

# Matthew 19:27-30

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*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**

<sup>27</sup> **Then Peter said to Him, “Behold, we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?”** <sup>28</sup> **And 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.** <sup>29</sup> **And 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.** <sup>30</sup> **But many *who are first* will be last; and *the last, first*.**