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Barnes' "A hero's welcome: The doctrine of future rewards and the bema seat of Christ" (book review)

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Book Reviews



Barnes, R. (2017). *A hero's welcome: The doctrine of future rewards and the bema seat of Christ*. El Cajon, CA: Southern California Seminary Press. 370 pp. \$14.95. ISBN 9780986444227

Ronald Barnes, author of *A hero's welcome*, was a professor of Biblical Studies until his death in 2018. Throughout his ministry, he maintained a strong testimony of unwavering faith and commitment to living in light of eternal rewards, a fitting epitaph to his life and preface to this volume.

Written in a conversational tone, Barnes has produced this work portraying himself as a fellow learner and member of a study group led by an instructor known as *didaskolos*. During their weekly studies, Didaskolos leads them through key passages and concepts related to the judgment (*bema*) seat of Christ. Barnes makes a distinction of the judgment seat of Christ from other judgments, noting that this event is only for believers. In doing so, he seeks to imbue readers with a passion for living with the motivation of eternal rewards in mind. He begins by sharing the character qualities listed in 2 Peter 1:5-11, maintaining that believers will be rewarded for allowing God to build these qualities into their lives, thereby gaining *A hero's welcome* into heaven, these naturally lead into a lifestyle, which ensures the gaining of the crowns mentioned in various places in the New Testament. He also discusses the five crowns and the criteria for receiving each of them: The incorruptible crown (1 Corinthians 9:25), the crown of rejoicing (1 Thessalonians 2:19), the crown of righteousness (2 Timothy 4:8), the crown of life (James 1:12, Revelation 2:10), and the crown of glory (1 Peter 5:9).

The appendices are rich with additional and in-depth information, as Barnes exegetes key passages related to eternal rewards and leads his readers in word studies that will deepen his readers' understanding of this future event. This volume is well documented and is a good balance of scholarship and practical truth.

A hero's welcome is appropriate for Bible College and church libraries. It has the scholarship necessary for inclusion in an academic collection while maintaining a devotional quality that will reach the general population.

Reviewer

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