

The Law of Rewards

Book Discussion Guide

Introduction

What was your initial reaction to the phrase “Give what we can’t keep to gain what we can’t lose” when you saw it on the book’s cover or read it in the introduction?

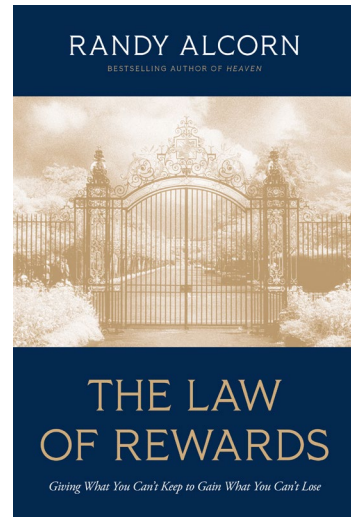
Randy Alcorn writes that the biggest misconception Christians have about giving is that when we give our money to a church, ministry or person in need, our money is “gone.” What are your thoughts on this?

What is the difference between “divesting” ourselves of our money and “investing” our money in heaven?

What did Jesus say in Acts 20:35, and how do his words affect the way you live?

Do you consider yourself to be God’s money manager? How have you been doing with God’s money?

Discuss the distinction between reluctant and joyful givers. Which one are you?



Chapter 1: What Determines Our Rewards?

Discuss your reaction to the statements, “If Christ is not Lord over our money and possessions, then he is not our Lord” and “There is a powerful relationship between our true spiritual condition and our attitude and actions concerning money and possessions.”

Were you surprised to read that our “poverty level” exceeds the average standard of living of nearly every other society in human history—both past and present?

Read Romans 14:12. Consider what you will say to God when you are required to account for what you have done with His money. What will you feel good about?

If things don't change, what might make you uncomfortable when you have to explain it?

The Law of Rewards: While our faith determines our eternal destination, our behavior determines our eternal rewards. What is your reaction to this?

What truth is found in 2 Corinthians 9:7? How does it make you feel?

Discuss personal examples of Reward Principle #1—*Giving brings greater blessing than receiving*.

Chapter 2: Fireproofing Our Money.

What is *your* treasure, according to the four questions on page 22?

Read Matthew 6:19-24. What significant observations can you make about this passage?

Instead of viewing money and possessions as an end in and of themselves, we should view them as a means to an end—storing up eternal treasures. What does your current use of money and possessions say about your view? If you are not pleased with what you see, what can you do to change?

Christ does not ask us to *reject* wealth. Wealth is to be pursued. However, the issue that arises is what constitutes true and lasting wealth? Christ offers the opportunity to trade temporary possessions and money for eternal rewards. How does your lifestyle measure up?

Reward Principle #2 – *When we invest money now in God's kingdom, we will receive great rewards later in heaven*. Look at your current use of money and discuss what Principle 2 reveals.

Although we cannot take our material wealth with us when we die, we can “send it ahead” by storing up treasures in heaven—by investing in God's kingdom here on earth. If you were to receive a monthly “bank” statement from God, like you do from your bank, what does your account in heaven contain? What are you willing to do without here and now in order to have lasting rewards in heaven?

Chapter 3: Gaining What You Can't Lose.

Read Luke 12:33-34. What do you learn from this passage?

We live in a very self-indulgent culture that is preoccupied with the accumulation of possessions. As such, the idea that “We provide tangible assets for ourselves in heaven by giving away tangible assets on earth” goes against what we see on a day-to-day basis. What is your reaction to this conflict? Discuss practical solutions.

Discuss Reward Principle #3—*God offers us rewards that are eternal, imperishable, and inexhaustible.*

When you look at society’s use of money in terms of Reward Principle #3, what do you see? How about your own use of money? How can you make changes in your own life?

Does the discussion of confederate currency help you see the lack of value money will have in heaven? How does knowing that “the currency of this world will be worthless at our death or Christ’s return” impact you and your current use of money?

Chapter 4: Two Perspectives, Two Masters.

Delayed gratification is a principle that goes against our society’s norm. However, that is exactly what we as Christians must strive to do. Discuss your reaction to “What we do with our money doesn’t simply *indicate* where our heart is. According to Jesus, it *determines* where our heart goes.”

Discuss the phrase “Money leads; hearts follow.”

“The believer’s view of reality should be radically different than the non-believer’s. We should live differently because we see differently.” Look at your life in these terms. What do you see?

Read Matthew 19:29. What does Jesus say here about eternal investing?

The author’s life was changed when he started viewing money as “eternal investment capital.” What is your view?

Although we have both God and money, we cannot serve both. What is your choice? Are you living your life in accordance with your choice? Do any changes need to be made?

Chapter 5: Looking through Eternity's Lens

What is your response to the author's question, "If life's greatest certainty is death, wouldn't it be foolish not to prepare for what lies beyond this life?"

Discuss Reward Principle #4: *When we see our lives through the lens of eternity, our attitude toward wealth will change drastically.*

Read Romans 14:10,12; James 2:12; 2 Peter 3:11-12. We tend to forget in our day-to-day living that we will be judged according to our deeds. What can you do to remind yourself of this?

Do you agree with the old adage that some people are "so heavenly minded that they are of no earthly good"? How does Colossians 3:1-2 disagree with this attitude?

Chapter 6: Heaven: The Home We've Never Been

Read John 14:2-3; Hebrew 11:14,16; Revelation 22:5. What do you envision heaven will be like? How does the author's description make you feel?

In preparation for Heaven what does I Corinthians 3:12-15 and Hebrew 12:1-2 encourage believers to do?

The author tells us that "five minutes after we die every Christian will understand that heaven is our home and earth was simply a temporary lodging on the homeward journey." He then says that "we don't have to wait until we die to know how we should live." How does the way you are currently living your life fit with these statements? Is there anything you would like to change?

Chapter 7: Daily Shaping Our Eternal Future

Is your house built on rock or on sand?

Discuss Reward Principle #5: *Obedying God is not only right, it's smart. It will always pay off in the end.*

Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-7 and James 2:17-26. What strikes you about these passages?

The author writes, “God condemns works done to earn salvation and works done to impress others. But our Lord enthusiastically *commends* works done for the right reasons.” What are the right reasons? Discuss examples.

Discuss your reaction to the author’s statement, “Where we spend eternity, whether heaven or hell, depends on our faith. Our further condition in either place will be affected by our works.”

At the end of this chapter the author invites us to read our own obituary as it would be written now by an onlooking angel from heaven’s point of view. Do you like what you see? What can you do differently in order to edit the obituary?

Chapter 8: Welcomed into Heaven’s Homes

Read Luke 16:9; John 14:2-3; Revelation 21:2,16.

Do you agree that in Heaven, and/or after the resurrection on the New Earth, people will literally live in dwelling places? Was Jesus actually suggesting in Luke 16 that we will spend time there with people who we have influenced on earth by our wise and generous use of God’s money?

How are you using your available resources to plan for your eternal future?

Did you try the field trip to the junkyard? If so, discuss your trip. If not, do you think it would be a good trip to make for you and your family? What might you learn?

Chapter 9: From Here to Eternity’s Rewards

What was your reaction to the farmers’ story at the beginning of this chapter?

Read Matthew 16:24-27; 19:27-30; 25:14-23; Luke 14:12-14; Romans 2:6, 10; Ephesians 6:8. What do you learn from these passages?

This chapter goes into specifics regarding rewards. How are you currently doing in the areas for which God rewards?

Discuss your reaction when the author writes, “although all believers will be with Christ, not all will reign with him, at least not with equal responsibility and authority.”

What is your reaction to Reward Principle #6: *We will have differing levels of reward in heaven, depending on our actions and choices on earth.*

Discuss the chart on page 99.

Chapter 10: Rewards: Our Missing Motivation.

Read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Galatians 6:9-10; Ephesians 6:7-8; 1 Timothy 6:17-19; 2 Timothy 4:7-8. What is the Apostle Paul’s view of works and rewards?

Discuss the implications of the author’s statement “The doctrine of eternal rewards for our obedience is the neglected key to unlocking our motivations.”

Discuss Reward Principle #7: *Desiring rewards is a proper motivation for serving Christ.*

Chapter 11: Power, Pleasures, and Possessions: Temptations or Motivations?

Read the following Scriptures and list the three “P” words that God promises to reward to the faithful:

1. Matthew 20:20-28; Luke 12:42-44; 19:15-19
2. Mathew 6:19-21; 19:16-22, 27-30
3. Psalm 16:11

As humans, we desire power, pleasure, and possessions. As such, we can also be tempted by each of these. Discuss the implications.

Discuss Reward Principle #8: *We are not to be motivated primarily by earthly power, possessions, and pleasures, yet we are offered all three in heaven if we invest now in God’s kingdom.*

Has this book changed any of your views about money and possessions? If so, how?