



Does God Keep Score?

Several years ago, I was having a conversation with someone about getting credit for ideas. I mentioned to them that it doesn't matter to me if I get credit for an idea or not, because God knows who did what and I was content to let God handle such things. This person then wondered whether or not God really credited man with such things. In essence, the question can be framed, "Does God keep score?"

First, we need to understand that God does not keep score in the sense that if we could only get enough points, then we would win salvation. The Bible teaches us that salvation isn't something that we earn. Jesus said in Luke 17:10, "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do." When we do everything that God tells us, we still haven't earned our salvation. We are still dependent upon Him for eternal life. Salvation is a gift that God gives upon the condition of faith and obedience (see Hebrews 11:6 and Hebrews 5:9). Neither our faith nor our obedience earns our salvation; but God promises to give us salvation when we trust and obey Him. It is the promise of God in which we trust, not in our own faith or obedience. In that regard, God doesn't keep score because no matter how high a score we

get, we'll never be high enough to earn our salvation.

Second, neither does God keep score as to how long we have been a faithful Christian as if that would make a difference in our salvation. Jesus told the parable of the "Laborers in the Vineyard" in Matthew 20:1-16. In the parable, the vineyard owner agrees with laborers for the same wage though they begin working at different times in the day. At the end of the day, they all get the same pay. The ones who started early complain, saying that they worked longer than the others. The owner asks them whether or not they agreed to that pay. They did, so that is what they got. The lesson from the parable is that salvation is available for all and it doesn't matter when you started working for God, everyone, whether young or old gets the same pay—eternal life and for that we ought to be very thankful. No, God does not keep score in regard to one's longevity of service in His kingdom.

Third, there is a sense, however, in which God does keep score. In Hebrews 6:10 we read, "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister." We learn from this passage that God takes note of those who do good things and He remembers those things. Moreover,

Jesus said, "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (Matthew 6:20). What are these treasures that we are to be laying up in heaven? He explains in Luke 12:33, "Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth." When we do good things for others, we lay up treasures in heaven. Are they for earning our salvation? No. What then are these treasures for? There is only one explanation. It is because God wants us to appreciate the results of the good things that we did once we are in heaven. That will be our treasure!

Does God keep score? He doesn't keep score when it comes to good works meriting salvation. Regardless of how high the score, it would never be enough to earn salvation. However, He does keep score when it comes to having treasure in heaven over which we can appreciate the results of our good efforts. And so John can write, "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward" (2 John 1:8). God doesn't keep score to determine who earned what, but to determine who IS what!

Kevin Cauley

Ready To Retire?



“Though the day may come for us to retire from whatever employment we have taken up, that is not to be the case with regard to the employment of self in spiritual matters.”

“If you don’t want to work you have to work to earn enough money so that you won’t have to work.” [Ogden Nash]

If you’re like me, you might have to read that statement a couple of times for it to sink in and make sense. Aside from receiving a large inheritance or winning a lottery (which for me would be a miracle since I have never bought a ticket) there is no way of getting around the need to work. However, if one works hard enough and long enough it is possible to retire at even an early age and then be able to sit back and enjoy a life of ease. Is that your goal for life?

Many people anxiously look forward to retirement. Perhaps some of these do so even before they have hardly begun to work. Then there are those who retire and have such difficulty figuring out what to do with their time they find another job. Still others become so fed up with the world around them they want to retire from life itself.

It is important to find something meaningful to do with our life. Without a sense of purpose, why live? Are we consciously seeking to find how whatever we do is linked to our relationship with God and what He has in mind for eternity?

As Solomon looked at life even in a general sense, he stated...

“(24) There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God, (25) for **apart from Him who can eat or who can have enjoyment?**” (Ecclesiastes 2:24-25)

Young and old alike, we must bear in mind the ways in which our labors are to glorify God. Though the day may come for us to retire from whatever employment we have taken up, that is not to be the case with regard to the **employment of self in spiritual matters**. Our **spiritual labor** is to continue because now is the time for such since there is a night coming when no one can work. (John 9:4)

What about retirement? The Hebrew writer encouraged...

“(9) So then, **there remains a Sabbath rest** for the people of God, (10) for whoever has entered God’s rest has also rested from his works as God did from his. (11) **Let us therefore strive to enter that rest**, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.” (Hebrews 4:9-11)

Let us continue to labor on in **works for the Lord**, knowing He will provide the time of rest. As long as we live in this realm our **work for the Lord** is to continue. May we find fulfillment in carrying on **His work** with a view toward the retirement benefits God will ultimately provide that will truly be out of this world!

Have a great day **possessing a powerful purpose for living!**

Carl Hanson



Bible Studies for the week of October 2nd, 2005

- AM Sermon..... Identifying Marks—Organization of the Church
- Scripture Reading..... Ephesians 4:11
- PM Sermon..... Accusations from Ahab
- Scripture Reading..... 1 Kings 16:30-33
- Sunday Class The Book of Matthew
- Wednesday Class..... The Book of Habakkuk

Kevin's Korner

This past Friday I finished a manuscript for the Southwest Lectures which are in April. That was one major project that I had on my plate. Now I'm ready to knock out a couple of more. I still have some follow up work to do from my mission trip to Brazil, a written debate on marriage, divorce, and remarriage, and tomorrow night I am preaching to the church in Green Forest on the subject of the Tribulation and Thousand Year Reign. The meeting is on the subject of "End Times" and it starts today and continues through Sunday. If anyone wants a ride over there tomorrow night, I would be happy to let you tag along with me. We will leave from the building here in Berryville at 6:30 PM.

Our gospel meeting is rapidly approaching! I've been on contact with brother Ray Sullins and he has sent me the schedule of topics for the meeting. I'll run

through them here. The theme of the meeting is: "Do All in the Name of the Lord." With the religious world in absolute turmoil as to the true standards of right and wrong, that is a very timely and appropriate topic! Sunday class will focus upon the topic, "They are Without Excuse" from Romans 1:8-20. Sunday morning's worship will be "My Well Beloved Has a Vineyard" from Isaiah 5:1-7. Sunday evening worship's topic is: "Fishers of Men" from Matthew 4:18-22. Monday night we will explore "What Shall We Do?" from Luke 3:7-18. Tuesday's topic is: "True Worshipers" from Genesis 22:1-13. The Wednesday night closer will be "A Zeal for God" from Romans 10:1-10. Of course, the schedule will be the same as always on Sunday and then each evening we will begin at 7:00 Monday through Wednesday. Be inviting your friends and don't forget to mark

your calendar with the dates: October 23rd through 26th.

This past week I was back at my community center volunteer work on Tuesday morning. Ever since they have gotten the new weight equipment I've enjoyed going a few times a week to exercise and meet folks. There have been several new faces that I have seen there and spoken with and some familiar faces as well.

The boys and I have also been biking around town a bit, at least, on this side of town. We'll ride up to the schools and to the community center and yesterday we even came by the building here for some water. The nice weather lately has really been enjoyable and there have really been some great opportunities for being outdoors. We thank God for such great weather!



Gospel Meetings coming up at Green Forest this week and Berryville on the 23rd! Make your plans!

Records for the week of September 25th, 2005

Sunday Bible Class	53
Sunday AM Worship.....	67
Sunday PM Worship.....	55
Wednesday Night Study.....	51
Contribution	\$1723.00
Budget.....	\$1662.00



Praises, Prayers, and Proclamations

Announcements

- Please remember in prayer: Cooper Doss, Bill Fort, Kala Grigg, Vaughn Farmer, Chenelle Grantham, Bob Smith, hurricane victims.
- Our monthly elders and deacons meeting is after services tonight. If you have business to discuss, see one of these men.
- Our weekly Bible study at the nursing home will continue on the 13th. This Thursday will be the monthly birthday party there.
- This coming Saturday morning we will have our men's breakfast. After breakfast we are going to have a work time to prepare for our meeting. Please bring tools.
- Saturday evening at 6:00 we will have our youth devotional at the Cauley's. We'll be watching and discussing the movie, "Because of Winn Dixie." I hope you will come and invite a friend! Bring chips, drinks, and chocolate.
- Our quarterly singing at the nursing home will happen at the end of this month on the fifth Sunday. Make plans to be there!
- Our pantry item is: Cake Frosting.

God's Salvation Plan

1. **Hear** the Gospel—Romans 10:17
2. **Believe** on the Lord & His Word—Mark 16:16; John 8:24
3. **Repent** of your sins—Luke 13:3,5; Acts 17:30
4. **Confess** Christ—Matthew 10:32,33; Luke 12:8; Romans 10:9
5. **Be Baptized** for the remission of sins—Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; Galatians 3:27
6. Live a **faithful**, dedicated life—Revelation 2:10; 2 Peter 1:5-10

Welcome!

Visit our web site: <http://www.the-churchofchrist.com>

Family Times for Worship and Study

Sunday Morning Bible Class:	9:30 AM
Sunday Morning Worship:	10:20 AM
Sunday Evening Worship:	6:00 PM
Ladies Bible Class:	10:30 AM
Wed. Evening Bible Class:	7:00 PM

Serving Each Other

	October 2nd 2005	October 9th, 2005
Sunday Morning		
Songs:	Barrett Brown	Ken Smith
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	George Eddings	Bill Fort
Scripture Reading:	Rusty Windle	Perry Foster
Lord's Table	Clay Bozarth	Leon Duncan
(assist)	Glenn Quigley	Glenn Williams
	Michael Morrell	Brandon Foster
	Dan Hand	Jerry Roller
Closing Prayer	Ervin Hand	Ken Smith
Sunday Evening		
Songs:	Bruce Foster	Clay Bozarth
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Rusty Windle	Glenn Williams
Scripture Reading:	Dale Pinkley	Jack Gentry
Lord's Table	Jerry Roller	Dale Pinkley
	Jack Gentry	Perry Foster
Closing Prayer	Bob Moore	John Gass
Wednesday		
Songs:	Glenn Williams	Clay Bozarth
Opening Prayer:	John Gass	Dale Pinkley
Invitation:	Bob Moore	Kevin Cauley
Closing Prayer:	Dale Pinkley	Brandon Foster

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