**Matthew 19:27-30**

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/matt/matt-19/matthew-1927-30/>

After Jesus’s interaction with the rich young ruler, Peter expresses a concern about whether they have done enough to enter life. Implied is an underlying question about whether following Jesus is worth the risk or cost. Jesus assures Him that everyone who sacrificially follows Him will receive an exceedingly great reward.

 The parallel gospel accounts of this event are found in Mark 10:28-31 and Luke 18:28-30.

Peter, the disciples’ spokesperson, seemed to have doubts after hearing Jesus speak of how difficult it is for a rich person to get into the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 19:23-26). Peter here seems to ask his own version of the question posed by the rich young ruler, who asked Jesus “Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?’ (Matthew 19:16). In Jesus’s answer, He substituted the phrase “enter life” for “obtain eternal life,” making it clear that the topic centered around gaining benefit, fulfillment, and reward from deeds done while living this life on earth. The rich young ruler asked what he was lacking, now Peter asks the same question, but with the preface that we have left everything and followed you. It seems that Peter wants to know whether this is sufficient, or (after hearing Jesus’s statement about how hard it is to enter the kingdom) whether they were also lacking.

Peter said to Jesus, “Behold, we have left everything and followed You.” Luke was more descriptive as to what the “everything” was, including “our homes” (Luke 18:28). It was true. When the twelve disciples, like Peter, first began to follow Jesus, they left their occupations; their families; and their homes in and around Galilee (Matthew 4:18-22; Matthew 8:19-23; Matthew 9:9). The disciples were dedicated. They had given up everything for the chance to be great in the Messiah’s kingdom now at hand.

Peter seems to skip over the part that Jesus had just told them, that all things are possible with God. Peter seems here to be seeking a tangible assurance related to the price they had already paid. He wanted assurances that there will be ample reward available for him and his fellow followers. Peter now wants to know “Have we done enough to enter life?”

Jesus treats this as a fair question. After denying themselves so much, then hearing what Jesus told the young ruler, they wanted to be assured that their sacrifice a) enough and b) was worth it. If they were going to be ineligible to enter the kingdom then what was the point of leaving everything behind? If the standard is unobtainable, then why bother?

Jesus does not rebuke Peter or the other disciples for asking this question. He does not scold or try to shame them for considering their own self-interest. God created people to seek their self-interest. Everyone naturally, by God’s design, pursues what they believe is best for them. This is evident in the second greatest commandment, which instructs us to love others as we love ourselves. The human problem is that our perspective is usually off, and we do not properly perceive what is in our true best interest. That is why the rewards of faith are so immense. Through faith we can see what is true, and seek our actual greatest benefit.

The scripture tells us that Jesus sought His self-interest. Even as Jesus modeled being an obedient servant, and gave His life as a ransom for humanity, He did so with His own greater good in mind. He took the form of a bondservant and was obedient to His Father’s will to the grave and back, and “for this reason” God highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name above every name (Philippians 2:7-10). He endured the suffering of the cross, and despised its shame for the joy that was set before Him (Hebrews 12:1). Jesus lived a glory-seeking life, but sought true and lasting glory through loving serve. Jesus chose to pursue eternal glory from His Father in Heaven rather than fleeting and fickle glory among the kingdoms of this earth. In fact, Satan tempted Jesus by offering Him this fleeting worldly glory, without having to suffer and die (Matthew 4:8-10). Jesus dismissed Satan, and chose the path of obedience, knowing it had much greater reward, to gain a lasting glory given to Him by His Father.

Jesus invited others to join Him in the glory-seeking life. As Jesus taught people to have humility, serve others, and to deny themselves, He consistently reminded them of how conforming to His selfless approach would in reality yield the greatest benefit for them. Denying yourself for His sake is the only way to save yourself (Matthew 16:25). Investing in the eternal goods of heaven, is a better life investment than acquiring destructible goods on earth (Matthew 6:19-20). Living righteously from the heart to honor God yields a greater reward than doing good works to be seen by men in order to win their fickle praise (Matthew 6:1-4).

Instead of reprimanding Peter and His disciples for considering their own interest and questioning the personal benefit of following Him, Jesus assured them as only He could do. He began by giving them His divine guarantee: Truly I say to you.

He acknowledged their sacrifice for Him. And He let them know how He was fully aware of everything that they had left. You who have followed Me, as the disciples had faithfully done, will be fully rewarded for your faithfulness, He told them.

Jesus said the fullness of their reward would come in the regeneration. The Greek word for regeneration is “palingenesia.” It is a compound word consisting of “palin,” meaning “again” and “genesis” meaning “beginning” or “creation.” It describes a total reconfiguration of nature and a political realignment. It is the cosmic event that brings about the new heaven and the new earth (Revelation 21:1). The disciples would likely have understood Jesus to mean the inaugural moment when the Messiah establishes His kingdom in Israel (Acts 1:6). And they would not have been wrong to think this—but it will be more glorious than they or we can imagine.

He told them when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, so shall you also sit down upon each of your own twelve thrones.

This was an exciting promise. A throne was a seat of great authority. Thrones were literal and symbolic seats of power. Only those in authority had the right to sit and exercise the political power from the throne. Jesus told the disciples when all things are made new, that the Son of Man—the Messiah—Jesus, Himself will sit on His glorious throne. It is a glorious throne, because it is the seat of power over all of creation. When Jesus takes His rightful and exalted seat over all creation every knee will bow and tongue confess that He is God almighty (Philippians 2:9-11). Jesus will be the undisputed authority.

But the Son of Man will also have a personal administration to serve along with Him in His kingdom. There will be twelve members of His personal cabinet who will have their own thrones to sit on. These thrones will be endowed with important responsibility and power from the Messiah. Jesus told the twelve disciples that those of you who have left everything will be granted one of these twelve thrones. The twelve thrones are over the twelve tribes of Israel. The responsibility of the ones who sit upon the twelve thrones will be judging and making leadership decisions for the twelve tribes of Israel after the regeneration has occurred.

This promise would have greatly assured them that what there will be for them will be worth far more than everything they have left behind.

But Jesus continued this revelation of reward. And He expanded it to include everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name’s sake. He invites any and everyone to join Him in the glory-seeking life.

Following Jesus has a cost. Sometimes it is painful. Sometimes it means being misunderstood or even persecuted by close family members (Matthew 10:21).

“He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.”
(Matthew 10:37)

Sometimes it means denying ourselves. Sometimes it means passing up earthly pursuits and opportunities to earn more money to redirect our time, money, and energies into kingdom advancing endeavors.

Following Jesus has a cost, but it also yields an immense reward. Jesus promises that everyone who has suffered the loss of relationship from their family or neglected their professional careers for His sake will receive many times as much as they left or lost. The word translated here many times is the Greek word “hekatontaplasion.” “Hekaton” means “hundred” or “hundredfold.” Most translations translate here as “hundredfold” as does NASB in the companion verse in Mark.

“but that he will receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions; and in the age to come, eternal life.”
(Mark 10:30)

Jesus teaches the gain will be “a hundred times” greater than the cost. A 100% rate of return on investment is a practically unfathomable. Especially when we consider that a 10% investment return to be good, and a 15% investment return amazing. In Mark, Jesus also describes what the return is. It is enjoying fellowship with God’s family. We gain brothers and sisters, parents, and children when we follow Christ. We gain houses and homes, because we gain being hosted by brothers and sisters in Christ. We gain real harmony and community. We gain unconditional love from other faithful believers. And in Mark, Jesus says that we gain these things in this “present age.” So it is a win-win. We gain great benefit through the Body of Christ in this life, and immense rewards from God in the age to come.; rewards beyond our ability to grasp (1 Corinthians 2:9).

It is “in the age to come,” we will receive the full inheritance of eternal life in the kingdom. This eternal life is what the rich young ruler wanted to obtain and it was its fullness that he passed up in order to hold onto his earthly goods (Matthew 19:16, 22).

Jesus promised His kingdom to those who are persecuted for following Him.

“[Makarios] are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. [Makarios] are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me.”
(Matthew 5:10-11)

When Paul and Peter contemplate the rewards to come, they are almost giddy with excitement. They passionately exhort their readers to consider the amazing opportunity and reward that trusting Jesus will yield.

“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.
(Romans 8:18)

“For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison.”
(2 Corinthians 4:17)

“so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”
(1 Peter 1:7)

“Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; 13 but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation. 14 If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.”
(1 Peter 4:12-14)

Following Jesus has a cost in this life. This is the case with any investment. But investing in God’s kingdom yields an immense reward. However, not following Jesus has a greater cost—it costs your “psuche”/life/soul, and it yields an ever-diminishing reward (Matthew 16:26).

Jesus then introduced a parable with a proverb. The parable Jesus introduces is recorded in the next chapter, Matthew 20. It is often called “The Laborers of the Vineyard” (Matthew 20:1-15). This parable depicts how everyone has the opportunity to receive much in the kingdom of heaven, even those who get a late start.

The proverb Jesus uses to introduce the upcoming parable is but many who are first will be last; and the last, first. Jesus also concludes the parable of the vineyard laborers with the same proverb (Matthew 20:16).

The proverb means that many who are first in this present age, and are rich and powerful among the kingdoms of this earth will be last in the regeneration. And many who are last in this present age, and are poor or regarded as insignificant among the kingdoms of this earth will be exalted to thrones of power and first in kingdom come. Pairing this with the parable of the laborers, which Matthew records next, it might also mean it is never too late to begin, and still get a great reward (Matthew 20:1-16). God is more focused on doing what we know to do, and sometimes we are late in coming to realize what we should be doing. But it is never too late to begin being faithful.

 **Biblical Text**

**27Then Peter said to Him, “Behold, we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?” 28And Jesus said to them, “Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name’s sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life. 30But many *who are* first will be last; and *the* last, first.**