

With Blessings Comes Responsibility

“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne; and books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, even the lake of fire. And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire” (Rev. 20:11-15).

In these last five verses of John’s vision, man is informed that there will be a final judgment, wherein all men will be judged according to their works. Being thus informed, it should motivate the reader to understand the conditions and responsibilities associated with this promise, which is a sure promise, because “God, who cannot lie, promised before times eternal” (Titus 1:2).

Statements are often made regarding the freedoms we have in the nation in which we live. However, even the least among us should know that freedom is not free: there were men and women who forfeited their lives for something greater than themselves. In a similar manner, the scriptures identify that “the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 6:23). As a result of the statement, many who look for a reason to sin, will affirm that man has no obligations, no responsibility concerning the receiving of God’s gift. There is nothing, good or bad, that comes into life that does not require action on the part of mankind. Seeing how it is foolish to try to convince the ungodly of this truth, let us go directly to God’s word that outlines responsibility. Individual responsibility includes:

Fear God: Solomon said, “This is the end of the matter; all hath been heard: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every work into judgment, with every hidden thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil” (Eccl. 12:13-14), and the Hebrew prophet revealed, “Wherefore, receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have grace, whereby we may offer service well-pleasing to God with reverence and awe: for our God is a consuming fire.” (Heb. 12:28-29). Regardless of which side of the dispensations man lived, the responsibility is the same.

Love God: “And one of the scribes came, and heard them questioning together, and knowing that he had answered them well, asked him, What commandment is the first of all? Jesus answered, The first is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God, the Lord is one: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength” (Mk. 12:28-30).

Obey God: The Hebrew prophet said, “though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation” (Heb. 5:8-9), and the apostle John revealed, “He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him” (Jn. 3:36, asv). To these passages, the apostle Paul affirmed,

“Know ye not, that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?” (Rom. 6:16).

Worship God: Jesus said, “for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve” (Matt. 4:10). Jesus, saying also, “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth” (Jn. 4:24).

Serve God: as Jesus said, in Matthew 4:10, “him only shalt thou serve,” He also says, “Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Matt. 6:24).

Glorify God: Paul says, “Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body” (1 Cor. 6:19-20).

If evil has deceived you, recall this warning from the apostle Paul, “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Gal. 6:7).

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