

The Rewards of Following Jesus

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Date: 17 February 2019

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- [0 : 0 0] Jesus talks about rewards. He doesn't say the word reward, but He talks about what we will receive a hundred times in this life.
- Rewards are common in our day. We are offered rewards for all kinds of things. If we would just spend a little more. You can earn rewards for shopping, for airline flights, for dining.
- You spend a whole lot on your credit card. You get reward points for that. You stay often enough at a certain hotel. You get rewards for that.
- You get rewards for safe driving. Sometimes people lose a pet and they post a reward. If you find my pet, I will pay you.
- Right? Or the police sometimes will offer rewards for information leading to the arrest of a criminal. Rewards. You even get rewards for recycling.
- [1 : 1 2] Rewards are offered as incentives, usually to spend more money. But sometimes they're offered to help at a cause or to encourage good behavior.
- Well, God also gives rewards. But the rewards that He gives to His people are not earned for a deserved achievement.
- They are to bless those who have sacrificed in His service. So in Matthew 10, I always say Matthew.
- Maybe it's that I taught in Matthew for five years. It's still stuck. We've been here over a year. I had to learn that this is Mark now. In Mark chapter 10, Jesus gives comfort to His disciples who are concerned and who have left everything and followed Him.
- Jesus wants them to know there is blessing, there is reward for those who do give all and leave all for Him. In the context, Jesus has been training His followers that there is a peculiarity about His disciples.
- [2 : 3 1] He calls His disciples to be extraordinary, to not be like the world, or do what is natural. He's calling them to be unique, peculiar, to stand out.
- Not to stand out, but that they will stand out because He's calling them to something that is totally counter-cultural. He's calling them to something that is completely unnatural.
- So it began in chapter 8, 31, where He told them about His own death, and then He said, if you want to follow Me, if you just desire to follow Me, you must deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Me.
- Following Me is a life of denial and sacrifice. In chapter 9, as He reminded them again of His death, He talked about following Him.
- And He encounters His disciples who are arguing among themselves about which one is the greatest. He has disciples who are ambitious, who have selfish biases, who want to be first.
- [3 : 3 6] And so He says to them, if you want to be first, be what? Be last. What? Totally upside down, counter-cultural thinking.

Unnatural thinking. And then at the end of chapter 9, He even talks about these kind of peculiar disciples, these extraordinary, unique kind of people who deal with sin at a deeper level than everyone else.

Instead of simply dealing with the symptoms, simply dealing with the surface of sins, simply dealing with the expression of sins, Jesus calls His followers to fight and root out the very source of the sin.

So if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. If your foot leads you into sin, cut it off. If your eye brings you into sin, pluck it out. He's talking about not literally cutting off members of our body, but doing something radical in our lives that deal with the source of what causes us to sin.

There is some kind of sacrifice. There is some kind of cutting off. There is some kind of getting rid of whatever it is that hinders me or that continues to keep me in sin.

[4 : 59] So He's calling for a radical kind of discipleship. A peculiar kind of people. A distinctive follower.

And He continues that in chapter 10 as He now is teaching them distinctive values. So He approaches the subject of marriage. And He talks about marriage in the first century with a view that is higher than anybody had ever had at the time.

To value marriage as it was designed to be valued. And then He talks about children. Valuing children higher than they had ever thought of valuing children.

And now He's talking about from verse 17 on riches. Riches. That riches are actually not to be valued. Because riches are dangerous.

He talks about the difficulty of riches. It will be difficult for the rich to enter kingdom. To inherit eternal life. To be saved as the disciples react to His teaching and say, then who can be saved?

[6 : 12] If the rich can't be saved, and by their thinking the rich have the advantage, the rich are quote unquote blessed by God, then if they're not saved, who can be saved?

And so Jesus is turning upside down all of their thinking in regard to different values. And here riches is an obstacle to salvation.

A hindrance, not a help to eternal life. So He confronts us. So now in verse 28, as Jesus answers the question, who can be saved?

Well, that's impossible for man. That's the point of the camel and the needle. The eye of the needle. It's an impossible thing with man. But not with God.

So the disciples have one more concern in verse 28. And so Jesus brings comfort in terms of a promise to His disciples about those who leave all for Jesus.

[7 : 19] And this text comes from verse 28 through 31. It comes in two parts. In verse 28 is the concern of the disciples. And Peter's the spokesman, but notice He's speaking for all of them.

He says, we, not just I, we. So He expresses His concern. And then we see in verses 29 to 31 Jesus' answer, which comes in comfort, which comes in promise, which comes about reward.

Okay? So let's look at those in those two ways. Verse 28, we have the concern. Peter began to say to Him, see, or literally, behold, we have left everything and followed You.

What's He expressing? here. Well, He's expressing His concern. And we might summarize it this way. What is the value of our sacrifices in following Jesus?

We've left everything and followed You. What's the value of that? What is the value of our sacrifices in following You? Matthew makes the same, tells the same story and it includes the same words, but Matthew includes a question that Peter tags on at the end of his statement.

[8 : 38] Lord, we have left everything and followed You. What then is for us? What about us? In other words, what, what, what?

Are we saved? Are we, you know, is there anything for us? We've left everything. Everything. So, let's look at this concern in three ways.

First, to remember the context and then look at the cost of their giving all and then their commitment. So, first, the context. Remember, they're in shock.

As he's talking about the difficulty of riches, verse 24, they're amazed at what he says and then Jesus expands his difficult statement into a more difficult statement where he says at the end of verse 24, it's not just difficult for a rich man, but verse 24, children, how difficult it is, period, to enter the kingdom of God.

And then he talks about the comparison between a camel going through the eye of a needle. Literally, the largest animal in Palestine going through the smallest opening of a sewing needle, not some gate in Jerusalem.

[9 : 51] That wasn't even discovered until 900 years after Christ. It never existed. So, Jesus was talking about an impossibility. And so he says, and then verse 26, we see that they're exceedingly astonished.

They're blown away. They're literally struck out. They're pushed over. Their minds are blown. This concept of riches being a hindrance, of being an obstacle, had never entered their mind before.

They were raised to believe from the Old Testament that God blesses the rich. If you're rich, you're blessed by God. If you're poor, you must be cursed by God.

If you're healthy, you must be blessed by God. If you're sick or lame in some way, you must be cursed by God. Remember the story in John chapter 9 of the blind man from birth?

Remember, the disciples asked Jesus, well, was it the man's sin that caused his blindness, or was his parents' sin that caused his blindness? See, this was their assumption in those days. That's what they think.

[11 : 01] One equals the other. So, in Jesus' day, the Jewish teachers were the prosperity, health, and wealth teachers. Okay? So, it must be something you did to cause your poverty or your sickness.

And Jesus, of course, in John 9 says, neither have to do with any of that. It's about glorifying God. And so, we see Jesus blessing and healing people all over the place.

Not connecting it to sin, but connecting it to God's, that God can save, that God can change, that God can transform anything. So, this is their, the context where their, their concern, because he's already rocked their world, he's already turned upside down the whole value system, and so it leads them to, to make this statement of concern in verse 28.

What about us? What would there be for us? So, Peter expresses that in terms of a cost. In verse 28, he began to say to him, behold, we have left all.

Now, if you have the ESV, your translation simply says, see, we have left all. Let's not miss that little word. That little word, see, is actually the word behold.

[12 : 27] behold. And, in the, in the gospel of Matthew, which I seem to keep slipping and saying, Matthew, it's a huge word.

It's a word that Matthew uses all the time. Anytime something significant, something he wants you to pay attention to, for instance, when the leper shows up, Matthew writes, behold, the leper.

Like, whoa, pay attention to this. Look, look, look, look. So, Peter is trying to get Jesus' attention. Behold, Lord, look, look, what we've done.

Stop for a minute and think about what we've done. Behold, we have left all. We have left all and followed you. What is this leaving all?

This word, it's an interesting word, the word to leave there, basically means to let go of something. So, depending on the context, if you're letting go of sins, you are forgiving.

[13 : 36] It's the word for forgiveness. At its root, forgiveness means to let go, to send it away. In another context, if you're talking about marriage, this word let go means divorce.

Same word that means forgiveness, also means divorce. Depends on the context. You're letting go of something. You're sending it away. You're giving up on it. Okay? Here it simply means, doesn't have anything to do with marriage, doesn't have anything to do with sin here, just means I'm letting go of all my things.

As Jesus expands in the next verse, my house and my home and my field and my brothers and sisters, my family, all that. I've let it go.

I've given it over. I've left it behind. So, what we learn from Peter's expression here is there was a considered choice.

And Peter's saying, Lord, we've counted the cost and we've paid the price. He's not complaining. He's just saying, we know this was part of the thing.

[14 : 50] To follow you meant to lead. I left my fishing boat behind. But, now I want you to think.

Because remember, in the context, he had just told the rich man that he must sell all and give it to the poor and look for his treasure in heaven and not on earth and then come and follow him.

Lest we think that's what God demands of every Christian, it is not. That's what he demanded of that man because that was that man's idol, his riches.

So, he will demand for any of us to leave whatever our idol is. God will reveal that to you, whatever that is. But, I want you to remember, think of Peter.

Did he, did he sell his house and get rid of it? Did he sell his fishing boats and get rid of it? You're saying no. How do you know? From other stories, he, he used them again.

[15 : 58] We keep seeing in Mark that when they go to Capernaum, they go to the house. which way back in chapter one we know was Peter and Andrew's house. That was home base.

He didn't get rid of it. His mother-in-law was still living there by the way. Wasn't kicking her out. You don't kick out mother-in-laws, right? I'm not going there. So, he still had it.

We know he still had his fishing boat because later there, well, Jesus made use of it. They're traveling across, you know, sort of getting in boats. Whose boats? Well, Peter and Andrew, James and John's boats, probably.

You know, and they're going back and crossing the sea. So, they left them but they haven't gotten rid of them. So, what does he mean to leave off? Attitude and heart.

They've left it behind in the sense of that's not my priority. And, they've given it over as however it's going to be. Want to use my house?

[17 : 00] Use my house. I got a boat. You want to need the boat? Use the boat. It's a matter of attitude. It's a matter of heart. Those things aren't the first importance anymore.

Jesus is now the first important. So, it doesn't literally mean I have to get rid of everything. It doesn't literally mean I leave my family and never have anything to do with them again.

It means there's a change in loyalty. Just like when a father leaves his, when a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife, right?

There's a change of loyalty and commitment there. Now, the wife becomes priority and the parents take a back seat. He doesn't stop honoring them.

Okay, you with me? This is what following Christ is. There's a new loyalty. There's a higher priority that Jesus has over all these other things. And he may ask me to completely leave something of my past.

[18 : 04] Don't know. So, finally, Peter adds one more statement. Not only have we left all, but we have followed you.

We've left all and followed you. Perfect tense, James, which means they've done it and they continue to do it. They continue to follow. They continue to follow. They're always going to be following him.

We followed you, which tells us something about the disciples' understanding. We know that there's certain things they don't understand yet. They don't understand that he's going to die and rise again.

They don't get that. That's not in their computer system yet. But they have understood what he meant by follow me.

Follow me. It means leaving things behind and following him. They've gotten that. They understand that's discipleship. Following him. Back when Jesus called them in chapter one, they're fishing, right?

[19 : 07] And Jesus says, follow me and I will make you fishers of men. Change your hockey. You'll still be fishermen.

Just be fishing for men. I'll do that part. You follow me. They get that. When he calls Matthew, or he's called Levi at the time, in the tax booth, right? Same thing.

Follow me. And Matthew, Levi, same guy. I don't know whether, I think his original name was Levi and I think Jesus renamed him Matthew. Anyway, he does.

He leaves his business and follows Jesus. And then has a big party, remember? Lights all his tax gatherer and sinner friends over to meet Jesus. That caused a little problem.

Transition party. Yeah. Yeah, well, it got him in trouble with the religious people. See, for them, there's a recognition that to come to Jesus is not some kind of side thing to my life.

[20 : 13] Jesus isn't some patch I put on. Remember the story of the patch, the new patch on the old things? Jesus is not a new patch on an old system.

He's not just a patch for my life. He is my life. And so, the disciples understand that come to him is not just some side thing that I do as convenience.

It's a life calling. It means to continue to follow him, to continue to count the cost, to sacrifice whatever he requires me to sacrifice, to leave behind whatever he requires me to leave behind.

So, Peter's concern here is what is the value of our sacrifice in following you? We've left everything and we're following you. So, what is there for us? What's left for us?

What about us? I heard what you said to that rich man. What about us? Is there something more for us to leave to? I think there's a little bit of anxiety for Peter here.

[21 : 14] It's like, where do we stand? Have we done enough? I mean, I just saw that guy walk away from you. I don't want to walk away from you.

Where do we stand with you? You know, I hear that in his voice. Some commentators think he's boasting. I don't think Peter's boasting here. Because the context, he's already anxious and afraid.

He's like, what's going on here? His mind's blown. You know, I don't think he's in any place for pride. I think he's very humble here and just saying, what about us? We have given everything for you.

What about us? So, Jesus' answers, we'll look at. I want you to understand, Paul had the same testimony.

Paul left everything too. everything changed for Paul after that one road experience. He's on his way to Damascus to persecute these heretic people.

[22 : 17] This Jesus. I'm going to destroy it. He's out there to persecute these people. And he sees the light, right? Which actually blinds him.

And remember, Paul's conversion was not some big struggle, power struggle. It was the light came on and Peter says, Lord, who are you?

Jesus? Oh boy. Everything changed for Paul. Oh, the Lord is, oh, you're actually the real Lord. Oh, okay.

Had everything wrong. So, then everything changed for Paul. Listen to how he describes his change in Philipians chapter three.

He says, if anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more. I had a ton of confidence in the flesh. I was circumcised the eighth day of the people of Israel, as of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews, as to the law, a Pharisee, that's the best you could be, as to the law, as to zeal, persecutor of the church.

[23 : 26] I didn't just come to synagogue class and listen and learn. I got out there and did something. I was a persecutor of the church. That's how zealous I was. As to righteousness under the law, blameless.

Really? He thought so. In terms of externals, tell Jesus, turn the light on.

But then listen to what he says. But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the, listen to this, surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For His sake, I have suffered the loss of all things.

There's that same phrase. We've left everything. We've lost everything. I have suffered the loss of all things. And count them but rubbish. Literally, done.

[24 : 28] That whole Pharisee of Pharisee thing? Done. That whole blameless to the law? I know better now. Nothing.

Nothing. In order that, what? In order that I may gain Christ. I've lost to gain Christ and to be found in Him.

Not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law. See, where he thought he was blameless. Not a righteousness that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ. The righteousness that comes from God.

Not that I give to God, but a righteousness that is a gift from God through faith in Christ. The righteousness from God that depends on faith.

I receive it by faith, not by works. Why? That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and may share in His sufferings.

[25 : 27] By the way, Paul means that in a positive way. I like the first phrase, don't you? That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection. Don't we all want to know that? I want to know the power of His resurrection.

Yeah, I want some of that resurrection power. Same power that raised Jesus from the dead lives in me, right? We sing. But Paul goes on, and may share in His sufferings. Do I want to sing that?

That's the next verse to that song, Ron. We need to add another verse to that song, same power. Share in His sufferings. Becoming like Him in His death.

That by any means possible, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. What is the value of our sacrifice? What is the value of Paul's sacrifice? What is the value of the disciples' sacrifice?

What's the value of our own sacrifice? We leave things, we sacrifice things. There's a cost for following Jesus. What's the value? Well, Paul says that in the words, the worth, the surpassing worth, the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus, my Lord.

[26 : 38] To know Him. Not know about Him, to know Him. To walk with Him, to talk with Him, to hear from Him, and to be led by Him. To know Him.

To gain Christ. To receive righteousness through faith. To know and experience the power of His resurrection. To become like Him in His death.

To have that hope, that certain hope, that living hope of the resurrection. Do you think in these terms? Is knowing Jesus Christ as surpassing value to you?

When you compare knowing Jesus versus suffering in this world, losing in this world, being last in this world, being despised in this world, being mistreated in this world because you're a Christian?

The one intolerable position in this culture? Everything's tolerated except belief in Jesus Christ. Why? Because it condemns every other way.

[27 : 51] And we won't have that. You take on Jesus' name, you will be persecuted. You desire to live godly, you will be persecuted.

You say His name. You say, we have a cake downstairs. You say, I will not make a cake to celebrate something I do not believe is right.

You will be persecuted. We're sharing a cake from those guys today. You say, let's give Him a little positive business, huh?

Support a fellow believer who's suffering for taking a right stand. So, so Peter expresses his concern.

How does Jesus answer his concern? He gives comfort. Verse 29 through 31. Huh. Jesus said, verse 29, truly I say to you, there is no one, no one, not anyone, who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother, not saying you have to leave all these things, but if you've left any of these things, if you've left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold.

[29 : 16] In other words, whoever has left any of these will receive a hundredfold in this life and in the life to come eternal life. There's His promise, His comfort.

Jesus promises greater rewards to His followers. The rewards are far greater than all the losses together. They're of surpassing value.

As Paul says in Romans, suffering now is not worth comparing to the glory to be revealed. Not even comparable. Jesus talks about a hundred times in this life, let alone the next life.

So let's break this down in three parts. First of all, Jesus mentions in verse 29 the purpose of the suffering. There's a reason for it. Then in verse 29 and 30, He gives the promise of reward and finally in verse 31, He gives a principle.

So what's the purpose of sacrifice? Why sacrifice? Why suffer loss, Paul? Why give up all these things, disciples? What does Jesus say at the end of verse 29?

[30 : 24] If you've left any of these things for what? My sake. For Me. You do it for Me. We do it for the Lord.

Our Savior. Our rock. Our refuge. Our shepherd. Our vine. Our bread of life.

Our light of the world. Our door of the sheep. What am I missing in John? The resurrection and life. We could name lots of names about who He is, right?

Because no one name can capture who Jesus is. Just like God has lots and lots of names because no name can capture who He is. We do it for Him.

It's a personal reason. We do it for Him. But also then, Jesus says, also for my sake and for the gospel.

[31 : 28] For the gospel. What does that mean? To do it for the sake of the gospel. To suffer all things. To lose all things.

To leave behind all things for the sake of the gospel. What's the gospel? It's the message of Christ. It's the message of the kingdom.

It's the gospel of the kingdom. The gospel is who God is, right? Who man is. What Christ has done to remedy that and our response.

That's the gospel. God is merciful and compassionate and loving and forgiving. He's also holy and righteous and just.

There's a tension going on there. And because of who God is, man falls short. Man is in ruin. I cannot meet His standards. The law shows that I have broken, that I am broken, that I am weak, that I am unable.

[32 : 28] So I'm in a bind. God is who He is and I am who I am. How do I reconcile? That's the third part of the gospel. Christ is sent to remedy our ruin.

And our response is faith. The gospel. The good news is God's remedy for man's ruin. That's really actually the storyline of the whole Bible.

We have man's ruin right up at the beginning in Genesis chapter 3. Man wrecks it all. Beautiful creation. Everything is very good. man's ruin. And then man, within three chapters he's kicked out.

Right? And then we see all through the Old Testament man's ruin, his ruin, his ruin. Even our best guys, even our best guys. Even Abraham falls.

Even Isaac falls. Even Jacob. Well, what do you mean even Jacob? Jacob was a big time faller until God breaks him. David is our great man after God's own heart and he breaks half the commandments in one activity or episode.

[33 : 43] Who do we got? Christ alone? Christ alone. So the promise of the Lord, what does Jesus affirm then in verse 29 and 30?

Truly, there is no one who has left what? Watch this. Watch what you leave and then watch what you receive here. So, no one who has left house, singular, or brothers or sisters or mother, singular, or father, singular, or children or lands for my sake and for the gospel who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, what?

Went from singular house to houses, plural. Brothers and sisters and went from mother, singular, to mothers, plural. skips father.

Father's mentioned in verse 29, not mentioned in verse 30. Interesting. And children and lands and then he adds with persecutions. You also receive persecutions as part of the promise.

All who desire to live godly in Jesus Christ will be persecuted. It's a promise. It's a promise. It's a confirmation of your faith. But it is.

[34 : 57] So note that he leaves out fathers. No fathers. Why? What is this that we receive? What is this hundredfold of houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and skip father and lands that we receive?

What is this? Is he talking prosperity gospel? Am I going to get a whole bunch of mansions in this world? Is that what he's saying? Lots of fields. So see? See? See? Jesus didn't really mean what he said earlier about the riches.

Now he's going back to oh no, now you get all of it. By the way, the prosperity preachers will use this verse and skip all the ones in front of it. Yes.

Absolutely. Treasures in heaven. So who are these family members we get? God here. I have family that's blood family and then I have family that's blood family.

If you're listening and not looking, I'm pointing at the cross. Right? Children of God, we gain mothers. We have one father. That's why it's not gaining fathers.

[36 : 08] I've got one father. Amen. And he's all of our father together. But we gain mothers and brothers and sisters and houses. That means, you know, everybody's welcome in everybody's house, right?

Ooh, it got quiet, didn't it? Yeah. Yeah. We do that. Obviously, we don't, you know, they lived in a time of hospitality. It's huge and we're trying to recover some of that in our own membership of being with one another and coming into houses.

Yeah, we share all that. We see in Acts, lands, right? People were poor. What did Barnabas do? He sold the tract of land and gave the prophets to the church so it would feed the poor.

Because nobody had anything of their, so that's what he's talking about, a spiritual blessing of a new family. And he adds, didn't he have to do that with persecution?

Literally, in the midst of persecution, your blessings, your reward in this life comes with family and houses and homes and all these things in the midst of persecution.

[37 : 18] Just affirming that as long as we are in this world in this time, there will be suffering and persecution. Don't paint that picture too rosy yet.

And then he adds, plus, that's now in the age to come. Eternal life. Absolute glory later.

And then he adds a principle in verse 31. And he kind of sums it all up. But many who are first will be last and the last first. There's that whole counter-cultural upside-down thinking again.

It's not the first who will be first. The first will be last. The proud in this world God is opposed to and he will bring them low. The low in this world who are humble before him will be lifted up.

First will be last and the last will be first. He who wants to be greatest will be servant of all, the last one.

[38 : 23] In God's value system, we descend into greatness. The greatest are the servants, the humble.

So this call to leave all and follow Jesus, this isn't new to the Gospels in the New Testament. This is how God called Abraham. Abraham, leave your home and your people and your land and go where, God, where I show you.

Where? Where? Just go. Trust me. And the promise to Abraham was blessing. Blessing.

Abraham was a rich man but never owned a piece of land until he buried Sarah. Didn't buy any land in the promised land because he knew that wasn't really the real promise.

That was a picture of the promise. Moses, same thing. Moses followed the Lord. He left what was the palace and riches to endure mistreatment with the people of God.

[39 : 35] He refuses the riches. Why would he do that? Notice how Hebrews 11 describes how Moses actually counted the cost, made considered choices.

Hebrews 11, 24. By faith Moses, when he was grown, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Choosing rather, watch this, rather to be mistreated with the people of God.

Is that what, he really chose that. Sometimes he's grumbling about it, doesn't sound like he's really, you know, maybe double thinking his choice. but considered to be mistreated with the people of God rather than enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt. For he was looking to the reward. By faith he left Egypt.

He left it behind. Not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible. Not seeing him, literally seeing him with significance.

[40 : 50] The word seeing there means to see, grasp the significance of who was before him in the burning bush and who was before him on the mountain and who was before him where he allowed, he was allowed, remember to see, God walking away from him.

He began to see the significance of who that God is and for that reason he had no fear of Pharaoh. Pharaoh. In fact, he watched the Lord just disintegrate Pharaoh's kingdom.

So notice that Moses made considered choices just like the disciples. They counted the cost. They denied riches for greater wealth of Christ.

And what motivated Moses was looking to the reward. He was like Abraham. He was looking for a better city. He wasn't going to put any foundations down in that promised land because he knew, oh, it's bigger than this.

This is great, land flowing with milk and honey. Great, great, great. But it ain't the, it ain't the real treasure. Moses saw that too. It's beyond our suffering now.

[42 : 06] It's beyond our losses now. Trusting in the promise of Christ. There are rewards now. We have to have eyes to see them and appreciate them. And by the way, do you grab hold of these rewards?

brothers and sisters and mothers and daughters here?

Have you been hurt before that keeps you reluctant from that? I understand that. Been hurt before? Been betrayed before? Overcome that by faith.

Trust God and is a body. And yeah, it includes not only loving one another and serving one another but also bearing with one another.

Why? Because we're not perfect. Forgiving one another. Why would I ever have to forgive these beautiful people? Because we rub shoulders long enough, we'll rub each other the wrong way.

[43 : 17] Just like family. Just like family. but even deeper family. Just a little encouragement. I don't know if you hold back from enjoying the reward of today.

We don't experience the reward unless we follow Jesus in His way. J.C. Ryle speaks of this passage with this beautiful way of calling us to apply this.

He says, all who are fearful of sacrifice and following Christ, all who are faint-hearted, look close at Christ's promise.

We receive a new family, a new fellowship, new companions, new friends. Ponder these words. Take courage. Take comfort from these words.

They are the words of Jesus Christ. Let's pray. Father, we thank You for Your Word.

[44 : 23] We thank You for the encouragement of Jesus in passages where He has been talking about so many changes, so many differences, so many unnatural things.

things. A different attitude, a different value. And sacrificing and leaving these things of earth behind.

We thank You, Lord, for a passage where now He looks at His disciples who are a bit concerned about where are we at and He gives us this comfort.

That yes, there is lots of loss, but there is gain. There is reward. In fact, it's incomparable. So, Father, help us to grasp by faith these truths, these promises.

Help us, Father, who are fearful, who are faint-hearted to ponder anew these words and to take them and take courage from them.

[45 : 30] We ask this in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. Amen.!NINGNINGNING Thank you.