

The Exceeding Great Reward

by Henry Law

The exceeding great reward is Christ Himself, who gives believers all He is and all He has.

Scripture: Genesis 15:1, Matthew 16:24, Philippians 3:8, Colossians 3:5, Revelation 21:4

Topics: "Christian Joy", "Eternal Rewards"

Description

Henry Law preaches on the profound truth that believers find constant peace and joy in Christ, who is the source of all happiness. Through the example of Abraham's obedience and surrender to God's calling, Law emphasizes that true Christians are called to relinquish earthly desires, self-righteousness, sinful habits, and worldly attachments to fully embrace Christ as their exceeding great reward. He highlights that in Christ, believers receive immeasurable blessings, including God's protection, wisdom, righteousness, sympathy, intercession, and eternal life, making Him the ultimate reward and treasure in whom all joy and fulfillment are found.

Transcript

"I am your shield, and your exceeding great reward." Genesis 15:1

It is a grand truth, that pleasantness and peace hold constant court in the believer's breast. But it must be so. For where faith dwells, there is Christ; and He enters as the author and giver of all joy.

Reader! come apart for a little moment, and pray over the simple words, which here endeavor to confirm this principle. If the Christ-revealing Spirit withdraws the veil, you will see the well-spring of happiness. Drinking of this pure stream, you will go on your way, blessed with much of heaven in possession--with all heaven in prospect.

We here fly back to Abraham's inspiring annals. He was dwelling in the land of his birth, in the home of his childhood, amid the friends of his heart. A voice shakes him from his dead repose. "Get out from your country, and from your kindred, and from your father's house." Many would have said, "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" Not so the called of the Lord. By faith he "obeyed, and he went out, not knowing where he went." He was no loser. He received manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting. Again, when he had scattered kings in the rescue of Lot, princely treasures courted his acceptance. Masses of gold and silver sparkled at his feet. "Take the goods for yourself," was a tempting offer, but with holy indifference he turned away. He was no loser. After these things, an assurance richer than all the riches of earth enriched him. "Fear not, Abram, I am your Shield and your

exceeding great reward."

Now in this narrative we have an unerring teacher's voice. It tells us that the true Christian is called to many relinquishments, to much self-denial, to constant trampling on earth's gilded baits. But it tells us, that every relinquishment is wealth, and every loss is gain. For he who leaves all for Christ, receives more than all in Christ. A few particulars will establish this truth. There is a plain inscription over the portal of the heavenward-path: "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way." He, then, who would enter, must be stripped of all those flowing robes, in which men flaunt and swell in nature's broad road. Self-righteousness must be torn off to its every shred. This is the very flaying of the soul. Dependence on imagined merit adheres as the very skin. But it all must yield. Self, in its most cherished form, must be despised and hated, as an abominable thing. All our darling excellences, all our fond conceits, all our superiorities must be rejected, as a filthy rag. It is hard work to cast all this away, and to go naked to be clothed by Jesus. But, if ever we would be saved, it must be done.

So, too, every hope which finds a Savior in the externals of rites and services, and means of grace, must be ground to powder and given to the winds. The channels of grace are not grace. The way is not the end. The implements by which we feed, are not food. The husk is not the kernel. The casket is not the jewel. The scaffold is not the building. The door is not the mansion. Here again is work, which requires a martyr's spirit, and more than human discernment. Satan is quick to deck our holy things, and our holy places with a show of saving efficacy. He whispers, that to put these into their proper place, is to put religion out of all place. But we must not hesitate. Christ must be embraced, unaided and alone, or not at all.

I need scarcely add, that every sweet sin, which has long been caressed in the recesses of the heart, must be dragged to the light and slain. This is oftentimes as the plucking out the right eye. But there must be no sparing. Christ is light. Sin is darkness. How can they be one? Sin loved, indulged, retained, binds fast the soul to the wheels of the chariot in which Christ cannot sit.

Again, the love of the world, in its foolish vanities, its empty shows, its godless maxims, its defiling pleasures, its lying principles, its soul-beclouding books, and all its idol-worship of talent, wit, and falsely-called glory, must be nailed to the cross. Its conformity must be shunned, as poison--its touch shunned, as a viper's sting. The heart must have no throne, but for Christ. Every joy must center in Him--every flower of refreshment must be gathered from Him. This walk is a departure from nature's country, from sin's kindred, and from the devil's home. It is a march towards a land, which Christ will give. It requires efforts many, and struggles many, and conflicts many, thus to take up the Christian's staff, and to put on the Christian's sandal, and to spurn all things dear to nature and to self.

But what is rejected? Nothing but husks and shadows--nothing but vexation, and disappointment, and misery--nothing but an oppressive load, a mocking shadow, a gnawing care, a weary chase after emptiness, a groaning under present burden, a dread of future reckoning.

What is gained? The substance of all good, the perfection of all excellence, in Christ. He welcomes to the secret chambers of His love. He opens His heart. A voice is heard by every coming sinner, You thus give yourself to Me, because I gave Myself for you, and now I give Myself to you. Fear not, I am your "exceeding great reward." O my soul, is this all-satisfying treasure yours? It turns all dross to gold, all clouds to sunshine, all sighs to song, and earth to the very gate of heaven.

Mark well the vast assurance, "I am your exceeding great reward." There would have been wondrous grace in the word, I will give some recompense. But it is more than grace to say, I Myself am your reward.

The prospect of future glory would have been sweet encouragement, but it is mercy above mercy to bestow a present, instant privilege. I am your reward. There would have been marvelous comfort in the pledge, You shall lose nothing in my service. But it is very God to speak, "I am your exceeding great reward." Mark, then, the vast assurance. Christ Himself is the reward--the present reward--the great reward--the exceeding great reward, which fills believing hearts. All He is, and all He has is theirs. Theirs by His love, which had no birth--theirs by His grace, which has no bounds--theirs by His promise, which has no change; theirs by His gift, which cannot be recalled. Theirs, because He delights to bless them. Theirs, because He overjoys in their joy.

Sincerely would I speak of the reward, which He gives in the gift of Himself. But here the tongues of men and angels fail. He is God. Is His deity a treasure? He says to His people, Open wide your hands, My deity is yours! As God, His power is Omnipotence. He uses it for them. It protects them by night and day from the fury and hate of earth and hell. It stands every moment a high barrier between them and destruction. It prevails with Satan to beat him back. It prevails with the Father to draw Him near. His wisdom is unsearchable. But it is all for them. He so plans and disposes, that the fate of empires and the falling sparrow alike yield them good. His Spirit is theirs. He is sent forth to awaken, to reveal salvation, to win to the cross, to cheer, to sanctify, and to lead into the pastures of truth and holiness.

He is God-man. As such He has died, and endured agonies, and sustained a curse, and wrought righteousness, and possesses a kinsman's heart to sympathize. All is theirs. His death is theirs, that they may never die. His agonies are theirs, to expiate. His curse is theirs, to redeem. His blood is theirs, to wash them whiter than the whitest snow. His righteousness is theirs, to deck them in beauties fit for the Father's admiring gaze. His sympathy is theirs, that He may have a fellow-feeling in all their infirmities, and a brother's pity in all their griefs. So, too, His present life is theirs, that they may live forever. His intercession is theirs. Hence streams of blessings ever flow. His advocacy is theirs. Hence pardons cease not: and God's countenance is ever the meridian-sun of smiles.

Yet a little while, and He comes again. His return is theirs, to receive them in glorified bodies unto Himself. His heavens are theirs, that they may dwell in one home. His throne is theirs, that they reign on one seat. His angels are theirs, as ministering guards. His providences are theirs, always revolving around the pivot of their welfare. His ministers are theirs, to call, to feed, to build them up. His Scriptures are theirs, as a mirror, in which they may see His work and learn His ways. His ordinances are theirs, as nourishment and strength, as seals and pledges of His everlasting covenant. Thus they live, that they may receive grace from Him. They die, that they may receive glory in Him. They revive, that they may see all the perfections of Jehovah, and feast upon all joys before Him.

Reader! strive to expand these hints. They tend to show the blessedness of the "exceeding great reward" in Christ. But is it your desire to have your portion in such happy state? Come, then, surrender all for Christ. Make Him your own by faith. Lift up the gate of your heart, and this King of Glory will come in. Abide in Him, and He will abide in you. Give Him your confidence, and He will be to you this boundless recompense. Can you think that He is less rich to bless now, than He was of old? Have His rewards lost one grain of their immeasurable greatness? It cannot be.

Act the faith of Abraham, and you will hear as Abraham heard, and find as Abraham found, "I am your exceeding great reward." You will testify, as grateful Jacob did, "God has dealt graciously with me, and I have enough," or rather, "I have all things." You will experience with Moses, that the reproach of Christ is greater riches than the treasures of kingdoms.

You will touch the chord of David's harp, and sound aloud, "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance, and of my cup." Your overflowing heart will testify, that the half was not told you! But we need not go back to the early records of faith to show that Christ is this "exceeding great reward." It is the one experience of all His servants. Many are cottages, in which, while penury frowns, the godly inmate smiles content, and sings the song of heaven over scanty fare. Many are the reviled and the oppressed, in whose mouth is neither railing nor complaint, but one meek utterance of praise. Many are the chambers of languishing and pain, in which the very groans are melodies of gratitude. Many are the beds of dying, in which death is abolished and peace triumphs.

Faith can explain all this. It knows Him, who, by His presence, makes all burdens light--all sorrows joy. It is the Lord. He dwells there by faith. He is the "exceeding great reward." Faith, too, can take wings and pierce the skies, and enter the home of the redeemed. What is that scene? Multitudes upon multitudes, with robes of white, and crowns of righteousness, and palms of victory, and songs of endless praise, follow the Lamb wherever He goes. This is the recompense of Christ. He bought it all. He gave it all. He prepared it all for them. He prepared them all for it. Is He not an "exceeding great reward?" Can you now take the world instead of Him? Look again. Read again. Think again. Holy Spirit! allow no one to put these pages aside, until, by Your mighty power, Christ is established in the heart, as the "exceeding great reward."

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