

(Matt. 19:25-26) – As we saw in the last lesson, the disciples had just heard the Lord tell a religious young ruler that if he would have eternal life he must part with his earthly possessions and follow Him as Savior and Lord (v. 21). This was the Lord’s answer to the young man in light of his boast that he had kept the law from his youth up and asking “What lack I yet?” (v. 20). The Lord showed the man that for a sinner to have eternal life God requires perfect righteousness that could only be found in Him – the glory of His Person and the power of His finished work of obedience unto death. The young man’s love of earthly possessions kept him from believing, embracing, and following Christ. He lacked God-given faith in Christ and repentance of dead works. Eternal life can only be attained by Christ for His people (Rom. 5:21; 6:23). Even though Christ had already taught the disciples these Gospel truths, they were still thinking according to the flesh and asked, “*WHO THEN CAN BE SAVED?*” Christ then answered, “*WITH MEN THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE; BUT WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE.*” By this He showed that salvation cannot be attained or maintained by the works and wills of men. **SALVATION IS OF THE LORD!**

(Matt. 19:27) – Speaking for the other disciples, Peter said, “*BEHOLD, WE HAVE FORSAKEN ALL, AND FOLLOWED THEE.*” There are several things to consider about this statement. First, all true disciples of Christ **DO**, by the grace of God, forsake all things and follow Him. Though their possessions did not equal that of the young ruler, Peter and the others had left their families and their livelihoods for Christ’s sake (Matt. 4:18-22; 9:9; John 1:43). It is not required of all sinners saved by grace to leave their families and quit their jobs to become traveling preachers of the Gospel. But it is required of all sinners saved by grace to believe, embrace, and follow Christ for all salvation and eternal life. It is required that they all forsake their dead works and former idolatry even to the point of standing against their families for the cause of God’s glory in Christ. This is **GOD-GIVEN** faith in Christ and **GOD-GIVEN** repentance of dead works and idolatry. When God brings us to Christ for salvation, we forsake our own righteousness and submit to **HIS** righteousness imputed as our only ground of salvation (Rom. 10:1-4). By the grace of God, we take up our cross and follow Him, forsaking the way of salvation by our works and wills. We rejoice in and follow God’s way of salvation through His grace by the blood of Jesus Christ.

If material riches would get in the way of our following Christ for salvation, God would bring us to forsake all and follow Him. If religious works and efforts would get in the way, God would bring us to forsake such self-righteous works and follow Him. If our earthly families would get in the way, God would bring us to forsake them and follow Christ! If God the Holy Spirit convicts us of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and He shows us the truth of our sinfulness and depravity, of God’s holiness and justice, and of

Christ as the only way of salvation and eternal life, there is nothing that could get in our way and keep us from believing in, coming to, embracing, and following Christ for all salvation and eternal life.

Peter then asked, *“WHAT SHALL WE HAVE THEREFORE?”* It is as though he is saying, “We have done what this rich young ruler refused to do. We have forsaken our homes, families, and our jobs to follow you. What, then, will be our reward?” This may cause us to ask, “What is wrong with these disciples? Didn’t they understand the Gospel of God’s grace to save them? Didn’t they understand that their forsaking all was not of their own power and goodness but a gift from God in Christ?” We need to understand that even though these disciples had heard and claimed to believe the true Gospel of salvation by God’s grace, they were still under the delusion that the Messiah had come to set up an earthly kingdom, and they still thought they would have elevated positions in that kingdom as payment for their commitment to Christ (Matt. 18:1; cf. Acts 1:6).

(Matt. 19:28) – The Lord’s answer is an expression of His grace and power that applies to ALL His followers and not to these disciples alone. All who *“HAVE FOLLOWED ME, IN THE REGENERATION WHEN THE SON OF MAN SHALL SIT IN THE THRONE OF HIS GLORY, YE ALSO SHALL SIT UPON TWELVE THRONES, JUDGING THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL.”* First, by “the regeneration” the Lord could be referring (1) to His first advent to come and set all things right by His obedience unto death and resurrection; (2) to the time of the New Covenant extending from His first advent to His second coming; and/or (3) to His second coming when He will set all things right for the glory of God and the good of His people. Secondly, sitting on “twelve thrones” and “judging the twelve tribes of Israel” refers to the glorious position of all His people as “kings and priests unto God” (Rev. 1:6; 5:10) who are ambassadors of Christ (2 Cor. 5:20) and who bring God’s judgment forth to the church by preaching the Gospel of judgment unto their salvation (Isa. 2:2-4; 42:1-4; 2 Cor. 2:14-17). This same judgment will be eternal damnation for all who are found without Christ.

(Matt. 19:29-30) – And what shall we who follow Christ have? *“AN HUNDREDFOLD, AND SHALL INHERIT EVERLASTING LIFE.”* The blessings and reward of the kingdom of God are not those that we earn by our obedience. They are more than we can imagine, infinitely exceeding any of the material things of this world (1 Pet. 1:22-25). And they are inherited, bequeathed to us by the death of Christ as our Surety, Substitute, and Redeemer, based on His righteousness imputed alone (1 Pet. 1:1-4). The Lord humbles us to show us that we are the last ones who could earn anything but death and damnation from Him, and this is when He blesses us by His grace and brings us to follow Him and seek to obey, not for earn rewards, but motivated by grace, love, and gratitude for all that He freely gives us out of His mercy and grace in Christ!