

Kingdom Investments

Matthew 19:27-30

Introduction

Our chapter began with a confrontation by the religious leaders—they asked Jesus two trick questions; first about marriage and then about divorce (vv.1-15). Then Jesus speaks concerning riches (vv.16-26) and now turns to the subject of rewards (vv.27-30). The rich young ruler asked the question; “What good things must I do to have eternal life?” (v.16). Jesus told the young man to keep the commandments—which he insisted he had. Then Jesus invited him to “go and sell all you have and give the money to the poor. . .then come and follow me.” The young man turned away sorrowful—sad **not willing to abandon his wealth**. Jesus then gave an allegory—a parable of the impossible—saying it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter heaven. The disciples asked—who then can be saved? (v.25). Jesus assures them with God all things are possible (v.26). All of this prompts Peter to say “See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?” This provides Jesus with the opportunity to speak about future rewards.

Wealth does not guarantee hell and poverty does not guarantee heaven. Great wealth or great poverty does not guarantee great faith.

Years ago I picked up a dime in our parking lot. The next door neighbor at the time owned a mortgage company—and watched me pick up the coin. “You would be surprised how many pennies I find in the parking lot” he said. “I pick them up, save them—and when I get a hundred pennies I go and buy a lotto ticket.” “How much have you won?” I asked. “I have found enough pennies to buy four tickets, but I haven’t won yet.” He found pennies. He gambled and lost. Some people feel OK about gambling when the stakes seem so low and the rewards seem so high. But what about the ultimate stakes? What about your soul?

We must trust Jesus for salvation and follow Jesus for life. Both the religious leaders and the disciples were shocked that wealth did not provide proof of blessing and the favor of God. People who trust in wealth find it difficult to trust Christ. People who are poor risk despair and also wind up failing to trust Christ. The real issue is not the presence or the absence of wealth but rather stewardship of the things that God has given you! What do you keep and what do you give? The Bible does not condemn us for the possession of things but rather our use of things! **When you own something you have the right to say how it will or will not be used! Are you owned by the Lord Jesus Christ? Are you trusting riches rather than Christ?**

Initial Investments (v.27)

Matthew 19:27 (NKJV) 27 Then Peter answered and said to Him, “See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?”

Peter’s question may have been shared by his constant companions. He uses the plural ‘we’. What the rich young ruler refused—they accepted. What treasure awaited them? The expression ‘left all’ (*aphekamen—aorist tense*) carries with it the sense ‘once and for all’. We left all once

Kingdom Investments

Matthew 19:27-30

and for all—making a determined decision—to follow and not go back. They had done what the rich young ruler was unwilling or unable to do. What will be their reward?

In this case the two things that make reward possible was a willingness to forsake all and then follow Jesus. Jesus does not rebuke Peter's question.

The question is dangerous when offered with an improper motive. Jesus has already said that those who do good because they are looking for a reward risk forfeiting their reward (see Matthew 6:1-18; and Luke 14:7-14).

Spurgeon said, "There is no reward from God for those who seek it from men."

In the Old Testament there were rewards for people who walked with God—obedience was often rewarded. Jesus will explain that obedience does not always result in *immediate* reward. If that were true—then those saints who exercise submission and obedience to the things of God would always be rich and the disobedient would always be poor (sadly the position of the so called health and wealth community). Suffering becomes in that twisted theology a sign of sin.

"The disciples true reward (and ours) was God's presence and power through the Holy Spirit. The reward also includes the assurance of salvation and eternal life (an assurance that the rich young ruler lacked, 19:20). Later, in eternity, God will reward his people for faith and service (see 5:12)." (*Life Application Bible Commentary: Matthew p. 382-383*).

What's in it for me if I follow Christ? Is it wrong to even ask the question? I don't think so. Jesus Himself said, "count the cost".

Long Term Dividends (v.28)

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."

The answer that Jesus gives points to a future time that he calls "the regeneration" when the Son of Man (Jesus) sits on the throne of His glory." The investment given in the present (you who have followed Me) will result in reward in the future (will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel". **Jesus speaks of a future position and duty.**

What is this 'regeneration' that Jesus speaks about? It has also been called "the renewal of all things". The word is found only here and in Titus 3:5 where it is translated "rebirth". The word literally means "again—genesis". The same word was used by Josephus to describe the nation of Israel after the Babylonian captivity and by Philo of the new birth of the world after the Flood and after its future destruction by fire. "In this present passage, however, Jesus uses it to

Kingdom Investments

Matthew 19:27-30

represent the rebirth of the earth under His sovereign dominion at the time of his second coming” (see John MacArthur p. 204).

Some suggest it is a reference to the Age to Come—what some call the Millennium when the earth is made new. Others suggest that this is the future eternal state—which takes place when there is a new heaven and new earth (see Revelation 21-22; and 2 Peter 3:10-13).

In Isaiah (65:17; 66:22) we read “For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered or come to mind” and in chapter 66 we read about the rebirth of Israel; “For as the new heavens and the new earth Which I will make shall remain before Me,” says the LORD, “So shall your descendants and your name remain.”

The Jews envisioned a golden age—like the time of David—it would include the Son of Man seated on David’s long vacant throne. Jesus makes it clear this event is yet future. The disciples expectation was this was an event—in the immediate future—not the far future—and the talk of arrest and imprisonment and death and resurrection was confusing. How can there be a Kingdom without Jesus as King?

Jesus it makes it clear—that a time was coming when He would rule and they would rule with Him. Notice the words “judging the twelve tribes.” Judging is the Greek work *krino*—and *mans to govern* sometimes direct—or administer or supervise. Jesus says the apostles will govern—oversee—direct Israel and Paul intimates that the believers in Christ would oversee the world and angels (see 1 Corinthians 6:2-3).

In Luke’s gospel at the final Passover (Luke 22:28-30) Jesus assures them they would have a role in this future Kingdom.

“But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials. And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, that you may eat and drink at My table in My Kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

How are we to think about this? If we simply take the text at face value the twelve apostles will rule the twelve tribes of Israel at Christ’s return. Of course this leaves open the question of in the absence of Judas Iscariot—and the later presence of Matthias as future apostle. If not taken literally does this mean the apostles have special rule and authority in some future Messianic Kingdom?

In Daniel (7:18; 22) the Son of Man recorded this vision for the future; *“But the saints of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever—yes, for ever and ever. . .The Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom”*.

Kingdom Investments

Matthew 19:27-30

The saints of the Most High are the true Israel—the people ruled by Messiah. There is a future reward for God’s people.

The long term dividend is **eternal life!** You go to heaven. You have a job in heaven. You have a place and position in heaven. You sit on a throne in heaven with Christ. Revelation 3:21; “To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also have overcome and sat down with My Father on His throne”. Believers exercise authority over the people on the earth; Revelation 2:26; “And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations”.

Heaven will not be boring! There will be singing (Isaiah 44:23; Rev.14:3, 15:3); there will be serving (Rev.7:15; 22:3); and there will be learning (1 Corinthians 13:9, 10).

Short Term Loss—Long Term Reward (v.29)

29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name’s sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.

What is the short term loss? “And everyone who has left”—given up something or someone valuable.

Spiritual blessings for material sacrifices.

What does Jesus mean?

The Christ follower and the Jesus lover can and will suffer loss. Material loss. Relational loss.
Followers of Jesus since the beginning have experienced the loss of family and friends.

If I lose my house Jesus will give me one hundred more houses? Do I receive a hundred mothers a hundred fathers multiplied lands and multiplied children?

Yes and no. I think the answer in part is spiritual blessings for material losses. I think the answer in part includes what we are given in Christ.

Jesus in effect is saying what I am giving you is hundred times better than what you are giving up! This is the answer to the rich young ruler’s question. How do you secure eternal life? We submit to Christ. We embrace His authority and His rule. Jesus takes priority over all. We give up anything and everything that hinders us from following Him. We inherit eternal life. For the rich young ruler his idol was money. Your idol might be different. You may have more and you may have less—but the sacrifice remains the sacrifice.

Some of you might be thinking-“Forget heaven! What about now? I need a job now! I need rent money now! I don’t care about future rewards. I care about the present. I don’t care about the sweet bye and bye. I care about the bitter here and now.

Kingdom Investments

Matthew 19:27-30

You may say that now—but one day you will care deeply. One day you will stand on the threshold marked “Eternity”.

Mark’s gospel gives us additional information (10:29-30); “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, 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.”

Mark speaks of the sake of Jesus and for the sake of the gospel. If you follow Jesus you will find your self in the same place Jesus found Himself. You will experience rejection and “persecutions” (Mark 10:30). You will encounter a cross—a tomb—and an empty tomb.

Peter may have lost his house in Capernaum. But how many saints would offer Peter a place to stay in his travels. What if my house burned to the ground? Would you let me stay for one day in a spare room?

Loss. Profit. Gain.

Go to heaven and ask Paul of this world’s suffering compare to the indescribable glories of heaven! Now go to hell and ask Judas if 30 pieces of silver made all his dreams come true. Ask Judas if hanging on to riches or power or position was worth it.

Oh in hell make inquiry of Herod and Pilate and the Rich Young Ruler. Ask them—in between the screams. Ask them if they tire of the darkness or the pain. Ask them about profit, loss and gain.

Risks And Disclosure (v.30)

30But many who are first will be last, and the last first.

This is what is called a paradox.

Whenever you make an investment be sure to read the fine print. This is the fine print to Peter’s question! Jesus issues a warning both to Peter and the disciples and to you and me. The first use human wisdom and human standards and the last use God’s standards of judgement and reward.

Jesus will often shock us or shake us with a wake up call. Wealth does not insure acceptance with God and poverty does not keep people away from Jesus. This is the moral of the parable of the workers (see 20:1-15!!!).

Kingdom Investments

Matthew 19:27-30

Jesus rejects the notion first come first served. Jesus is not impressed by personal achievement. Jesus rejects our unfair comparisons. Jesus reserves the right to reward according to His own standards and desires. Jesus traffics in grace.

In Luke 14 Jesus tells the story of a Sabbath dinner. The guests push and shove trying to get the best seats where there honor will be duly noted. So Jesus takes the occasion to offer some investment advise—on how to succeed! He tells them—take the worst seat—take the last place—find the seat nearest the exit or the kitchen! When the host arrives—he or she sees you sitting in the worst spot possible and says “bring another chair”. I want you to sit next to me! I want to talk to you! Move over and make room for my guest and dear friend! Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled and whoever humbles himself will be exalted (Luke 14:10-11).

We find our lives by losing our lives (Matt.10:39; John 12:25).

We are unknown and yet known (Matt.10:39).

We are dying and yet we possess life (2 Corinthians 6:9).

We are poor and yet we make many rich (2 Corinthians 6:10).

We have nothing and yet we possess all things (2 Corinthians 6:10).

We are strong when we are weak (2 Corinthians 12:10).

We are seen and yet we remain unseen (2 Corinthians 4:18).

Jesus reserves the right to turn all things on its head. We see things as humans see things. But our judgment is sometimes inaccurate or incomplete. Jesus knows and sees everything. **Many people you placed first on the list may wind up last on the list—and many people you placed last on the list—Jesus reserves the right to place first on the list. God knows the true hearts of His servants: We judge and reward by the visible—visible works—visible moral behavior—we judge by age or seniority—by friendliness—by years as a Christian by recognition, esteem, influence, ability, skill, position.**

Jesus looks at surrender, sacrifice, submission, transparency, humility, weakness, poverty of spirit—and fruit of the Spirit.

Conclusion

An old missionary couple had been working in Africa for years and were returning to New York to retire. They had no pension; their health was broken; they were defeated, discouraged and afraid. They discovered they were booked on the same ship as President Teddy Roosevelt—who was returning home from one of his big game hunting expeditions. No one paid any attention to them. They watched the fanfare that accompanied the President’s entourage, with passengers trying to catch a glimpse of the great man. As the ship moved across the ocean, the old missionary said to his wife; “Something is wrong. Why should we have given our lives in faithful service for God in Africa all these many years and have no one care a thing about us? Here this man comes back from a hunting trip and everybody makes much over him, but nobody gives two hoots about us.”

Kingdom Investments

Matthew 19:27-30

“Dear, you shouldn’t feel that way” his wife said.

“I can’t help it; it doesn’t seem right.” When the ship docked in New York, a band was waiting to greet the President. The mayor and the dignitaries were there. The Newspapers were full of the President’s arrival, but no one noticed the missionary couple. They slipped off the ship and found a cheap apartment on the East Side—hoping the next day to see if they might find some way to make a living in the City. That night the man’s spirit broke. He said to his wife, “I can’t take this; God is not treating us fairly!” His wife wisely replied, “Why do you go in the bedroom and tell the Lord?” A short time later he came out from the bedroom, but now his face was completely different. His wife asked, “Dear, what happened?” “The Lord settled it with me” he said. “I told him how bitter I was that the President should receive this tremendous homecoming, when no one met us as we returned home. And when I finished, it seemed as though the Lord put his hand on my shoulder and simply said, ‘But you’re not home yet!’”

(Ray Stedman; Talking to My Father).

Loss. Profit. Gain.

Two things for reward—forsake all follow Christ (v.27).

Reward—rule and reign with Christ forever (v.28)

Your reward will be great (v.29).

The shocking surprise—the first will be last—and the last first—severe judgment—and perfect justice for the believer!