevolent character.
 - 1. At the cross, God proved His benevolence, which means "good will," toward us (Romans 5:8; 8:32).
 - 2. God asks us to believe at least two things:
 - a. That He is - God's existence.
 - b. That He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him - that is, His goodness.
 - 3. The confidence of the gospel is that in the end, good will triumph over evil.
 - a. This is what allows us to go on each day.
 - b. The ultimate triumph of God over evil.
 - c. When we think about that it should cause us to reflect on God's desire for us personally to be a part of His triumph.
 - 4. We must never get big-headed and think we are some major cog in this battle, we are just foot soldiers.
 - a. We should also remember that at one point we rebelled against God and sided with Satan.
 - b. Despite that and our status, God still wants us to share in that victory when the time comes.
 - 5. 2 Timothy 2:11-12.
 - B. God's desire for us is that all respond to His goodness and accept the reconciliation He offers on His terms.
 - 1. Our destiny rests on our decision, but God is not neutral with respect to our choice, greatly desiring us to share in His glory (2 Peter 3:9).
 - 2. In other words, God greatly desires to bless us.
 - 3. When we take an honest, seeking step toward Him, He honors that as He did with Cornelius (Acts 10:1-4).

- C. Angelus Silesius, a German theologian and poet, once wrote, "Whoso draws nigh to God one step through doubtings dim, God will advance a mile in blazing light to Him." (Luke 15:20).
- D. God's special love is shown to those who do seek Him diligently (Numbers 6:24-26; Psalm 149:4).

III. What is the reward God gives?

- A. Faithfulness to God certainly brings the enjoyment of many secondary things that are of great benefit to us.
- B. But more important than all of these is the real rewards that awaits us: a deep fellowship with God the Father.
 - 1. We were created in such a way that fellowship with God is our deepest need (Genesis 1:27; Ecclesiastes 3:11).
 - 2. God ought to be our greatest desire.
- C. Jesus stated that eternal life is to know God (John 17:3).
- D. To have fellowship with God for all eternity is the reward of diligently seeking God (Revelation 22:1-5).

IV. The right response to God's goodness.

- A. We need to be careful to have true conceptions of God's character - but we need to respond to that character in the right way.
- B. It is a combination of reverence plus gratitude that is the right response to God's goodness.
 - 1. Romans 1:21.
 - 2. Remember our definition of seeking God: growth in obedience with a desire to love and honor God more each day.
- C. This puts the emphasis on the glory of the Giver, not our enjoyment of the gift.
- D. Even in our consideration of the reward that can come to us, we still need to keep the emphasis on God, not on us.

From a sermon by Gary Henry