



Results of the Evaluation: Reward & Loss of Reward, 1 Cor 3:14-15; Passages that Mandate Bible Study for Spiritual Growth: 2 Tim 2:15; 3:16-17; Col 1:3-9

The evaluation is for the purpose of reward. Those who grow in grace will not only be qualified to produce divine good but will be motivated to do so. Those who do not grow in grace will not be qualified due to ignorance of the plan of God and their production will come from false motivation and therefore produce human good.

The rewards that are imputed to positive believers at the evaluation tribunal of Christ are disclosed by our Lord to the Apostle John in Revelation 2-3 which we have developed as the Nike Awards. John issues the awards by means of seven grants introduced by the phrase:

τῷ νικῶντι, *tōi nikōnti* - "To him who overcomes"

The word *nikōnti* is a derivative of the noun **νίκη, *nikē*** which means, victory. Those who are victors are winners in the Invisible War and they are rewarded.

- 32- Our quick overview of 1 Corinthians 3:10-15 has provided a summary of how the pastor must observe context when examining a passage. He must evaluate every word to determine its meaning in the mind of the writer. This means he must utilize isagogics, apply pertinent categories of doctrine, and exegete each word.
- 33- When a pastor approaches the Bible utilizing this system he is able to develop a clear and precise interpretation of a given passage that harmonizes with the entire Scripture.
- 34- Members of the congregation are thus given a source of motivation to produce works that are meaningful. The proper motivation is to serve God, to glorify Christ, and to magnify the power and majesty of the Word of God.
- 35- The Scripture is clear that to do this the believer must study the Bible seriously and under a pastor that is not afraid to utilize the system just noted in his analysis of the Word. There are many verses that emphasize this:

2 Timothy 2:15 - Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of God.

2 Timothy 3:16 - All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness;

v. 17 - that the man of God may be mature, equipped for every good work.

Colossians 1:3 - We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying consistently for you,

v. 4 - having heard the report of the faith of you all in Christ Jesus, and the love which you have toward all the saints;

v. 5 - because of the confidence of what is preserved for you in heaven of which you heard before in the study of the Word of truth, the gospel [the biblical message],



The gospel is usually thought of as the doctrine of salvation: Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ; He was impeccable in His true humanity and perfect in His undiminished deity; as such He was a qualified substitute for us on the cross; He received willingly the imputation of our sins and their judgment upon Himself; when His true humanity expired His human spirit went into heaven in the presence of the Father, His soul went to Paradise in the presence of the Holy Spirit, and His body was placed in the grave of Joseph of Arimathea; three days and three nights later His soul and human spirit were reunited with His body in resurrection. One's personal faith in the veracity of these statements results in forgiveness of pre-salvation sins and the imputation of eternal life.

However, the Colossians to whom Paul wrote were already believers. The word "gospel" has quite a different connotation to those who have believed in Christ. It refers in such contexts to the entire revelation from God with which He desires us to become familiar through Bible study. This the Colossians had done.

Colossians 1:6 - (the gospel of truth) being present in you even as [καθώς, *kathōs*: comparative conjunction] in all the world is constantly bearing fruit [application of doctrine to life that results in divine good] and increasing [the dividends that accrue from divine good], even as it has been doing in you also since the day you heard of it and began to fully understand the grace of God in the sphere of biblical truth [doctrine];

v. 7 - even as you have been taught from the source of Epaphras [pastor-teacher of the Colossian church], our beloved fellow servant, a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf,

v. 8 - who also informed us of your love in the Holy Spirit [reciprocal love which motivates spiritual growth].

Colossians 1:9 - Because of this [reciprocal love motivation], we also, from the day we heard [from Epaphras], do not cease to pray on your behalf, constantly asking that you might be filled [spiritual maturity] with the knowledge [ἐπίγνωσις, *epignōsis*: cognizance of divine thought] of His sovereign purpose [complete understanding of the directive will of God] by means of wisdom [σοφία, *sophia*: *epignōsis* knowledge plus discernment for its application to life and circumstances; ἐσωτερικὴ ἁρμονία, *esōterikē harmonia*: inner harmony with the Word present in one's soul] and spiritual understanding [σύνεσις, *sunesis*: cognizance that results in behavior consistent with divine instruction: ἐξωτερικὴ ἁρμονία, *exōterikē harmonia*: outer harmony with others in one's life].

Here I would remind you of our past studies on the subject of spiritual growth and how we illustrated it as a double-column phalanx, the left column representing one's acquisition of divine thought through Bible study. This divine thought is said by Paul to be *epignōsis* knowledge that motivates the right column's advance by means of reciprocal love for God.

This word *epignōsis* is extremely important and thus needs to be discussed.