

Degrees of Punishment and Reward

Listed below are scriptures which indicate there will be degrees of punishment as well as degrees of reward and discretion on the Day of Judgment.

Punishment:

Since the "Bride of Christ" does not stand before the Great White Throne Judgment, none of these verses apply to Christians.

Romans 8:1 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, 2 because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.
I believe in the majority of cases, these verses apply to those who never heard; not to those who rejected the Lord. Nevertheless, God is sovereign, just, and merciful. He has all authority and does what is right.

Matthew 10:15 I assure you, the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah will be **better off on the judgment day** than that place will be.

Matthew 11:24 I assure you, Sodom will be **better off on the judgment day** than you."
-Some will be better off than others on judgement day.

Matthew 23:14

ESV "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense you make long prayers; therefore you will receive **greater condemnation**.
KJV Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the **greater damnation**.
-There will be greater and lesser damnation.

Mark 9:42 "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe to stumble, **it would be better** for him if, with a heavy millstone hung around his neck, he had been cast into the sea.

Mark 12:40 who devour widows' houses, and for appearance's sake offer long prayers; these will receive **greater condemnation**."
-This implies there are greater and lesser condemnations.

Luke 10:12-14

12 The truth is, even wicked Sodom will be **better off** than such a town on the judgment day.
13 "What horrors await you, Korazin and Bethsaida! For if the miracles I did in you had been done in wicked Tyre and Sidon, their people would have sat in deep repentance long ago, clothed in sackcloth and throwing ashes on their heads to show their remorse.
14 Yes, Tyre and Sidon will be **better off on the judgment day** than you.
-You can be better or worse off on judgment day.

Luke 12:47 "That servant who knows his master's will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be **beaten with many blows**. 48 But **the one who does not know** and does things deserving punishment will be **beaten with few blows**. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.
-The distinction between few and many blows indicates differing degrees of punishment.

Luke 20:47 who devour widows' houses, and for appearance's sake offer long prayers. These will receive **greater condemnation**."
-This indicates there is greater and lesser condemnation.

John 19:11 Then Jesus said, "You would have no power over me at all unless it were given to you from above. So the one who brought me to you has the **greater sin**."
-This indicates there is greater and lesser sin.

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James 2:13 because **judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful.** Mercy triumphs over judgment!

-There will be mercy on judgment day and it will be given to those who have been merciful in this life.

James 3:1 Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach **will be judged more strictly.**

-There will be more strict and less strict judgment on judgment day.

2Peter 2:20 If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are **worse off at the end than they were at the beginning.**

-Some conditions will be worse than others.

Reward:

Depending on the context, some of these will apply to Christians and some will not.

Matthew 5:12 Rejoice and be glad, because **great is your reward** in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

-I believe this can apply to Christians and non-Christians.

Matthew 10:41-42

41 Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will **receive a prophet's reward**, and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive **a righteous man's reward.**

42 And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward."

Matthew 16:27 For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person **according to what he has done.**

1Corinthians 3:13-15

13 his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work.

14 If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward.

15 If it is burned up, **he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.**

-This is definitely written in the context of the Christian.

Hebrews 11:35 Women received back their dead, raised to life again. Others were tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain **a better resurrection.**

-This is clearly in the context of faithful ones who lived before the time of Christ.

Discretion

*The following verses indicate there will be discretion on that day. (These verses do **not** apply to Christians since Christians are saved through faith! This discretion applies to non-Christians.)*

Matthew 10:41-42

41 **Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet** will receive a prophet's reward, and anyone who **receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man** will receive a righteous man's reward.

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42 And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward."

Matthew 12:36 But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. 37 **For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned."**

Matthew 12:41-42

41 The **men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it;** for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here.

42 **The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it;** for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon's wisdom, and now one greater than Solomon is here.

Matthew 18:33-35

33 Shouldn't you have had **mercy on your fellow servant** just as I had on you?'

34 In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

35 "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you **unless you forgive your brother from your heart."**

Acts 7:59 While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." 60 Then he fell on his knees and cried out, "Lord, **do not hold this sin against them."** When he had said this, he fell asleep.

-This indicates a belief that some sins will not be held against people, making their plight better.

Romans 4:5 However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his **faith is credited as righteousness.**

-Faith is credited as righteousness.

Romans 9:18 Therefore **God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy**, and he hardens whom he wants to harden.

-God has mercy and applies it as He sees fit.

2Timothy 4:16 At my first defense, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me. **May it not be held against them.**

-This also indicates Paul believes some sins will not be held against people, making their plight better.

2Timothy 1:15-18

15 You know that everyone in the province of Asia has deserted me, including Phygelus and Hermogenes.

16 **May the Lord show mercy to the household of Onesiphorus**, because he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains.

17 On the contrary, when he was in Rome, he searched hard for me until he found me.

18 **May the Lord grant that he will find mercy from the Lord on that day!** You know very well in how many ways he helped me in Ephesus.

-This indicates Paul believed mercy will be applied to people, making their plight better.

James 5:20 remember this: **Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins.**

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-James indicates ... I really don't know what James is saying here. Either we're forgiven by our faith in Jesus and His atoning blood or we're not!

1 Peter 4:8 Above all, love each other deeply, because **love covers over a multitude of sins.**

-I really don't know what Peter is saying here. Either we're forgiven by our faith in Jesus and His atoning blood or we're not!