

“Our Eternal Reward – Part 4”
Mark 10:28-31
(Preached at Trinity, May 8, 2013)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. We've been looking at Peter's response to Jesus words to the Rich Young Ruler in **Verse 21 Mark 10:21 NAU** - "go and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."
 - A. Jesus commanded the Rich Young Ruler to forsake all and follow Christ. Peter considered his life and the life of the other apostles and declares:
Mark 10:28 NAU - "Behold, we have left everything and followed You."
Matthew records a fuller statement:
Matthew 19:27 NAS - "Behold, we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?"
 - B. He wanted to know what reward he can expect for what he has given up. Again, he was considering our Lord's words to the Rich Young Ruler.
"go and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven"
 - C. What exactly is the disciple's reward?
2. In His answer Jesus speaks of two aspects of our reward, one aspect is in the realm of this age and the other aspect is reserved for eternity.
Mark 10:30 NAU - "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."
3. So far we've looked at our reward in this present age. In spite of the suffering that comes with discipleship, there are infinite rewards in this life. Our reward far exceeds anything that we lose. Jesus declares a hundredfold reward of everything forsaken - "hundred fold" being used to describe "many times over."
4. Last time we began looking at eternal reward. Paul spoke of it as his crown.
2 Timothy 4:7-8 NAU - "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; ⁸ in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing."
5. Again, we must see the great contrast between the then and now.
Our reward is always given in the backdrop of the difficulties of this life.
James 1:12 NAU - "Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which *the Lord* has promised to those who love Him."
Matthew 5:11-12 NAU - "Blessed are you when *people* insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. ¹² "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."
6. Heaven has always been put before the eyes of the saints to encourage them on their journey. Last time I focused on our "eternal life." – **Verse 30** and our reward associated with it.

- A. Just as our chief reward in this age is Christ, He is also our chief reward in the age to come. We shall see Him.
Not only will we *see* Him; we shall be *with* Him.
Not only will we be *with* Him; we shall be *like* Him.
We will share in His holiness – sin shall be no more
- B. We looked at other blessings of glorification -
All that pertains to our mortality will be forever gone. There will be no death, no aging, no sickness
- C. We will spend eternity with Christ in a restored universe
God is going to restore all things. All corruption will be removed.
7. What else does the Bible say about our eternal reward?
- I. Let's look a bit more at our crown
The Bible often refers to our reward as our crown
- A. Paul referred to his eternal reward as a crown
2 Timothy 4:7-8 NAU - "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; ⁸ in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing."
1. He described his life as a great struggle – a good fight
But it was temporary. He was pressing towards a crown, a trophy reserved for the faithful.
Matthew 25:21 NAU - "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'"
3. It was a crown of righteousness –
It was a crown reserved *for* the righteous
It was a crown *consisting* of righteousness – in other words the blessing of freedom from sin.
- B. It is a crown that awaits every Christian who finish the race
2 Timothy 4:8 NAU - "and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing."
1. Salvation and eternal life should always be seen as the greatest of all rewards.
It is a trophy, a crown, a sure reward
2. Only those who finish the race without being disqualified receive the prize
1 Corinthians 9:24 NAU - "Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but *only* one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win."
- C. One of the aspects of Christian's crown is the saints he has won for Christ.
1. We have this as a reward now. The saints of God have great joy in seeing sinners embrace Christ and begin to serve Him. Paul called his converts his joy and crown.
Philippians 4:1 NAU - "Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord, my beloved."

2. But Paul also considered the unimaginable joy in presenting his converts to Christ.
1 Thessalonians 2:19-20 NAU - "For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? ²⁰ For you are our glory and joy."
2 Corinthians 11:2 NAU - "For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin."
3. This requires great care with the Gospel – the danger is always great to have our labors invalidated – See **1 Cor. 3:10-15**

II. Another of the glories of our eternal reward is it will be fixed and unchanging

- A. Everything in this life is changing and ending
 1. We plan for life but it is constantly changing
 2. We plan for a vacation and it is soon past.
We buy a new car and it quickly becomes old
Our bodies age and grow frail
Friends pass away. In the end the earth will pass away
 3. I've often said, "Life is full of last things."
Never again will I hear my children playing together in their rooms.
Never again will I bounce Ella on my knee until she falls asleep.
Everything we do we will do a final time.
I will preach a final sermon, kiss my wife for the last time, drive my truck, brush my teeth. Everything is ending. If your hope is in this life you will be filled with disappointment and frustration.
Ecclesiastes 1:2-5 NAU - "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher, "Vanity of vanities! All is vanity." ³ What advantage does man have in all his work Which he does under the sun? ⁴ A generation goes and a generation comes, But the earth remains forever. ⁵ Also, the sun rises and the sun sets; And hastening to its place it rises there *again*."
- B. But in eternity we will enjoy endless joy
 1. Death will no longer loom over us like stalking beast
 2. Christ will be forever with us
 3. Every enjoyment will continue in unending succession
We shall have a crown of glory that fadeth not away.
We shall have a treasure, "where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal"
 4. Eternity will not be characterized by loss

III. Jesus implies here that there will be degrees of reward:

Mark 10:31 NAU - "But many *who are* first will be last, and the last, first."

William Hendriksen – "There does not seem to be any good reason for saying that Jesus meant *all* those who "shall be last" are going to be lost or outside the kingdom. Fact is: not only are there degrees of suffering in hell, there are also degrees of glory in the restored universe. There will be surprises however. Not only will many of those who are now regarded as the very pillars of the church be last, but also many who never made the headlines—think of the poor widow who contributed "two mites"—shall be first in the Day of Judgment."

- A. We do not know how the degrees of reward will be applied but the greatness should serve to encourage our hearts.

1 Corinthians 15:58 NAS - "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not *in vain* in the Lord."

1. For examples Pastors:

Hebrews 13:17 NAS - "Obey your leaders, and submit *to them*; for they keep watch over your souls, as those who will give an account."

1 Peter 5:2-4 NAS - "shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to *the will of God*; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; ³ nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. ⁴ And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory."

3. Or teachers

James 3:1 NAS - "Let not many *of you* become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we shall incur a stricter judgment."

4. Jesus seemed to imply that faithfulness has its own reward. Each Christian is held accountable for his or her particular gifts and the task God has set before them.

Matthew 25:20-21 NAU - "The one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, 'Master, you entrusted five talents to me. See, I have gained five more talents.' ²¹ "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'"

- B. We must view this with great caution

1. In the end our labors are in not in proportion with our reward. Our labors are finite. Our reward is infinite, for if our ultimate reward is Christ, His radiance and excellence will fill our souls for eternity.

2. May each of us be careful to stir up those graces that He has given us. May we not be like the one who squandered his talents.

3. May God enable us to endure faithfully until the end, that we might all receive the prize.

4. But may we remember, even when we've done all that we can do, we've done no more than what is expected of us as servants of Christ

Luke 17:7-10 NAU - "Which of you, having a slave plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come immediately and sit down to eat'? ⁸ "But will he not say to him, 'Prepare something for me to eat, and *properly* clothe yourself and serve me while I eat and drink; and afterward you may eat and drink'? ⁹ "He does not thank the slave because he did the things which were commanded, does he? ¹⁰ "So you too, when you do all the things which are commanded you, say, 'We are unworthy slaves; we have done *only* that which we ought to have done.'"