HONOR'S REWARD
Unlocking the Power of This Forgotten Virtue
Honor’s Reward will leave you with no questions as to the enormous value God places on this quality that should overflow from our hearts as Christians.

—Joyce Meyer

After reading Honor’s Reward, one is compelled to honor the book’s author himself, John Bevere, as both a biblical teacher of remarkable insight and a skilled writer. John establishes honor as an issue of the heart, takes the reader on a journey that covers a diverse range of human relationships, and inspires each of us to live in a way that reflects this important spiritual principle, which brings with it abundant reward.

—Brian Houston

When I first read Honor’s Reward, I felt I had encountered a classic masterpiece that could greatly impact churches, marriages, families, and businesses alike. It is the key that unlocks promotion, favor, and success in this life and in the one to come. This is, hands down, John Bevere’s greatest work so far.

—Jentezen Franklin
Honor's Reward
Contents

1 Rewards 1
2 Partial and No Rewards 13
3 Full Reward 25
4 Little to Do with the Leader 37
5 Authority 49
6 Harsh Authority 67
7 Honoring Civil Leaders 81
8 Honoring Social Leaders 101
9 Honoring Domestic Leaders 113
10 Honoring Church Leaders 135
11 Double Honor 155
12 Honoring Our Peers 179
13 Honoring Those Entrusted to Us 195
14 Honor in the Home—Children 213
15 Honor in the Home—Wife 229
16 Honor All 245
17 Honoring God 255
Appendix 273
Rewards

Honor. Though it is almost an extinct virtue in the twenty-first century, the concept still holds the power to move us. In movies, a display of honor can inspire tears as courage and sacrifice are witnessed. Review the greatest blockbusters of all time and you’ll find honor interwoven into their plots. We applaud its virtue vicariously, but where is honor in our everyday lives? The notion that it could be lived in the ordinary has become foreign to our generation.

I want to see honor restored to the sons and daughters of God. It is the essential key to receiving from God, and for this very reason the enemy of our souls has all but eliminated the true power of honor. Honor carries with it great rewards; rewards God desires you to have. Honor has the power to greatly enhance your life.

You are about to embark on a journey that will take you closer to the heart of God, the author of all that is honorable. I pray these revelatory truths will affect your life in a profound and practical way. Many have not learned these lessons until much later in life. For this reason John the apostle urgently writes:
“Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for, but that we may receive a full reward.”

—2 John 8

John was an old man looking back over nearly a century of living when he penned these words (Clarke’s Commentary, Abingdon Press (1977)—Accordance 6.6). He lent his hard-won insight for our benefit today. John had the acquired vantage realized by men and women who have lived long and well. It is a destination arrived at by faithfully walking in a life calling, a post of assurance and strength, something I call a Grandfather or Grandmother Anointing. And when these people speak, the wise listen.

Over my many years, I’ve enjoyed a handful of encounters with such men and women. These are ambassadors who’ve worn life well and entered the stage where they look back with knowing. Such seasoned veterans develop some common attributes, three of which we will discuss here. First, they instinctively locate the heart of a matter. They don’t beat around the bush, or waste time with the unimportant. Second, they say much in very few words. Third, the words they choose to utter are weighty. Their somewhat sparse communication carries a greater weight than the same words spoken by another who has not walked as well, or as long, the paths of life. After spending time with them, I’ve found myself meditating for months on just one or two sentences from these seasoned veterans.

In light of this reasoning, we can assume that John the apostle was saying a great deal. In fact, I’ve meditated on these inspired words for years, and the revelation within them continues to expand. In fact, two entire books have been inspired from his words:
the one you’re holding and *Driven by Eternity*. Let’s examine his admonishment a phrase at a time.

## Don’t Lose Your Inheritance

He begins, “Look to yourselves.” John encourages each of us to *take heed, examine, and watch out for ourselves*. An urgency is lent to his words, for what he’s about to communicate is not to be taken lightly, but thoroughly pondered.

Careful attention must be paid so we do not lose those things for which we have labored. This is a bit sobering . . . we can lose what was won through labor. Imagine a farmer toiling to clear his field. He works through the heat of the day to rid the soil of boulders and stumps that would hinder the soil from producing a harvest. Once cleared, he plows and tills the ground in preparation for the planting of his seed. Once the field is planted, he labors to maintain the ideal conditions for his plantings to flourish by fertilizing, weeding, and watering his seed. The plants emerge and his labor continues as he protects the field from pestilence and damage. Then a few weeks prior to harvest, he is weary and gives up. All is for naught as he loses his entire crop because of his latter neglect. Or perhaps a storm threatened, he saw the warnings but neglected to respond, and the mistake cost him the ingathering. What a waste of time, money, labor, and resources only to falter at the moment of realization.

What about a businessman who labors to build his company for years, only to lose it in the end because of a few bad decisions? Again . . . tragic. In both cases, the benefits of extensive labor are lost in a moment through wrong choices.
This is why Scripture repeatedly encourages us to finish well: “He who endures to the end” (Matt. 10:22; 24:13; Mark 13:13), again, “We have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end” (Heb. 3:14), and again, “He who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end” (Rev. 2:26, emphasis mine in all), and the list continues. Christianity is not a sprint but an endurance run. Therefore it is not how we start the race that counts, but how we complete it. How we finish is determined by the choices we make, and those are often formed by patterns we develop along the way.

Life-Defining Moments

There was an incident with one of our sons. He wanted to do something I wasn’t in favor of. He knew where I stood, yet I felt he was old enough to make the call, so the final decision was his.

Time passed and I found out he chose to go against my counsel. Later we sat down to discuss his choice. I explained, “The choice was up to you, but I want to take this opportunity to teach you from this. Listen to this true story.

“There was a young king named Rehoboam. Shortly after he began his reign, a question arose from his subjects: ‘Your father made our lives rough from the demands he placed upon us. Would you please lighten the load and we will happily serve you.’

“The young king instructed the people to return in a few days to hear his decision. His father’s counselors told him, ‘If you will be a servant to this people, be considerate of their needs and respond with compassion, work things out with them, they’ll end up doing anything for you’ (1 Kings 12:7 MSG).
“It was good and wise counsel, but the young king rejected their advice and went to his peers. They said, “These people who complain, “Your father was too hard on us; lighten up”—well, tell them this: “My little finger is thicker than my father’s waist. If you think life under my father was hard, you haven’t seen the half of it. My father thrashed you with whips; I’ll beat you bloody with chains!”’ (vv. 10–11 MSG)

“The young king, Rehoboam, heeded his friends’ advice with some tragic results. The kingdom that his father, Solomon, built was torn, and ten out of the twelve tribes of Israel were permanently fragmented as five-sixths of the kingdom was torn from his iron fist. One bad choice cost him dearly for the rest of his life.”

I then told my son, “Let’s go back. Perhaps for years Prince Rehoboam and his friends privately mocked and even spurned the counsel of his father, Solomon, or his elders. Maybe they snickered over goblets of wine and shook their heads in the secrecy of the royal chambers at what they presumed to be foolish and old-fashioned advice. Vain thoughts may have cluttered Rehoboam’s head: I will keep my peace while I am yet a prince, but when I become king I will not listen to these silly old men. As a prince, his decisions to ignore and lightly esteem his elders’ wisdom cost him very little. He did not realize the die had been set and one day he would be foolish while thinking himself wise. When his life-defining moment arose, he lacked the pattern necessary to execute sound judgment.”

I continued: “We all have life-defining moments. They are like open-book tests, but we don’t know we have been examined until it is over. Son, you decided not to heed my counsel and this time it cost you nothing. But the day will come when a life-defining
moment arises. If you’ve already developed the pattern of heed-
ing wise counsel, you will naturally follow suit and find yourself
greatly rewarded.”

Moving on from my son, let’s review another example. The
children of Israel had not developed a pattern of embracing God’s
Word. He delivered them from bondage, but they repeatedly com-
plained and disobeyed. There were times this behavior seemed to
exact a minimum cost, and other times when it didn’t appear to
affect them at all. However, in the process, a pattern was being
established. Eventually their life-defining moment arose. Twelve
spies were sent into Canaan to check out the land, which God set
apart as theirs. The spies returned with a whiny, negative report,
and the whole assembly followed and began to complain as be-
fore, but this time it cost them dearly. They would never enter the
Promised Land and for the rest of their lives they would wander.
In a moment’s time they lost all they’d labored to possess. There
was no reversal of their loss. Though God promised the land to
them, they would never lay hold of it, just as Rehoboam lost the
ten tribes for the rest of his life and generations afterward.

There is an important lesson for the young and old in this: we
don’t want to merely obey God; we need to catch His heart. It is
then we will glimpse the wisdom behind His directives, and not
just see them as constraints or laws. The young prince Rehoboam
never caught his father’s or his elders’ hearts. The older generation
of Israelites never quite saw what God was doing, nor the good-
ness of His heart toward them, and they lost everything.

Now let’s look at the other side of the coin. There are exam-
ples throughout the Scriptures where individuals glimpsed God’s
heart and developed wise decision-making models. When those
undetected *life-defining moments* occurred, they responded correctly and received great rewards.

The simplest way to not lose what we’ve labored for is to develop patterns of consistently honoring God’s counsel. Each and every day we are presented with opportunities to make choices. The day will come when we will look back and know which were in fact *life-defining*, but if we’ve developed godly patterns we’ll continue to follow suit, and later realize our reward.

**Rewards**

This brings us to John’s next point, and for ease of reference we’ll review the entire verse: “Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for, *but that we may receive a full reward.*”

He is a *Rewarder* (Heb. 11:6).

This is a truth we must establish deep within our hearts. In fact, He loves to reward. How did He introduce Himself to Abraham? “After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, ‘Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, *your exceedingly great reward*’” (Gen. 15:1, emphasis mine).

He said, “I am your . . . *exceedingly great reward.*” Wow, what a way to present yourself, especially when You are God Almighty! Psalm 19:9–11 echoes this: “The ordinances of the Lord are true and righteous altogether . . . *in keeping them there is great reward*” (AMPC, emphasis mine). We read in Psalm 57:2, “I will cry to God Most High, Who performs on my behalf and *rewards me* [Who brings to pass His purposes for me and surely completes them]!” (AMPC, emphasis mine).

God is a rewarder and loves to reward His children! As a
father of four sons, I’ve discovered a portion of this delight. I love to see their eyes light up with gratefulness, and watch fulfillment settle upon them as they bask in the afterglow of a choice made well and rewarded. However, I’ve also learned it is unwise to reward bad behavior. By rewarding those who don’t deserve it or have not earned it, you destroy the power of incentive—and incentive is a good thing. My boys know I love them, but over the years they’ve grown to understand the difference between my love and pleasure. God loves each of us deeply, and His love is perfect. However, that doesn’t necessarily mean there won’t be times when He’s not altogether pleased with our actions or choices. God rewards those He is pleased with, which are those who heed His counsel.

Notice John says, “That we may receive a full reward.” While meditating on this statement, the word full jumped off the page. I thought, If there’s a full reward, then there’s a partial reward, and even a no-reward scenario. (Remember, we are not talking salvation here, but rewards.) Upon further meditation, I concluded there are two applications to which John is referring. The first is the Judgment Seat of Christ. Paul states: “We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord” (2 Cor. 5:8).

We know immediately Paul is not addressing all humanity, for when an unbeliever is absent from the body he is not present with the Lord; rather, he is in hell. This may sound harsh, but it’s the truth. Jesus didn’t come into our world to condemn it—quite the contrary, He came to save it. The world was already condemned because of Adam, who sold us over to eternal death (John 3:17–18). Only those who receive Jesus by committing their lives completely
to Him will be present with the Lord when they leave behind their earthly bodies. Paul continues to address the believers:

“Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”

—2 Cor. 5:9–10

Every believer will stand before Christ’s Judgment Seat. On that day, each of us will receive according to what we did in our short time on earth. The Good News Translation states, “We will each receive what we deserve.” Our sins will not be judged, for the blood of Jesus eradicated the eternal punishment ascribed to sin. Rather, we will be rewarded, or suffer loss, for what we did as believers. Our deeds, words, thoughts, and even motives will be inspected in the light of His Word. The temporary things on which we built our lives will be devoured, which will result in lost opportunities, and the eternal will result in everlasting rewards (1 Cor. 3:14–15).

The scope of loss suffered to rewards will vary from having everything we have done consumed, yet we’ll be saved, but as through fire—all the way to the heights of reigning alongside Jesus Christ forever and ever (1 Cor. 3:15; Rev. 3:21). This is certainly a vast range. The first would be our example of a “no-reward” situation; the latter would be an example of the “full-reward” scenario, with the partial reward falling anywhere in between.

These Judgment Seat decisions are called “eternal judgments”
(Heb. 6:1–2), which means there will never be any alterations, amendments, or changes made to those decrees. Therefore, it can be concluded that what we do with the cross of Christ determines where we’ll spend eternity; however, the way we live thereafter as believers determines how we’ll spend it.

It is wise, therefore, to look diligently into what Scripture says about eternal judgments and rewards. This knowledge is described as an elementary teaching of Christ. In elementary school, your foundation is laid with all your educational building blocks, such as reading, writing, math, etc. Can you imagine trying to build your high school or college education without knowing how to read, write, add, or subtract? It would be impossible. Yet far too many believers attempt to build their Christian lives without this elementary knowledge of the teaching of Christ. The urgency of this dilemma moved me to write Driven by Eternity, which addresses this issue in detail, and I recommend it as a companion to this message.

This Life

We’ve established that godly patterns carry the promise of reward at the Judgment Seat, but their blessing reaches us in this life as well. We read, “Godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come” (1 Tim. 4:8, emphasis mine).

Our Father desires to reward us both then and now as we heed His counsel. We are told, “The righteous will be rewarded in the earth” (Prov. 11:31 NASB). Not just in heaven, but in this life. And again, “Righteous people will be rewarded with good things”
James is emphatic when he states, “Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father” (James 1:16–17).

Good is from God. Don’t ascribe the harmful and detrimental to God; He is the giver of good. God’s desire is to reward you with His blessings (benefits) here and now. His rewards carry no backlash with them. We are told, “The blessing of the Lord makes one rich, and He adds no sorrow with it” (Prov. 10:22). And again, “The trustworthy person will get a rich reward” (Prov. 28:20 NLT). The rich reward is the full reward.

Continuing to ponder the apostle John’s words, I thought, For there to be full-, partial-, and no-reward scenarios in our future, then it stands to reason that, too, would apply to this present life. Upon reviewing the life of Jesus, this became evident. As He walked this earth encountering humanity, there were some who received the partial reward, others who received nothing, and those who attained full-portion rewards. Let’s look at a sampling of each, and watch for the patterns that emerge, which will show us the way He desires for each of us.
Nazareth anxiously anticipated the promised manifestation of Messiah; they were watchfully aware because it was the season He was to appear. They were similar to Christians today, for most know we are in the time period preceding His second coming. Jesus said we would know the season or generation, but not the day or hour. So there is no reason to think it odd the Israelites knew the season of His first coming. Daniel gave the time frame in his writings (Dan. 9:24–26), and the experts in the law told the wise men where to find the child Jesus (Matt. 2:4). The citizens of Nazareth knew the time was upon them, but once the Messiah was revealed in their midst we find a puzzling reaction:

“Now He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them.”

—Mark 6:5 (emphasis mine)
Notice the words “could do no mighty work there.” A few years ago while reading this scripture I was startled by this phrase. I thought, *Wait a minute, it doesn’t say, “He would do no mighty work,” but rather it specifies, “He could do no mighty work there.”* Had it said the former, I wouldn’t have given it a second thought, because it would deal with Jesus’s will. However, “could do no” meant He wasn’t withholding; rather He was restrained. This point is emphasized and clarified in other translations as well; the Amplified Bible, Classic Edition says, “He was not able to do.”

Our question becomes, *Why couldn’t Jesus do any mighty works in Nazareth?* What restrained Him? He performed great miracles in the other cities; the blind saw, deaf ears were opened, the crippled were suddenly walking, the dead raised. And this is just a sample of what was recorded. Frequently it was reported in the Gospels that He healed all manner of sickness and disease. What was the difference? Why were only a few sick healed in this city? Our answer is found in the words of the Nazarene people from the preceding verses:

> “Where did this Man get these things? And what wisdom is this which is given to Him, that such mighty works are performed by His hands! Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?” So they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house.”
> —Mark 6:2–4 (emphasis mine)
What’s happening? Let’s look. Jesus returned to the city He grew up in and joined God’s people as they gathered on the Sabbath. The entire community is in the synagogue. Then suddenly Jesus stands up and reads the following passage: “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me . . . ” (Luke 4:18).

The crowd knew what was coming—these were familiar words. They’d heard this passage in Isaiah numerous times; it was one of the main prophetic books that spoke of the coming Messiah. It would be no different than if today someone stood up and read the Beatitudes or the Lord’s Prayer; we’d know what was coming next.

Jesus continued, “To preach the gospel to the poor . . . to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD” (vv. 18–19).

To this, there was only one point that needed to be addressed in these citizens’ minds: why was this untrained young local reading the Scripture rather than their seasoned rabbi? But suddenly the bomb is dropped; as Jesus rolls up the scroll He announces, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing” (v. 21) —in other words, “I am the Messiah.” Then He goes on to tell of the great and mighty works wrought in the other cities; and closes with a strong prophetic message.

What? Is He for real? Are they hearing correctly? Did He actually say He is the One about whom Isaiah prophesied? How preposterous! Insane! In utter disbelief, the people begin to talk amongst themselves. “This is Jesus! What in the world is He doing? What is He saying?”

I can imagine one mother saying, “This can’t be! He was in my son’s Torah class!”
Stunned, another adds, “His family lives next door. He played with Benjamin!”

Others might have had more current memories: “He built the table we eat on every night! He built our chairs! He’s the carpenter’s son. What does He mean, ‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me’? Who does He think He is?”

Today we might protest, “He played soccer with my son!” or “He was in my daughter’s math class!”

They formed a mental image of how their Messiah would come from their understanding of Old Testament Scripture. Here’s another familiar passage from Isaiah:

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder . . . Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom . . . from that time forward, even forever.

—Isa. 9:6–7

These citizens were watching for a great King, One who would be both supernaturally wise and a powerful conqueror. He would swiftly deliver them from Roman oppression, and establish them as a nation without equal. He would regain the throne of David, and reign forever and ever. But when Jesus came as one of their own, raised in their schools, laughing in their streets, building household furniture, and now surrounded by mafia (tax collectors) and prostitutes, they were blindsided. They couldn’t grasp it. “Wait a minute!” they cried within and without. “This is not the way we expected the Messiah to come!” These local townspeople
didn’t realize there would be a few thousand years between the statement, “a Son is given,” and the total realization and physical manifestation, “of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end.”

This incident, along with others like it throughout the Scriptures, reveals a truth that is hard to grasp: often God will send us what we need in a package we don’t want. Why? To let us know He’s God and we cannot second-guess Him. We cannot search for answers merely with our heads; we must seek Him and His provision with our hearts. Scripture cannot be interpreted from our limited human mental understanding. There must be a breath of the Spirit of God. He alone gives wise counsel and correct application.

**A Stark Contrast**

Allow me to give another example of this. The Pharisees were watching for a mighty conquering Messiah as well, a hero who would deliver God’s people from Roman oppression. These leaders anxiously awaited His coming, believing they would be made under-rulers of this new kingdom established in Jerusalem. So when Jesus came on the scene as an untrained man from Galilee, they mocked Him. He didn’t fit the image of their Messiah either.

In one of their many interrogations of Jesus, it is recorded, “Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, “The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, “See here!” or “See there!” For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you”’ (Luke 17:20–21).
Again these Pharisees were referring to Isaiah’s prophecy of the Messiah’s earthly kingdom. They, too, were looking for a Messiah based on their mental interpretation of scripture, rather than relying on the Spirit of God’s leading. They knew God not by their hearts, but by their own reasoning.

In contrast, let’s look at another man who was also watching for the Messiah. His name is Simeon. The Gospel of Luke tells us he was:

just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. So he came by the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said . . .

—Luke 2:25–28 (emphasis mine)

The summation of what Simeon spoke over Jesus was a declaration of this thirty-day-old baby as the Messiah. Now this is most interesting. Here is a man who recognizes the Messiah when He is but a month old, and yet all of Nazareth cannot recognize Him and the Pharisees mock Him when He is thirtysomething years of age, and performing signs and wonders no human being ever accomplished! Why? Again, it is because God is Spirit, and those who would know Him and His ways must know Him by His Spirit who reveals truth. There is a key difference between Simeon and the others; and this truth we are about to see. This revelation
will bring understanding to why so many do not receive their full inheritance from God.

Honor

To begin, let’s again look at the statement Jesus made concerning His hometown’s response to His ministry. He said, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house” (Mark 6:4, emphasis mine).

The key word here is honor. They didn’t honor Him.

The Greek word for honor is *time* (pronounced “tee-mee”). I’ve done much study of this word, and the words closely related to it. I’ve looked in numerous Greek dictionaries, commentaries, and other books containing studies of the original Greek. I’ve also had in-depth talks with two fluent-speaking Greek men. One lives in Greece (his family is now four generations of ministers); the other is a minister living in Great Britain. The definitions I’m about to give are a combination of all the feedback I’ve received from these sources.

The simplistic and literal definition of *time* (honor) is “a valuing.” When you speak of the word *time* to a Greek man, he thinks of something *valuable, precious, weighty*, such as gold. Think of it—you don’t put gold in your junk drawer; rather you assign it a place of honor. Other definitions of honor are *appreciation, esteem, favorable regard, respect*.

Sometimes to better understand a word, look at its counterpart. The antonym of honor is *dishonor*. The Greek word is *atimia*. Some of its definitions are: *to not show respect or value; to treat as common, ordinary, or menial*. When you speak of dishonor to
a Greek man, he would think of something common, light, and easily done away with, such as vapor. A stronger form of dishonor is to be treated shamefully and even humiliated.

From looking at my study of Greek dictionaries and commentaries, I’ve discovered that honor can be displayed in action, word, and even thought. But all true honor originates from the heart. This is why God says, “Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths and honor Me with their lips, but have removed their hearts far from Me, and their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men” (Isa. 29:13, emphasis mine).

Notice God says, “their fear toward Me.” True honor is an outflow from a heart that reverentially fears God. This is important, and we will discuss it further in a later chapter.

Jesus said these people of Nazareth withheld honor from Him. These hometown folks didn’t treat Him as valuable and precious. They didn’t recognize Him as One divinely sent to them to fulfill God’s will. Rather, they saw an ordinary man, a common local boy, standing before them. Because of this, they only received a partial reward. Jesus was restrained from doing any mighty works. There was nothing notable that occurred; probably a few headaches, maybe arthritis, or a couple of bad backs were healed.

Think of it. Jesus—the Son of God, the Son of Man filled with God’s Spirit without measure—is sent to heal the sick and all who are oppressed of the devil; but He cannot fulfill this commission, not because it wasn’t God’s will for all to be healed in that city, but because they restricted Him by withholding honor. They treated Him as a common local. Therefore, they received a very small partial reward (just a few of the sick were healed).
A No-Reward Situation

In the Gospels we find another incident in which Jesus is in a house teaching a multitude of teachers and experts of the Scriptures. These ministers came out of every town in Galilee and Judea to hear Him. We read: “And the power of the Lord was present to heal them” (Luke 5:17, emphasis mine).

Notice the word them—this would definitely refer to those in attendance. Now, let me make a statement of truth: God never wastes anything. Oh yes, consider the time Jesus fed the four thousand and again the five thousand. In both cases, He gave strict instructions to gather all the leftovers up so none would be lost. What many of us would have thrown away or dumped into the garbage disposal, He collected. You can see this same pattern throughout all of Scripture in God’s ways. He never wastes anything.

So if the power of the Lord was present to heal the Pharisees and teachers of the law, that means there was at least one of them, and more than likely several who needed to be healed. In this, I speak from experience. Let’s bring it forward to the present. Gather a few hundred people in a room, and with a group that large there are at least a dozen, and many times more, who have some kind of ailment. God’s power is there to heal them all, but not one of them is healed.

Later, some men brought their paralyzed friend on a stretcher. After failing to gain entrance by the front door because the building was jammed full, they tried another route. Rather than give up, they went onto the housetop, tore open the tile roof, and
lowered the paralytic down into the midst to Jesus. We then read: “When He saw their faith, He said to him, ‘Man, your sins are forgiven you.’ And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, ‘Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?’” (vv. 20–21).

Notice Luke writes the Pharisees, “began to reason, saying.” Let’s probe a little deeper. Did these leaders whisper to their comrades sitting nearest to them? Did they congregate in small groups and discuss Jesus’s statement with one another? To bring clarity, we need to go to Matthew’s account. He writes they “said within themselves” (9:3, emphasis mine). So we see these teachers dishonored Jesus only with their thoughts. They spoke within themselves. They didn’t speak aloud shameful, critical, or degrading words, but rather they were contrary only in thought. Mark writes as well that they were “reasoning in their hearts” (2:6). Listen to Jesus’s response to their thoughts:

But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, “Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise, take up your bed and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins”—He said to the paralytic, “I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.”

—Mark 2:8–11

Immediately the paralytic rose up, picked up his bed, and walked out of the building in full sight of all the ministers. The
Bible records that these leaders and teachers, “all were amazed and glorified God, saying, ‘We never saw anything like this!’” (v. 12).

They were all amazed, but none of them were healed, even though the power of the Lord was initially there to heal them! They received no reward because they dishonored Jesus merely by way of thought! In this incident it wasn’t their actions, nor their words, but their unvoiced thoughts. Remember, honor or dishonor can be displayed in deed, word, or thought, but all true honor originates from the heart. Thoughts are important!

Many of these leaders had already developed a pattern of dishonoring Jesus. They had mocked and disdained Him, and many times attempted to publicly shame Him. It is recorded, “So the scribes and Pharisees watched Him closely . . . that they might find an accusation against Him” (Luke 6:7). And again we read, “So they watched Him, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous, that they might seize on His words” (20:20). These are only a few accounts of many. As you can see, these men went beyond withholding honor to the place of dishonoring Jesus.

The people of Nazareth withheld honor, and received a small or partial reward. The leaders dishonored Jesus in thought and received no reward. Now let’s examine those who received full rewards and see if there is any connection with the principle of honor.
If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved.

—Rom. 10:9–10 (NLT)

God wants you to experience life in its fullness. He’s passionate about you and the plan He has for your life. But there’s only one way to start the journey to your destiny: by receiving salvation through God’s Son, Jesus Christ.

Through the death and resurrection of Jesus, God made a way for you to enter His kingdom as a beloved son or daughter. The sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross made eternal and abundant life freely available to you. Salvation is God’s gift to you; you cannot do anything to earn or deserve it.

To receive this precious gift, first acknowledge your sin of
living independently of your Creator, for this is the root of all the sins you have committed. This repentance is a vital part of receiving salvation. Peter made this clear on the day that five thousand were saved in the Book of Acts: “Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out” (Acts 3:19). Scripture declares that each of us is born a slave to sin. This slavery is rooted in the sin of Adam, who began the pattern of willful disobedience. Repentance is a choice to walk away from obedience to yourself and Satan, the father of lies, and to turn in obedience to your new Master, Jesus Christ—the One who gave His life for you.

You must give Jesus the lordship of your life. To make Jesus “Lord” means you give Him ownership of your life (spirit, soul, and body)—everything you are and have. His authority over your life becomes absolute. The moment you do this, God delivers you from darkness and transfers you to the light and glory of His kingdom. You simply go from death to life—you become His child!

If you want to receive salvation through Jesus, pray these words:

_God in Heaven, I acknowledge that I am a sinner and have fallen short of Your righteous standard. I deserve to be judged for eternity for my sin. Thank You for not leaving me in his state, for I believe You sent Jesus Christ, Your only begotten Son, who was born of the Virgin Mary, to die for me and carry my judgment on the Cross. I believe He was raised again on the third day and is now seated at Your right hand as my Lord and Savior. So on this day, I repent of my independence from You and give my life eternally to the lordship of Jesus._
Jesus, I confess You as my Lord and Savior. Come into my life through Your Spirit and change me into a child of God. I renounce the things of darkness which I once held on to, and from this day forward I will no longer live for myself. But by Your grace I will live for You who gave Yourself for me that I may live forever.

Thank You, Lord; my life is now completely in Your hands, and according to Your Word, I shall never be ashamed. In Jesus’s name, Amen.

Welcome to the family of God! I encourage you to share your exciting news with another believer. It’s also important that you join a Bible-believing local church and connect with others who can encourage you in your new faith.

You have just embarked on the most remarkable journey. May you grow in revelation, grace, and friendship with God every day!
This life on earth is but a vapor, yet many of us live as though there is nothing on the other side. But the way we live this life will determine how we spend eternity. Scripture tells us there will be various degrees of rewards for believers—ranging from watching as all a person accomplished is devoured in judgment, all the way to reigning with Christ Himself.

Drawing on the principles in 2 Corinthians 5:9-11, John Bevere reminds us that all believers will stand before Christ to receive what they have earned in life. Many of us will be shocked to learn that the majority of our time was spent on things that don’t count toward eternal rewards.

So how can we develop significant lives? In Driven By Eternity, you will learn to discover your calling and multiply what God has given you. As you gain an eternal perspective, you will be empowered to labor for what lasts.

Available at: CloudLibrary.org
Have you given much thought to eternity? You may know where you will spend it, but do you know how you will spend it?

It is vital for believers to live with an eternal perspective, yet eternity can be difficult to grasp. This epic audio drama from John Bevere’s book Driven by Eternity offers a window into what lies beyond our earthly reality.

Join the majestic King Jalyn, the dark lord Dagon, Charity, Independent, and others as you explore the wondrous lands of Affabel and the terrible outer limits of Lone. Your life will be transformed as these characters reveal what lies within your own heart.

Available at: CloudLibrary.org
The Bait of Satan exposes one of the most deceptive snares the enemy uses to get believers out of the will of God: offense. Most people have been ensnared by this trap and don’t even realize it.

Don’t be fooled! Christ said, “It is impossible that no offenses should come” (Luke 17:1). You cannot choose whether or not you will be offended, but you can choose how you will respond. If you handle offense correctly, you will become stronger rather than bitter. Only the right response will enable you to have an unhindered relationship with God.

Through this message, John Bevere will empower you to remain in the will of God and break free from suspicion and distrust. You can escape the victim mentality and live without the burdens of aggravation and frustration. As you discover a greater level of submission to God, your life will abound with forgiveness, reconciliation, and every-increasing joy.

Available at: CloudLibrary.org
If it’s good, it must be God. Right?

These days the terms good and God seem synonymous. We believe what’s generally accepted as good must be in line with God’s will. Generosity, humility, justice—good. Selfishness, arrogance, cruelty—evil. The distinction seems pretty straightforward.

But is that all there is to it? If good is so obvious, why does the Bible say that we need discernment to recognize it?

Good or God? isn’t another self-help message. This book will do more than ask you to change your behavior. It will empower you to engage with God on a level that will change every aspect of your life.
Just like Superman, who can leap over any hurdle and defeat every foe, followers of Christ have the supernatural ability to conquer the challenges we face. But the problem for both Superman and us is there’s a kryptonite that steals our strength.

Of course, both Superman and kryptonite are fictional. But spiritual kryptonite is not.

This book offers answers to why so many of us are unable to experience the divine strength that was evident among first-century Christians.

In Killing Kryptonite, John Bevere reveals what this kryptonite is, why it’s compromising our communities, and how to break free from its bondage.

Not for the faint of heart, Killing Kryptonite is anything but a spiritual sugar high. This is serious truth for any Christ-follower who longs to embrace the challenging but rewarding path of transformation.
Once upon a time… Marriage was forever. It was a covenant that knit one man and one woman together. This weaving made both stronger, nobler, and more vibrant expressions of who they were created to be. They were better together than either had been on their own. The wedding ceremony was but a beginning. It was the gateway to build their happily ever after. Each choice and action was designed to construct the life their union represented. Husband and wife walked into the great unknown with hearts, hands, and voices intertwined to express the love of their Creator.

How did we lose touch with this profound love story? In *The Story of Marriage*, John and Lisa Bevere invite you to rediscover God’s original plan. Whether you’re married, single, or engaged, your story is a part of His.

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**Messenger International** exists to help individuals, families, churches and nations realize and experience the transforming power of God’s Word. This realization will result in lives empowered, communities transformed, and a dynamic response to the injustices plaguing our world.

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John Bevere displays a rare talent for detailed scrutiny of biblical text. Readers will be startled by some of his fresh, perceptive observations.

—PUBLISHERS WEEKLY

No Christian wants to place limitations on God, but many of us unknowingly restrict His activity in our lives because we ignore a critical spiritual principle: Honor.

It’s a concept largely lost in our culture, but as you’ll see in the pages of this book, it is core to releasing God’s kingdom into all aspects of life.

In Honor’s Reward, best-selling author John Bevere unveils how embracing the call to honor aligns you with God’s value system and positions you to receive all He has for you.

Pairing profound biblical insights with powerful stories of these principles in action, this book will give you a fresh outlook on this forgotten virtue—and, more importantly, a passion to incorporate it into every area of your life.

JOHN BEVERE is an international speaker and best-selling author known for his bold and uncompromising approach to God’s Word. John and his wife, Lisa, are the founders of Messenger International—a ministry committed to developing uncompromising followers of Christ who transform our world. When he’s home in Colorado, you can find John playing competitive card games with his family or trying to convince Lisa to take up golf.

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