

Mark 10:28-31 – Following Jesus: The Price, the Prize, and the People

Handfuls, TSK, GreekLexicon, Gill, Henry, Geneva, Rienecker, PNT, Poole, Robertson, Calvin, Brink, Broadus, Vincent, Family, JFB,

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: A rich young ruler came and asked Jesus what he could **do** to inherit eternal life. Instead of telling him **what he could do** to inherit eternal life, Jesus told him what **he must show** to prove he had eternal life. Jesus was implying that he must have faith in him and **show that faith by his actions**. Sadly, the rich ruler showed that his heart was not changed. He showed this by his unwillingness to give up what he loved dearly: His possessions.

This episode prompted Jesus' disciples, who had given up everything to follow him, to respond. Today you **will see how Jesus described in more details the things a Christian must be willing to sacrifice as evidence of his faith and the rewards he would receive for his sacrifices.**

Our headings are:

The Price for Following Jesus

The Prize for Following Jesus

The People Following Jesus

Our goals are: You will be moved **to give up anything in order to follow Jesus**, and that you **will become confident in receiving your rewards in heaven.**

The Price for Following Jesus

28 Then Peter began to say to Him, "**See, we have left all and followed You.**" 29 So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's..."

1. Peter said that they had left everything to follow Jesus, quite unlike what the rich young ruler had refused to do so.

Peter was not being a martyr – like some who like to suffer so they could talk about it. He was simply stating the truth.

2. But what did the disciples actually give up in following Jesus?

They gave up a lot.

a. Some gave up their business enterprise to do missionary work.

They saw the greater task – of being “fishers of men” rather than fishermen...being “collectors of men” rather than collectors of tax, etc. From that time they often struggled to make ends meet with their families. Only the alms they received was used to keep their families going.

b. The disciples gave up their houses...traveling by foot...with literally “no place to lay their head.” Their relatives may have had to move in with other relatives and friends...or they may have had to endure the harshness of traveling around hot, rocky, and dry Judah. Who likes to leave the comforts of his house and regularly sleep in cold open places with scorpions?

c. Some disciples gave up their land. This might not mean much to you in an age of apartments and condos, but it surely did to them. Their land was their lives. To lose land in many cultures is like losing your life. This happens even today. Ask the Christians of Southern Sudan and they will verify this.

d. Some disciples had to leave their brothers, sisters, father, mother, wife, and children. This was a most difficult thing. Without near relatives, this world would be a wilderness, dry, barren, and hopeless. But the Christian is able to neutralize中和 this loss of family and friends by reminding himself that Christ, who is closer than a brother, is always near.

e. Some of the disciples had to be willing to give up their lives for Christ. Paul was ready to die...for example...to be willing to be a sacrifice...Most of the 12 disciples were executed -sawn in two, beheaded, or crucified.

3. But the disciples were not demanding payment for work from Jesus.

We know this because the disciples did not ask what they would get before they joined Jesus; they knew it was the right thing to do. They were not negotiating with God. They were not mercenaries. To be a mercenary would be to try to get salvation by works! **The disciples’ leaving all to follow Jesus was an expression of their faith (what Jesus required of the rich young ruler).** And for their obedience they would be rewarded, which is our next point. But before, take note of these:

4. Lessons:

a. Your faith must be so strong in Jesus that you would be willing to give up anything, including your family, for the sake of following Jesus. You may not have to give up your family, job, or country to serve the Lord, but you must be willing to do so. You see this illustrated when God told Abraham to sacrifice his son, but then God provided a substitute for Isaac.

b. Suppose your relatives give you an ultimatum: “Quit serving God or we will stop talking to you!” What would you do? Are you ready for that? Today if a Jewish child becomes a Christian some in the Jewish community would hold a full funeral service to show that their son or daughter were dead to them. Can you imagine how hard that is? There may be a great price for following Jesus, but what you get is a much greater value – you get rewards in heaven.

c. Though you may have to give up your family for serving Jesus, remember that Jesus is always near you, and further, he has provided many brothers and sisters in the church.

d. No brother and sister in the church must ever feel unloved. Be a good brother and sister in Jesus. The blood that joins you together as brothers and sisters in the church is much stronger than the blood you get from your parents.

The Prize for Following Jesus

30 "**who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life.**

1. So by now you realize that leaving their families did not save the disciples; believing in Jesus did.

They showed their belief in Jesus by following him. Jesus then promised them rewards and blessings. That is the context of this passage.

2. The 1st reward every Christian who follows Christ receives is the presence of Christ, the comforts of the Holy Ghost, the communion of saints, and the joys and pleasures of the soul.

These things are a hundred times better than anything you may have

to leave to serve Christ. (Of course Christ is speaking hyperbolically; **for no one would expect to have 100 wives!** A woman is far more precious and deserves 100% of the attention of her husband.) Even if you had the greatest amount of wealth (like the bride), you could not buy Christ's love. Your efforts would be despised. This is what Solomon wrote!

Songs of Solomon 8:7...If a man would give for love all the wealth of his house, it would be utterly despised.

It is what the bride receives from the Beloved Bridegroom that makes the bride blessed.

3. The 2nd reward every Christian who follows Christ receives is a concrete future, or a golden future.

It is an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and never fades away. This inheritance is reserved in heaven, a place of eternal glory and happiness. The Bible teaches us that heaven is a place of mansions. John 14. Imagine the size of God's house if there are many mansions in his house! And then add the beauty of Revelation 21:10-22:5, to complete the picture. All earthly inheritances are corruptible, defiled, fading and perishing: houses fall, relations die, friends fail, and lands are destroyed –fall into the sea...but not inheritances in heaven! **Every Christians who follows Christ receives prominence in heaven and become judges of Israel.**

Matthew 19:28 So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

This act of judging was not the real prize. The real prize to the disciples was that they would see that the tribes of Israel would be brought back together again. There was no greater joy than this for the Jew.

While you are not judges now, Paul makes it clear that Christians will also judge the world.

1Corinthians 6:2 Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

4. Lessons:

a. In order to get these prizes you must press on – keep working hard - for the prize.

Philippians 3:13-14 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

The Prize is Christ and heaven.

b. Evaluate the rewards you want based on their lasting value, not by how many fancy they are. Fancy things will rot.

The People Following Jesus

31 "But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

1. Who were the first people in Christ's kingdom?

The Jews were the first in outward privileges in the kingdom, but they were rejected by God for their unbelief, and contempt of Jesus. Jesus longed to have them under his wings but Jewish people and their leadership rejected him.

Matthew 23:37 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! **How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!**

Luke 9:22 saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things, and **be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed,** and be raised the third day."

2. Who are the last in the kingdom?

The Gentiles, you and I, who were last called, would be first in embracing Jesus. This sentence is confirmed, and illustrated, by a

parable, in the following chapter. This would certainly calm the Jewish Christian so that he did not become arrogant. But for now, see the promise of the Gentiles becoming part of the kingdom and with the hope that the Jews will ultimately return.

Romans 11:23 And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. 24 For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who are natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

Conclusion:

It is not wrong for a child to think about the inheritance he might get from his parents and there is nothing wrong in thinking about **the inheritance you will get from your heavenly Father**. As God's child, you can expect an abundant reward. And while all Christians will go to heaven, Christ's rewards for every Christian are based on how much the Christian labors for him, how much he sacrifices for his kingdom's sake. Not every Christian will receive the same reward. Some of those rewards you will be able to get in this life.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. You true inheritance came free of cost through Christ's bloody death on the cross in your place. You have eternal life because of him.

2. Thank God for your earthly rewards – like the real presence of Christ through his Holy Spirit, physical protection and provisions (food, clothing, and shelter) in this life, overseers (pastors and elders) to watch over your souls in the home and in the church and help keep you from sin, Christian family and friends in abundance (100's of us) to support and pray for you. Yes, you might lose some things, but you gain a lot more. This is how God's covenant people are blessed in this life.

2. Thank God for your rewards in heaven – a place of eternal rest, free of suffering, free of sadness, free of sicknesses, and free of surgeries.

Heaven is a place where there is food in abundance, for the Tree of Life will be restored. It is a place where the streets are paved with gold...and the gates are secure. Heaven is a place where the work you will do is worshipping with a pure heart...where you will not be sleepy or tired. Heaven is a place where you will join Christ in judging the world. Look forward for your heavenly reward. Work for your treasures there.

If you are not a Christian you have no good expectation of your future – it is hopeless and dire. But if you come to Christ, ask him to take away your sins, ask him to make you his child, and ask him to join you to his church, he will forgive your sins, and give you new life – blessings in this world and in the world to come. Amen.