

Study Guide to
Rewards in the OT and NT

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1 Old testament foundation to understanding rewards

1.1 God made man in his image

*Genesis 1:26 And God said, Let us make man in our **image**, after our **likeness**: and let them have **dominion (rule)** over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. 28 And God **blessed** them, and God said to them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and **subdue** it: and have **dominion (rule)** over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.*

1.1.1 Implications of God being the Creator:

- 1) He owns it all; 2) He can do with it whatever He wishes; 3) He sustains it; 4) He rules over it (any exercise of dominion within the creation must come at His permission); 5) He can destroy or re-create His creation at will.

1.1.2 We are Created in His Image and after His Likeness. (1:27)

God is seen in Genesis 1 as ruling over all. He speaks; it happens. His will is done. Man was created to have dominion, to rule over the earth v 26 & 28. Dominion is a blessing of God, lost by the first Adam, regained by the second, shared with those who follow in the footsteps of the future ruler of the world to come. (See Heb 2).

1.1.3 Obedience is the Key to Exercising Dominion

Gen 2:15 And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to work it and to keep it. 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat: 17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it: for in the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die.”

Although God's creation was good, indeed, very good, it was not the best. It was impossible for man to demonstrate the higher, nobler virtues. God created the best way to the best of all possible worlds by providing a stage on which people could choose (through obedience) to demonstrate and acquire the nobler virtues. Eventually there will be a new creation which is best, which will be populated by those of proven character, who have demonstrated the higher virtues. The audience of the current show is Satan and his angels (Eph 3:10). We're pawns to demonstrate to Satan & Co. that the God who holds all pleasures is worthy of obedience (cf. Job). Satan desires to prevent us from enjoying the glory he grasped at (and lost).

1.1.4 Rebellion (Independence) is the Essence of Sin and the Loss of Dominion

6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, (desirable for gaining wisdom) she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also to her husband with her; and he did eat.

Man has an innate desire for: **power, pleasure, and possessions**. Satan's will is to have us meet those desires on our own, immediately rather than in God's plan (cf Jesus ruling over all). Satan's way is a deceptive, time-saving short-cut to godliness. God's commands are not to keep us from good, but from evil. His commands flow out of His infinite goodness and are for our good. [Temptation always comes in disguise. Deceit = promise one thing deliver another.] Our ability to

resist Satan's deceptions is directly proportional our ability to accurately wield the sword of the Spirit, the Bible.

MOTIVATIONS	<i>I John 2</i>	<i>Genesis 3</i>	<i>Luke 4</i>
Pleasure	Lust of the Flesh	good for food	bread
Possessions	Lust of the Eyes	pleasant to the eyes	kingdoms
Power	Pride of Life	desirable-gaining wisdom	throw

1Jn 2:15 Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For everything in the world--the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the pride of life (boasting of what he has and does)--comes not from the Father but from the world. 17 The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.

7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

Man's attempts of covering his sin are always cheap and inadequate because he doesn't think he's that bad, or that God is really worthy of a life. The penalty for rebellion against a great king is always death. A life is required. In ancient near east covenants and treaties between a Suzerian and a Vassal (greater power, lesser power), to "live" meant to exercise dominion under the terms of a covenant; to "die" meant to be deposed from rulership under the terms of the covenant. ("I put the unfaithful vassal to death [slew] and led him captive to my capital where he served out the rest of his days in my dungeon.") {See more in **IV. Eternal Life.**}

1.1.5 Man Lost the Right to Rule through the Fall (Independence)

Our God always keeps His promises. He is a God who blesses and curses, revealing His nature as good and just and loyally loving. If we disobey, He can't fulfil His promise to bless, so He must fulfil His promise to curse. What did Adam and Eve lose? Or in what way did they die? Physical? Spiritual? Relationship with God? In II Cor 5 the apostle Paul equates being naked with a lack of glory.

Our natural tendency is to refuse to accept responsibility for our sin. Every sin can be explained (but not excused) by factors in our environment. In a perfect environment it would be easy to not sin. However, we live in imperfect environments, and therein lie our tests.

Wisdom is choosing the right objectives, and the right means of attaining those objectives. Being God is the wrong objective. Disobedience is the wrong way to any objective. Fear of the Lord (knowing that the God who judges and rewards or punishes is watching everything I think, do, and say) is the beginning of wisdom.

1.1.6 The "Son of Man" Gained back the Dominion and Shares it with those who are Faithful to Him.

Psalm 8:1 O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. 4 what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? 5 You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. 6 You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet:

Heb 2:5 It is not to angels that he has subjected the world to come, about which we are speaking. 6 But there is a place where someone has testified: "What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? 7 You made him a little lower than the angels; you crowned him with glory and honor 8 and put everything under his feet." In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him. 9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory: and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. 10 In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering.

1.2 Abrahamic covenant: genesis 12-15

Gen 12:1 The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. 2 "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." 4 So Abram left, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran.

1.3 Blessings & cursings: deuteronomy 20-30

Rulership is a blessing - *Dt 15:6 For the Lord your God will bless you as he has promised, and you will lend to many nations but will borrow from none. You will rule over many nations but none will rule over you.*

1.4 Kadesh-barnea: numbers 13-14

Num 14:20 The Lord replied, "I have forgiven them, as you asked. 21 Nevertheless, as surely as I live and as surely as the glory of the Lord fills the whole earth...23 not one of them will ever see the land I promised on oath to their forefathers. No one who has treated me with contempt will ever see it. 24 But because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it.

1.5 Isaiah 40-66

Isa 40:1 Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. 10 See, the Sovereign Lord comes with power, and his arm rules for him. See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him.

1.6 Daniel 12

Dan 12:1 ...But at that time your people--everyone whose name is found written in the book--will be delivered. 2 Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. 3 Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever. 13 "As for you, go your way till the end. You will rest, and then at the end of the days you will rise to receive your allotted inheritance."

1.7 Malachi 3-4

Malachi 3:14 "You have said, 'It is futile to serve God. What did we gain by carrying out his requirements and going about like mourners before the Lord Almighty?' 16 Then those who

feared the Lord talked with each other, and the Lord listened and heard. A scroll of remembrance was written in his presence concerning those who feared the Lord and honored his name. 17 "They will be mine," says the Lord Almighty, "in the day when I make up my treasured possession. I will spare them, just as in compassion a man spares his son who serves him. 18 And you will again see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not. 4:2 But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings. And you will go out and leap like calves released from the stall. 3 Then you will trample down the wicked; they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day when I do these things," says the Lord Almighty.

2 Rewards in the gospels

Preface:

There is a literal place of eternal punishment ("hell") for those who have not trusted Jesus Christ as their personal, substitutionary sin-bearer. [Rev 20:15 If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.]

Rom 3:22 This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. 25 God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished_26 he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus. (Cf. John 3)

2.1 Preliminary concepts about the gospel of jesus

2.1.1 The good news

John, Jesus, and the disciples all proclaimed the same **good news**: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

Mat 3:1 In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea 2 and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near." 4:17 From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

2.1.2 The kingdom of heaven

The kingdom coming from heaven (not the kingdom which is heaven [cf. kingdom of God in parallel passages in Luke to the Sermon on the Mount, it is not the kingdom which is God, but the kingdom which comes from God] note also that in the Greek, heaven is in the **plural**, so it can't be the kingdom which is heavens, but rather the kingdom which comes from the heavens.) is that which was promised in the **Davidic Covenant**, (II Sam 7; Ps 89) i.e., a **literal rule** over earth centered in Jerusalem. {See section on the Kingdom.}

Lk 1:31 You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, 33 and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."

2.1.3 The proper response

The desired response to the good news was that of believing that the promised kingdom was coming in which righteousness would be rewarded, and thus to stop living as if this world was the only one. (Thus you would share your food and clothes, knowing that God would judge and reward you for doing so.)

Lk 3:10 "What should we do then?" the crowd asked. 11 John answered, "The man with two tunics should share with him who has none, and the one who has food should do the same." 12 Tax collectors also came to be baptized. "Teacher," they asked, "what should we do?" 13 "Don't collect any more than you are required to," he told them. 14 Then some soldiers asked him, "And

what should we do?" He replied, "Don't extort money and don't accuse people falsely—be content with your pay."

1. Faith is believing that God is who He said He is and will do what He said He'll do.

Heb 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

2. Faith was not necessarily belief that Jesus died for sins so you wouldn't have to, but belief that God would do what He said, be it accepting Christ's death on our behalf, or promise of God's blessing.

Gen 15:5 He took him outside and said, "Look up at the heavens and count the stars—if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be." 6 Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

2.1.4 The gospel audience

It is more than likely that the audience of John and Jesus (in the first half of the Gospels) were already going to heaven rather than hell because they were offering the blood sacrifices mandated by God for forgiveness. They believed God when He said in Leviticus, offer this sacrifice and you'll be forgiven. (To my knowledge, there is no OT evidence that an Jew had to be looking forward to a Messiah dying for them. They just had to exercise faith in what God had said He'd do if they participated (sincerely?) in the stipulated OT system.

Lev 1:4 He is to lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him. 4:26 He shall burn all the fat on the altar as he burned the fat of the fellowship offering. In this way the priest will make atonement for the man's sin, and he will be forgiven. [see also 4:35; 5:10, 13,15,18; 6:7; 19:22]

1. From God's standpoint the sacrifices only covered over the sin until Christ died to take away the sin. God, standing outside of time looked immediately at the death of Christ, the worshipper could only look at God's **word and promise**. The OT sacrifices couldn't cleanse the conscience and had to be repeated and in other ways were deficient, but they secured forgiveness.

2. The view of OT forgiveness which states that the worshipper/sacrificer had to be looking forward to the Messiah as he offered his lamb or goat is based upon extra-biblical writings and nowhere clearly stated in the Law, and obscurely referred to in the prophets. If looking forward to the Messiah's death was such an important part of the sacrificial system, then why didn't God state that was required instead of repeatedly offering a promise of forgiveness that had a hidden catch?

2.2 The sermon on the mount

= How to get rewards / blessed in the Kingdom.

2.2.1 The Emphasis of the Sermon

Note the number of times **blessing and reward** is mentioned in the sermon. There is no mention of the blood sacrifice securing atonement and forgiveness. Note also who is addressed. If John 2:11 occurred chronologically before the Sermon, then there is a clear statement that the disciples were believers (in Jesus as Prophet, their belief in Him as King didn't come until Peter's

confession that He was the Christ, and their belief in Him as Priest came after the Resurrection [Study "belief" and the disciples.]). In light of any teaching about Jesus dying for one's sins (which didn't come about until the nation rejected Him) it would be reasonable to assume that the issue faced by His audience was very parallel to that of believers today and those believers to whom the synoptic gospels were written, i.e., "how should a believer live to please God ?" Recall that the Gospels were written to believers not so much to authenticate (although that was a partial purpose, but to activate believers to service. John's gospel is the only one written to unbelievers and believers (life-abundant life). *(See section on John.)*

Mt 5:1 Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, 2 and he began to teach them, saying: 3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. 5 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. 6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. 7 Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. 8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. 9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. 10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

2.2.2 Note also what one has to do to get blessed.

Blessing does not equal forgiveness. If it did, than failure to be peacemakers or failure to be persecuted would mean that a person failed to obtain forgiveness and went to the lake of fire rather than heaven, just because no one persecuted them.

1. Reward is a cause for rejoicing (v12). The issue is reward not heaven. Heaven is assumed as already a possession.

5:12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

2. The issue is glorifying God by good works (v13-16), a discipleship passage, no forgiveness is mentioned. Failure to do what Jesus instructed does not result in the lake of fire, but rather worthlessness for further service (in the kingdom).

5:13 "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men... 16 In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

3. Where do "the least" go? v19 Note that the lawbreaker and hypocritical teacher is not cast into the lake of fire but rather is least in the kingdom, they apparently are still in the kingdom.

*5:19 Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven. v20 See on **enter** = take up possession in *.*

2.2.3 What prevents Gehenna?

See the section on Hell for the rationale for not equating Gehenna with the lake of fire. It is more likely that the references to the Valley of Gehenna where the unprofitable garbage was burned outside the city, away from the presence of the King refers to unprofitable servants being deprived of rewards rather than the eternal torment of the unregenerate in the lake of fire. For now, just notice the corrective or preventative to Gehenna.

v22 don't say "you fool", but rather reconcile ruptured relationships so that worshipful service is acceptable to God. (No one ever says one has to be reconciled to one's brother before one can accept the gift of salvation (forgiveness) but here Jesus said one must be reconciled with one's brother before God will accept a gift of service.)

v27 I've yet to hear an altar call where one is invited to pluck out their eye or cut off their hand to avoid going into the lake of fire.

5:22 But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, 'Raca,' is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell. 23 Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.

5:27 You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' 28 But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

2.2.4 Are Righteous Works Rewarded?

Note the following clear statements on reward as a result of doing works of righteousness. One can't logically argue that we are not instructed to work for a reward. Jesus was not just teaching against self-righteousness, for then His conclusion (as that of many modern preachers) would be trust in the Substitutionary Atonement, but instead we find a call to put into practice the teaching (see the end of the Sermon). Jesus was obviously motivating His hearers to godly living with hope of reward in the kingdom.

5:44 But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 46 If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that?

Luke 6:38 Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." 6:38 Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

Mat 6:1 "Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. 2 "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. 3 But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

6:5 "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. 6:6 But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

6:16 "When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. 17 But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, 18 so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

2.2.5 The Obedient Make Deposits

Those who claim they aren't interested in rewards and that they are only motivated by the love of Jesus, should note that Jesus said if you love me keep my commandments, and here commands believers to lay up treasure in heaven.

6:19 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

2.2.6 Seeking the Kingdom

The admonition to seek the kingdom serves as the conclusion to a chapter where focus is on living your life here in such a way that your heavenly Father will reward you in the future. Righteousness is a state of being in conformity to God's will as revealed in His communication to us (Gen 15:6). There is no mention about blood sacrifice or atonement in the chapter, or the book yet for that matter, so the issue isn't justification but glorification (=being blessed in heaven).

6:33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

2.2.7 Losing Your Life

Since thus far in the Sermon the issue has clearly been earning reward in the Kingdom, the burden of proof is upon those who want to read the following verses and ending as teaching about justification. v13 Destruction does not always mean "perdition" or lake of fire every time it occurs (if indeed it ever means that) but rather it refers to loss of something valuable. In Matthew's only other use of the noun (26:8) it refers to waste of precious ointment. His use of the verb refers to general loss (i.e., losing a coin or sheep) and frequently to loss of reward in discipleship passages. In Mt 10:39 and 16:24 we are actively told to lose our lives/souls in exchange for God's reward. Life also in 7:14 does not immediately equate with heaven but as will be seen under *. it frequently is used by Jesus in the gospels to refer to reward or dominion in the kingdom.

7:13 "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it.

7:14 But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

10:39 Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. 40 "He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me. 41 Anyone

*who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's **reward**, and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man's **reward**. 42 And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not **lose his reward**."*

*16:24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 25 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. 26 What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will **reward** each person according to what he has done.*

*2 John 8 Watch out that you do not **lose** what you have worked for, but that you may be **rewarded** fully.*

v8 A clear reward context, used as a motivation for obedience and teaching that one works for reward and that reward can be lost. The word for **lost** is that same as that used for those following the wide path in Mt 7.

2.2.8 The Issue of Fruitfulness

The fire in 7:19 can refer to burning of I Cor 3:17 or John 17 more easily than the lake of fire of Rev 21. The issue is good fruit vs. bad or no fruit rather than forgiveness.

7:19 "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

I Cor 3:14 If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. 15 If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.

2.2.9 Call for Action

Again the context of the Sermon points to a reward motivation for believers in interpreting 7:22ff

7:21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' 23 Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!' 24 "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.

1. The issue is not "Savior, Savior" because the suggested corrective course of action is not belief in Calvary, but works. Coming at the end of the Sermon on the Mount would have to push the argument in favor of a rewards interpretation, unless there is not just possible but necessary evidence to the contrary. Remember: **enter** can mean take up **possession**.

2. Those making the appeal are either: 1) those who have done miracles in Jesus' name and spoken under the power of the Holy Spirit yet have not been obedient to the teachings of the Sermon; or 2) those who have been energized by Satan to do counterfeit miracles in the name of Jesus. The former are much more in keeping with the context and conclusion of the Sermon, while the latter introduces concepts totally out of keeping with the Sermon, which would need more explanation before any conclusion (and a different conclusion as well.).

3. Do you know me? Jesus said he didn't know these people who were "evil doers" (as opposed to those who did His word). Know has numerous meanings and connotations: from understanding, to acquaintance, to recognition. It is quite possible (particularly in light of the previous use of the word in recognizing good or bad fruit) that Jesus is saying that He never recognized the evil doers as profitable servants of His (because their disobedience hindered such a relationship) or that He was never intimately acquainted with them as lovers would be.

4. The conclusion to the Sermon is an exhortation to build one's life on the teaching of Jesus concerning how to get blessed in the kingdom (not an exhortation to trust in the solid Rock of Christ's death). Those who failed to apply the Sermon suffered the loss of all they had built (lived for) even if what they had been living for had religious intent and effect (v 22). The collapse of one's house is catastrophic and tragic, but not the same as being cast into the lake of fire.

Mt 10:32 "Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. 33 But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.

Lk 8:18 Therefore consider carefully how you listen. Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has will be taken from him."

Mt 10:37 "Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; 38 and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. 39 Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. 40 "He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me. 41 Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward. 42 And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward."

2.3 Call to discipleship

A. Survey of DISCIPLESHIP: Those who are called disciples in the gospels are the:

A1. CURIOUS: Those who followed Christ and expressed a willingness to listen to His teachings.
Matthew 4:25 Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed him. 5:1 Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him...

A2. CONVINCED: Those who believed Jesus was a prophet/priest.
John 2:11 This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed in Cana of Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him.

A3. COMMITTED: Those who believed Jesus was the promised King, and who follow in spite of hardship, willing to pay the same price Jesus did to accomplish God's will for their lives.

*John 6:66 From this time **many of his disciples turned back** and no longer followed him. 67 "You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve. 68 Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. 69 We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."*

*Luke 14:25 Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: 14:26 "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters--yes, even his own life--he **cannot be my disciple**.*

*Luke 14:27 And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me **cannot be my disciple**.*

*Luke 14:33 In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has **cannot be my disciple**.*

*John 8:31 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you **hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples***

*John 13:35 By this all men will know **that you are my disciples**, if you love one another."*

*John 15:8 This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, **showing yourselves to be my disciples**.*

*Matthew 19:27 Peter answered him, "We have **left everything** to follow you! What then will there be for us?" 29 And everyone who has left **houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields** for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life.*

A4. CONFORMED: Those who in the process of following Christ experience a transformation of values, attitudes, and actions, becoming like Christ.

Decision to be Made

Matthew 9:9 As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him.

*Mark 8:34 Then he called the crowd to him **along with his disciples** and said: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.*

*Luke 14:28 "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first **sit down and estimate the cost** to see if he has enough money to complete it? 29 For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, 30 saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.' 31 "Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first **sit down and consider whether he is able** with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? 32 If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. 33 In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has **cannot be my disciple**. 34 "Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? 35 It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; it is thrown out. "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."*

*Luke 9:57 As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." He said to another man, "Follow me." But the man replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God." 61 Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say good-by to my family." 62 Jesus replied, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is **fit for service in the kingdom of God**."*

I to be Denied {See below on losing soul/life B2. Mat 16}

Luke 14:25 Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: 26 "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters--yes, even his own life--he cannot be my disciple.

Luke 14:33 In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.

Mt. 10:37 "Anyone who loves his father/mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son/daughter more than me is not worthy of me;

Savior to be Followed

*1 Peter 2:21 To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an **example**, that you should **follow** in his steps.*

*John 10:4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep **follow** him because they know his voice. 27 My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.*

John 12:26 Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.

Matthew 8:19 Then a teacher of the law came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go."

1CO 11:1 Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.

2TH 3:9 We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow.

Alternatives to following Christ

*1TI 4:1 The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and **follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons**. 5:15 Some have in fact already turned away to **follow Satan**. 2 Peter 2:2 Many will **follow their shameful ways** and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. 10 This is especially true of those who **follow the corrupt desire of the flesh and despise authority**. Bold and arrogant, these men are not afraid to slander celestial beings; 15 They have left the straight way and wandered off to **follow the way of Balaam** son of Beor, who loved the wages of wickedness. Jude 1:16 These men are grumbler and faultfinders; they **follow their own evil desires**; they boast about themselves and flatter others for their own advantage. 18 They said to you, "In the last times there will be scoffers who will **follow their own ungodly desires**." 19 These are the men who divide you, who **follow mere natural instincts** and do not have the Spirit.*

Cross to be Carried

*Luke 14:27 And anyone who does not **carry his cross** and follow me cannot be my disciple.*

*Matthew 10:38 and anyone who does not **take his cross** and follow me is **not worthy** of me. 39 Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.*

Incarnation to be Imitated Immersion (in Water & Word) to be Continued

Matthew 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore going, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

John 8:30 Even as he spoke, many put their faith in him. 31 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. 32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

John 4:1 The Pharisees heard that Jesus was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John, 2 although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples.

Luke 6:40 A student (disciple) is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher.

Production to be Produced

Mark 1:17 "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."

John 15:5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

6 If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. 7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. 8 This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

Acts 14:21 They preached the good news in that city and won a large number of disciples. Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, 22 strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said. 23 Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.

Love to be Lavished

John 13:34 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. 35 By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

Acts 11:29 The disciples, each according to his ability, decided to provide help for the brothers living in Judea.

A5. CROWNED: Those who have paid the cost that Christ paid will share in the reward that Christ received for His faithfulness and service.

Expectation to be Earned

Matthew 16:23 Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men." 24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 25 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. 26 What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done.

Matthew 10:41 Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward. 42 And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward."

*Matthew 19:21 Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have **treasure in heaven**. Then come, follow me." 27 Peter answered him, "We have left everything to follow you! **What then will there be for us?" 28 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life.***

*Luke 9:23 Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. 24 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. 25 What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self? 26 If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his **glory** and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.*

B. Observations on Discipleship

B1. Note that the call is to believers.

*John 8:30 Even as he spoke, many put their faith in him. 31 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you **hold to my teaching**, you are **really my disciples**.*

*Mark 8:34 Then he called the crowd to him **along with his disciples** and said: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. (Cf. Mt 16)*

B2. Life and soul are the same Greek word and stand for all that a person is and does. (I Pt 5) "Lose" is verb form of the noun which is the same word as for destruction/perdition in the Sermon on the Mount. Note that one must lose his **life/soul** in order to gain it. This can't be the requirement for forgiveness, nor can it be implicit in faith (otherwise there wouldn't be such explicit, repeated calls for it, rather than faith).

*Mt 16:22 Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!" :23 Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men." 24 Then Jesus **said to his disciples**, "If anyone would **come after me**, he must **deny himself and take up his cross and follow me**. 25 For whoever wants to **save his life/soul** will **lose it**, but whoever loses his **life/soul** for me will find it. 26 What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his **life/soul**? Or what can a man give in exchange for his **life/soul** ?*

B3. The issue is rewards not forgiveness.

*Mt 16:27 For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will **reward** each person according to what he has done.*

For what will a person exchange the days of his life?

B4. The Son of Man will come with glory to share His glory with those who are faithful to Him. Glory is almost synonymous with reward and rulership or dominion or life. See I Peter 1.

*Mk 8:33 But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. "Get behind me, Satan!" he said. "You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men." 34 Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 35 For whoever wants to **save his life** will*

lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it. 36 What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? 37 Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? 38 If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."

B5. Being ashamed is failing to receive glory, not, getting cast into the lake of fire. If Jesus is ashamed of us, He won't recognize us as one of His faithful servants.

Lk 9:23 Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. 24 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. 25 What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self? 26 If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. 27 I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God."

B6. Jesus is ashamed of those who have failed to acknowledge Him before others (do good works in His name, testify, witness, etc). He is seeking to motivate to self-denial discipleship, not the acceptance of the free gift of justification. The choice is being **profited** or being deprived of reward (forfeit blessing) or suffering loss. (See on Mat 7:17 for loss).

2.4 Inheriting eternal life

2.4.1 A. Definitions

A1. Inherit does not automatically equate with justification. To inherit can mean "to have an inheritance"

*Col 3:24 since you know that you will receive an **inheritance** from the Lord as a **reward**. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.*

Heb 6:12 We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.

BAGD 2. acquire, obtain, come into possession of something.

L-S 2. acquire, obtain, come into possession of; to take possession of...

TDNTA It may be noted that in Greek, Egyptian, Hellenistic, and Jewish law children were always heirs, but Roman law allowed parents a freedom of testamentary disposition.[W. Foerster, III, 758-69]

A2. Enter does not necessarily just mean to step over the threshold, but has demonstrated NT meanings of "to take possession of" or "have a share in" something.

*Lk 24:26 "Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?"
Lk 8:33 And the demons came out from the man and entered the swine; and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake, and were drowned. (Also Mk 5:13)*

BAGD 2. fig._a. of pers.: come into something=share in something, come to enjoy something

A3. Some verses indicate eternal life is a gift, unearned, others indicate it is a reward for works. Zane Hodges: "No one receives eternal life as a reward who has not first received it as a gift. [See section on Eternal life. Most verses indicate eternal life is the result of works, and occur in reward

contexts.] Even in the Gospel of John where the gift concept of eternal life is clearest, there are reward passages relating to eternal life (John 12:25; 17:2,3,12 note the subjunctive mood). I John 4:7 seems to differentiate being born again and knowing God (cf. 17:3).

A4. "Life" can mean mastery or dominion. Death can mean loss of dominion. Adam and Eve "died" when they sinned, yet still talked with God. The only obvious immediate change was that they could now see their nakedness. Possibly they had been clothed with glory and lost it. (Cf. II Cor 4:5) {See under Part One: I. "Image of God", and below D2. Life=Dominion}

A5. Laying hold of eternal life in I Timothy 6, is clearly seen to mean doing good works for future reward. Verse 19 is a good example of a different translation of "eternal".

*I Tim 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. 13 I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate, 14 that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ
6:17 Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. 18 Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, 19 storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed. (Greek = eternal life).*

A6. Eternal

A6a. The noun "eternal" means age, a definite period of time, both in Classical Greek and in NT (where it is often translated "this present world"). The adjective is almost always translated "eternal" even though in less than a handful of verses is the concept of everlasting indicated. In most occurrences "of the age" referring to the Messianic Age, i.e., the expected kingdom, is a preferred translation.

See BAGD or Lidell-Scott or TDNTA (last pages) for more information.

A6b. Verses that appear to link "eternal life" with a reward based on works

{See the section on Rewards in the Epistles for comments on those verses.}

Mt 18:8 If your hand or your foot causes you to sin cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire.

Mt 19:16 Now a man came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?"

Mt 19:29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life.

Mt 25:46 "And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Mk 10:17 As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

Mk 10:30 will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life.

Lk 10:25 On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. " Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

Lk 18:18 A certain ruler asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

Lk 18:30 will fail to receive many times as much in this age and, in the age to come, eternal life."

Jn 5:39 "You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me;

Jn 6:27 Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval."

Jn 6:54 "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.

Jn 12:25 "He who loves his life loses it; and he who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal.

Rm 2:6 who will render to every man according to his deeds: 7 to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; 8 but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. 9 There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, 10 but glory and honor and peace to every man who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

Rm 6:22 But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life.

Gal 6:8 The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

1 Tm 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

1 Tm 6:17 Instruct those who are rich...to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, 19 storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed. (Greek = eternal life).

Titus 3:7 that being justified by His grace we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

1 Jn 3:15 Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

A6c. Verses that appear to link "eternal life" to God's gift resulting from faith

Jn 3:15 that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. 16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. 36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him."

Jn 4:14 but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

Jn 5:24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.

Jn 6:40 "For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him, may have eternal life; and I Myself will raise him up on the last day." 47 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life.

Jn 10:28 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.

Jn 17:2 even as Thou gavest Him authority over all mankind, that to all whom Thou hast given Him, He may give eternal life. 3 Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

Rm 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I Tm 1:16 And yet for this reason I found mercy, in order that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience, as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life.

I Jn 5:11 And the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. 13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life.

A6e. Other verses using "eternal life"

Jn 4:36 Even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests the crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together.

Jn 6:68 Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

Jn 12:50 "And I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me."

Acts 13:46 And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. 48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.

Rm 5:21 that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Titus 1:2 (faith...experiential-knowledge...godliness) resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time, (in the Greek = times eternal)

I Jn 1:2 and the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us

I Jn 2:25 And this is what he promised us—even eternal life. (v24 abiding concept)

I Jn 5:20 And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding, in order that we might know Him who is true, and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

Jude 1:21 keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life.

A6f. Theological Dictionaries - aion [age, aeon], aionios [eternal]

TDNTA (Theological Dictionary of NT Theology, Abridged, ed: G. Kittel) [from H. Sasse, Vol. I, 197-209]

The Nonbiblical Use. Meanings are a. "vital force," b. "lifetime," c. "age" or "generation," d. "time," and e. "eternity."

The term is used in philosophical discussions of time, usually for a **span** of time as distinct from time as such (*chrónos*), though for Plato (alone?) it is timeless eternity in contrast to *chrónos* as its moving image in earthly time (cf. Philo). In the Hellenistic world Aion becomes the name of the god of eternity.

Liddel & Scott Classical Greek Dictionary

aion - A period of existence: 1. one's lifetime, life, Hom. and Att. Poets. 2. an age, generation, Aesch.; posterity, Dem. 3. a long space of time, an age, 4. a definite space of time, an era, epoch, age, period, this present world, opp. to millennium, N.T

aionios - lasting for an age , Plat.: ever-lasting, eternal.

2.4.2 B. Matthew's account

B1. Read His Lips

Note that Jesus challenges erroneous conceptions even to the point of nitpicking. For instance, the term "good" is used incorrectly by the man. Since only God is "good" then to recognize that Jesus is "good" or to ask Him about the teaching regarding "good" should be to recognize that He is God and should be obeyed as such, yet the Jewish opposition wasn't responding to Him as such. Thus Jesus highlighted their inconsistency on even a minor point. With such exactness prefacing His response, one would expect that the rest of His answer would be specific and exact, not leaving room for ambiguity. Jesus did not challenge the man's thought on the necessity of doing (working) being required for eternal life. To have left the man with such a fatal misconception regarding forgiveness would have been unconscionable for Someone who gave His life so that those who believed could obtain forgiveness.

*Mt 19:16 Now a man came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?" 17 "Why do you ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments." 18 "Which ones?" the man inquired. Jesus replied, "Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, 19 honor your father and mother,' and 'love your neighbor as yourself.' " 20 "All these I have kept," the young man said. "What do I still lack?" 21 Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have **treasure** in heaven. Then come, follow me." 22 When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.*

B2. Question: v16 do to get ?

B2a. What does he have to do?

17 If you want to enter life, **obey**

21 **sell** and **give**, then **follow** (as a disciple)

B2b. What does he get?

17 If you want to **enter life**
21a If you want to **be perfect**,
21b you will have **treasure in heaven**.
23 it is hard for a rich man to **enter the kingdom of heaven**.
24 a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."
25 "Who then can be **saved**?"

B3. Lessons

B3a Jesus doesn't correct the man's misconception about doing rather than believing because doing is required.
B3b. Nor does Jesus dispute the man's claim about keeping the commandments (In Marks account it is recorded that Jesus looked at the man and loved him after he gave his response.)[See note B4.]
B3c. Getting eternal life is equated with entering, being perfect (complete) and having treasure in heaven, entering the kingdom of heaven/God, and salvation (not justification).
B3d. Obedience to the commandments and self denial are required (not simple trust)

B4. OT Obedience

[Note: Some expositors claim to bring out the impossibility of keeping the commandments, as if God gave something that people would be constantly frustrated in their ability to keep. Apparently there were individuals who were pleasing in God's sight in the OT. And obviously there were hypocrites in the NT audience. The commands were given as guidelines for behavior that was expected, not just to get men to turn to Christ a thousand years after they were given. Perhaps the man was following the commandments according to a righteous interpretation of his day, not according to the standards of our day. (see Anna and Simeon as righteous OT saints in NT times).]

Mt 19:23 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "I tell you the truth, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. 24 Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." 25 When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished and asked, "Who then can be saved?" 26 Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

B5. Disciple's question: v27 we did, what will we get?

*Mt 19:27 Peter answered him, "We have left everything to follow you! **What then will there be for us?**" 28 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have **followed me** will also sit on twelve thrones, **judging** the twelve tribes of Israel. 29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life. 30 But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first.....20:15 Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?'16 "So the last will be first, and the first will be last."*

B5a. What should a disciple do?
27 have left everything to follow you!
28 you who have followed me
29 everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake

B5b. What should a disciple get?

28 sit on twelve thrones, judging (Power, rulership-dominion)

29 receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life.

B5c. When does a disciple get it?

28a at the renewal of all things, (when Jesus returns and sets up His kingdom)

28b when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne,

B6. First Things Last

The following parable is bracketed by 19:30 first will be last...last will be first. and 20:16 the last will be first, and the first will be last. and must be interpreted in light of these "bookends" and understood in such a manner that it explains the previous section beginning at 19:16 covering the lack of reward for the rich man and the great reward for the disciples. In Jewish thought at the time the rich were those whom God favored and blessed because He was pleased with them and the poor were those under God's curse, with whom He was not pleased. Thus the rich man was considered "first" now but would be considered "last" when Jesus passed out rewards. The disciples who had nothing would be considered "last" but would eventually be considered "first".

Note also that the "first" did receive something, although that is not the main point of the parable. That the reward seems to be the same for everyone can not be seen as the point of the parable, not only because of the "bookends" but also for the contradiction that would exist between the previous clear teaching and sworn promises of Jesus and the parable that explained them. Jesus had clearly promised the disciples and all who followed Him a great reward which not everyone received.

2.4.3 C. Mark's account

Mark's Manual on Discipleship places the interview concerning eternal life within a very significant segment of the Book, occurring between two accounts of Jesus opening the eyes of the blind. In the first, Jesus does a two stage healing: the man saw in part, and then saw in whole. This parallels what was going on with the disciples.

Immediately after the two-stage eye-opening the disciples saw that Jesus was the Messiah. (Stage 1') However, they did not understand that the route to glory was self-sacrificial serving. (Stage 2') Which is why Jesus begins to immediately instruct them in His (and their) upcoming sacrificial service. Between the two-stage miracle and eye-opening of Bartimaeus (10:46) Jesus is instructing the disciples that he and they must suffer for glory. It is in the middle of this section that the rich young man comes to Jesus. The prominence and amount of space given to this account in a major reward section precludes any reading of justification/forgiveness into the narrative, unless demanded by the dialogue. As can be clearly seen, the dialogue centers around reward, not forgiveness.

STAGE 1 - Eyes partially opened; but he doesn't see reality clearly

Mk 8:23 He took the blind man by the hand and led him outside the village. When he had spit on the man's eyes and put his hands on him, Jesus asked, "Do you see anything?" 24 He looked up and said, "I see people; they look like trees walking around."

STAGE 2 - Eyes fully opened; he sees reality clearly

25 Once more Jesus put his hands on the man's eyes. Then his eyes were opened, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly.

STAGE 1' - Eyes partially opened = Jesus is the Messiah; but disciples don't clearly see the route to His rulership.

8:27 Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, "Who do people say I am?" 28 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets." :29 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Christ. "

STAGE 2' begins - Jesus begins to instruct that the route to rulership is self-sacrificial service.
30 Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him. 31 He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again.

STAGE 2' Continues: ACCOUNT OF RICH YOUNG MAN

*10:17 As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 18 "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good except God alone. 19 You know the commandments: 'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honor your father and mother!'" 20 "Teacher," he declared, "all these I have kept since I was a boy." 21 Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have **treasure in heaven**. Then come, follow me." 22 At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth. 23 Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!" 24 The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! 25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. 26 The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, "Who then can be saved?" 27 Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God." 28 Peter said to him, "We have left everything to follow you!"*

This section follows the pattern discussed above in Matthew. Notice that get=inherit; Jesus specifically states that there is only ONE thing the person lacks, and that is not stated as trust in Christ's death on his behalf, but rather self-sacrificial works.

*29 "I tell you the truth," Jesus replied, "no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel 30 will fail to **receive a hundred times as much** in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, **eternal life**. 31 But many who are first will be last, and the last first."*

STAGE 2' Concludes: Clearest teaching on the route to rulership and opening of Bartimaeus' eyes.

*Mk 10:43 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become **great** among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever wants to be **first** must be slave of all. 45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."46 Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (that is, the Son of Timaeus), was sitting by the roadside begging.... 52 "Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.*

Note: Remember that Son of Man is the one to whom all glory and dominion is given by the Ancient of Days (Dan 7). This Future Ruler of the world to come gains His rulership by sacrificial service, as must the disciples.

Mt 20:25 Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. 26 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, 27 and whoever wants to be first must be your slave 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

2.4.4 D. Luke's accounts

D1. In Luke's first account of the same subject matter (an expert in the law as opposed to the rich ruler of 18:18) a few observations are noteworthy:

D1a. Inheriting eternal life (10:25) is used instead of "get" and is equated with living (10:28)

D1b. The two greatest commandments are put for all the law.

D1c. Jesus not only said that the man's answer was correct (one must do works to inherit) but reaffirmed the answer with "Do this and you will live".

Lk 10:25 On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 10:26 "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?" 27 He answered: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' " 28 "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live. ""

D2. Life = Dominion

In Deuteronomy, entering, conquering, enjoying and living (having dominion) in land is called "life" and dependent upon obedience to the revealed will of God.

Dt 4:1 Hear now, O Israel, the decrees and laws I am about to teach you. Follow them so that you may live and may go in and take possession of the land that the Lord, the God of your fathers, is giving you.

8:1 Be careful to follow every command I am giving you today, so that you may live and increase and may enter and possess the land that the Lord promised on oath to your forefathers.

16:20 Follow justice and justice alone, so that you may live and possess the land the Lord your God is giving you.

30:15 See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. 16 For I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess. 17 But if your heart turns away and you are not obedient, and if you are drawn away to bow down to other gods and worship them, 18 I declare to you this day that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. 19 This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live 20 and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the Lord is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

D2a. THUS: Life or living is equated with having dominion or ruling, it is a reward of obedience.

D2b. This concept of life is parallel with that of rest or inheritance (as in the Book of Hebrews) *Dt 12:10 But you will cross the Jordan and settle in the land the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance, and he will give you rest from all your enemies around you so that you will live in safety.*

D2c. Note: Israel's reception and possession of their inheritance was dependent upon their obedience (works) [Dt 26:52 The Lord said to Moses, 53 "The land is to be allotted to them as an inheritance based on the number of names. cf. Numbers 13 and 14 where the Exodus generation is deprived of their inheritance. {Extra Credit: trace Caleb through the Scriptures.}]

D3. In Luke's second account, parallel to Matthew and Mark, the issue of "good" is discussed, with the term being applied to Jesus. Jesus "quibbles" over the issue of good, because if the man realized that Jesus = good and that good = God, then Jesus would = God, and the man should have been following Him.

Lk 18:18 A certain ruler asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 19 "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good except God alone. 20 You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not give false testimony, honor your father and mother.' "21 "All these I have kept since I was a boy," he said. 22 When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." 23 When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was a man of great wealth. 24 Jesus looked at him and said, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! 25 Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." 26 Those who heard this asked, "Who then can be saved?" 27 Jesus replied, "What is impossible with men is possible with God." 28 Peter said to him, "We have left all we had to follow you!" 29 "I tell you the truth," Jesus said to them, "no one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God 30 will fail to receive many times as much in this age and, in the age to come, eternal life."

2.5 How to get rewards

2.5.1 A. Pay the cost of being a disciple {see iii. Call to discipleship}

Luke 14:33 In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.34 "Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? 35 It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; it is thrown out. "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

v33 The issue is exchanging what we have in this life for the benefits of being Christ's disciple. There is clearly a cost involved which is most easily reconciled with the free gift of forgiveness by viewing the calls to discipleship as being issued to believers who were already forgiven. The motivation for discipleship in vv34-35 is the desire to avoid being useless or unprofitable like unsalty salt. The unfaithful believer is useless to his Master, while the profitable one will be entrusted with additional responsibility in serving his Lord. The one who has ears to hear and accept the call and pay the cost of following is a believer who is convinced that Jesus is who He claimed to be.

Lk 17:33 Whoever tries to keep his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it.

Lk 21:16 You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers, relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death. 17 All men will hate you because of me. 18 But not a hair of your head will perish. 19 By standing firm you will gain life.

2.5.2 B. Be a wise steward

B1. USING PRESENT OPPORTUNITIES

Lk 16:8 "The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light. 9 I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings. 10 "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. 11 So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? 12 And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own? 13 "No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money." 14 The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus. 15 He said to them, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God knows your hearts. What is highly valued among men is detestable in God's sight.

In Luke 16 there are two direct motivations appealing to self-interest. v9 instructs believers to use the worldly (especially financial) resources with which God has entrusted them to evangelize, for the purpose of gaining friends (converts) and receiving a rich welcome into eternal dwellings (see II Peter 1). The second motivation is in the next verses (vv10-12) that of being entrusted with true riches, and receiving property of our own (in the kingdom).

B2. The Parable of the Ten Minas (in Luke)

In Luke's gospel, the Parable of the Ten Minas is strategically placed at the end of Jesus' instruction to His disciples before He entered Jerusalem to die. It occupies a place similar to Mark's account of the blind men being healed.

Lk 18:7 And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? 8 I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

19:8 But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount." 9 Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. 10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."

B2a. The occasion for the parable is to teach the disciples how they should live in light of the "postponement" of the kingdom. Note that the kingdom is still viewed as future. Observe also that the man (Jesus) is entrusting His known servants with approximately three months wages. Finally note the distinction between servants and subjects.

Lk 19:11 While they were listening to this, he went on to tell them a parable, because he was near Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once. 12 He said: "A man of noble birth went to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then to

return. 13 So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. 'Put this money to work,' he said, 'until I come back.' 14 "But his subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, 'We don't want this man to be our king.' 15 "He was made king, however, and returned home. Then he sent for the servants to whom he had given the money, in order to find out what they had gained with it.

16 "The first one came and said, 'Sir, your mina has earned ten more.' 17 "Well done, my good servant!' his master replied. 'Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.'

18 "The second came and said, 'Sir, your mina has earned five more.' 19 "His master answered, 'You take charge of five cities.'

20 "Then another servant came and said, 'Sir, here is your mina; I have kept it laid away in a piece of cloth. 21 I was afraid of you, because you are a hard man. You take out what you did not put in and reap what you did not sow.' 22 "His master replied, 'I will judge you by your own words, you wicked servant! You knew, did you, that I am a hard man, taking out what I did not put in, and reaping what I did not sow? 23 Why then didn't you put my money on deposit, so that when I came back, I could have collected it with interest?'

24 "Then he said to those standing by, 'Take his mina away from him and give it to the one who has ten minas.' 25 "'Sir,' they said, 'he already has ten!' 26 "He replied, 'I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what he has will be taken away.

27 But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them, bring them here and kill them in front of me.'" (The Triumphal Entry)

B2b. v16 The issue of judgment is trustworthiness/faithfulness. Each servant received an equal amount, yet obtained different returns. The first servant obeyed to a greater degree than the second, and so received different commendation and different reward (see I Cor 15 - differing glory) of additional responsibility. The reward is spelled out as authority over cities which indicates the reward of rulership in the future kingdom.

B2c. Reward of Ruling with Christ

Lk 1:32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, his kingdom will never end." 33 and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever;

Mt 19:28 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Mt 25:31 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory.

2 Thess 2:14 He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Mt 20:25 Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them.

Mk 10:42 Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them.

Lk 22:26 But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. 27 For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves. 28 You are those who have stood by me in my trials. 29 And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, 30 so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Rom 5:17 For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

Rom 8:17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs--heirs of God and/but co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we co-share in his sufferings in order that we may also co-share in his glory.

v17 the conjunction and is "de" which is usually translated as but, although it is not the strong contrastive "alla" because some heirs of God will become co-heirs with Christ, but most won't because they won't suffer.

1 Cor 6:2 Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? 3 Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life!

2 Tim 2:11 Here is a trustworthy saying:

*If we died with him, we will also live with him;
12 if we endure, we will also reign with him.
If we disown him, he will also disown us;
13 if we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself.*

v12 contains two parallel conditional contrastive clauses, dealing with the subject of rewards.
vv11&13 also contain two parallel conditional contrastive clauses dealing with the subject of justification.

Heb 12:2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Jam 1:12 Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

1 Pt 5:4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

Rev 2:10 Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.

Rev 3:11 I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.

Rev 3:21 To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.

Rev 5:9 And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. 10 You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."

v10 Note that serving Christ in the future is equated with ruling with/for Him.

*Rev 20:4 I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and **reigned** with Christ a thousand years. 5 (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will **reign with him** for a thousand years.*

*Rev 22:3 No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. 4 They will **see his face**, and his name will be on their foreheads. 5 There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.*

vv3&4 Those who serve and rule are those who see His face, just like a President's cabinet.

B2d. v18 The second servant was apparently less faithful for He showed a smaller profit and received less commendation and less reward or additional responsibility.

B2e. v20 The third servant is usually considered an unbeliever for logically indefensible reasons. The manner in which he differed from the other servants is not over whether or not he had accepted God's gift of forgiveness but rather over the issue of faithfulness. His lack of faithfulness can possibly traced to His inaccurate view of His Master's desire to bless. He didn't actively rebel as did the subjects, but rather chose to set his own objectives for using what the Master had given him, rather than obeying completely.

v24 It is more than likely that the item taken and given has some corresponding significance to the Christian life, otherwise believers would not know with or in what to be faithful. The reward of rulership or authority or dominion or power is a function of the glory given to believers which can be reasonably equated with the Spirit of glory, the Holy Spirit. All believers are given a bestowment or initial installment of the HS at regeneration. The believer has the job of using the HS in their own lives as they pursue sanctification and in the lives of others as they reach out. One who has grieved, quenched or ignored the HS is an unprofitable servant. Those who fail to use or respond to the HS in their lives will face judgment when the Lord returns. It is quite possible that the portion of the HS or power entrusted to believers will be taken from the unfaithful and given to the faithful. (See on I Pt 1.)

B2f. v27 The enemies of the King receive a different judgment than the unfaithful servant.

B3. The Parable of the Talents (in Matthew)

Mt 25:14 "Again, it (kingdom of heaven) will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them. 15 To one he gave five talents of money, to another

two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey.

16 The man who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more. 17 So also, the one with the two talents gained two more. 18 But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

19 "After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. 20 The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.' 21 "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!' 22 "The man with the two talents also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two talents; see, I have gained two more.' 23 "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!' 24 "Then the man who had received the one talent came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. 25 So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.' 26 "His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? 27 Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest. 28 ""Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. 29 For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. 30 And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

The five talent and two talent servants were both equally faithful in using that which God entrusted to them, thus they received equal commendation and happiness but it is not specified that they received equal entrustment of additional responsibility. In Luke's account, the servants were not equally faithful, and so received differing commendation and differing reward of additional responsibility.

Note that in Luke the reward is spelled out as authority over cities which indicates the reward of rulership in the future kingdom. (See verses on ruling B2c.).

B4. Note on: WEEPING AND GNASHING IN THE OUTER DARKNESS

There is no necessary evidence to equate outer darkness with the lake of fire. The contexts of most usages of the terms weeping and gnashing of teeth and outer darkness are that of a penalty for unfaithfulness, not a consequence of not having one's sins forgiven, or lacking eternal life. In the following verses observe: 1) who is being punished; 2) why they are being punished.

Mt 8:11 I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. 12 But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Mt 13:41 The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. 42 They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear. 49 This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous 50 and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Mt 22:13 "Then the king told the attendants, 'Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' 14 "For many are invited, but few are chosen."

Mt 24:51 He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Mt 25:30 And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Lk 13:24 "Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to. 25 Once the owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, 'Sir, open the door for us.' "But he will answer, 'I don't know you or where you come from.' 26 "Then you will say, 'We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets.' 27 "But he will reply, 'I don't know you or where you come from. Away from me, all you evildoers!' 28 "There will be weeping there, and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown out. 29 People will come from east and west and north and south, and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God. 30 Indeed there are those who are last who will be first, and first who will be last."

2 Pt 2:17 These men are springs without water and mists driven by a storm. Blackest darkness is reserved for them.

Jude 1:6 And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home--these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day.

Jude 1:12 These men are blemishes at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualm--shepherds who feed only themselves. They are clouds without rain, blown along by the wind; autumn trees, without fruit and uprooted--twice dead. 13 They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shame; wandering stars, for whom blackest darkness has been reserved forever.

2.5.3 C. Be a working watching and waiting servant

Lk 22:24 Also a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. 25 Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. 26 But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. 27 For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves. 28 You are those who have stood by me in my trials. 29 And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, 30 so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Lk 14:12 Then Jesus said to his host, "When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. 13 But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, 14 and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

v14 Blessing is equated with being repaid at the resurrection of the righteous. When those who have demonstrated righteous (self-sacrificial) behavior are resurrected, they will be repaid (Dan 11). It should go without stating that the righteousness spoken of is not justification or forgiveness but that of selfless service. Jesus is specifically giving the motivation of future reward for present service. Reward is viewed as a repayment (Col 3:24 receive the reward of inheritance).

Lk 12:19 And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry." ' 20 "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?' 21 "This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God."

Lk 12:31 But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well. 32 "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. 33 Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. 34 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. 35 "Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, 36 like men waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. 37 It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. I tell you the truth, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them. 38 It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the second or third watch of the night. 39 But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. 40 You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him."

12:41 Peter asked, "Lord, are you telling this parable to us, or to everyone?" 42 The Lord answered, "Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom the master puts in charge of his servants to give them their food allowance at the proper time? 43 It will be good for that servant whom the master finds doing so when he returns. 44 I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions.

The issue in these verses is faithfulness to the Master's instructions, particularly good stewardship or responsibility (faithful and wise..not justification). Those with the expectation of the Master returning, who carry out His will, will receive the pleasurable reward of having their Master wait on them (v37 fulfill their desires) and gaining additional possessions (v44).

Note the contrast with 12:37 and 17:7 (next section) and the parallel with Mat 24.

Luke 12:45 But suppose the servant says to himself, 'My master is taking a long time in coming,' and he then begins to beat the menservants and maidservants and to eat and drink and get drunk. 46 The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the unbelievers. 47 "That servant who knows his master's will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows. 48 But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.

Note the master-servant relationship even for the bad guy, who knew his master's will, who has been given much.

Those who lose sight of His return and engage in self-centered behavior will suffer punishment, described as being beaten with blows, cut into pieces, and assigned a place with unbelievers.

Place usually refers to portion or part of a whole. In a geographical sense, it is sometimes used but with the idea of part of a territory. More frequently it is used of a share in something (like a reward or inheritance).

Cut in pieces=

Unbelievers=

Lk 17:7 "Suppose one of you had a servant plowing or looking after the sheep. Would he say to the servant when he comes in from the field, 'Come along now and sit down to eat'? 8 Would he not rather say, 'Prepare my supper, get yourself ready and wait on me while I eat and drink; after that you may eat and drink'? 9 Would he thank the servant because he did what he was told to do? 10 So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.'"

This section must be interpreted in light of its context (Luke chapters 16 and 18) in which rewards are clearly promised for service.

*Mat 24:42 "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. 43 But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. 44 So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him. 45 "Who then is the **faithful** and **wise** servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? 46 It will be **good** for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns. 47 I tell you the truth, he will put him in **charge of all his possessions**. 48 But suppose that servant is wicked and says to himself, 'My master is staying away a long time,' 49 and he then begins to beat his fellow servants and to eat and drink with drunkards. 50 The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. 51 He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (See on Luke and above on weeping and gnashing of teeth.)*

v42 Our responsibility is to keep watch, v44 be ready, v45 be faithful and wise (choose the right objectives and right means of obtaining those objectives), fulfill our responsibilities especially those of serving others. The motivation for doing so is v46 it will be good for us, v47 we will receive additional responsibility from our Master. {See Teaching Regarding the Wedding Feasts and Banquets}

2.5.4 D. Be a good sheep

*Mt 25:31 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. 32 All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 He will put the **sheep on his right** and the **goats on his left**. 34 "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' 37 "Then the **righteous** will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and go to*

visit you?' 40 "The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'

41 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the **eternal fire** prepared for the devil and his angels. 42 For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, 43 I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.' 44 "They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?' 45 "He will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.' 46 "Then they will go away to **eternal punishment**, but the righteous to **eternal life**."

2.5.5 E. Reward passages in john

John 3:3 In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again." 4 "How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!" 5 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. 6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. 7 You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' 8 The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." 9 "How can this be?" Nicodemus asked. 10 "You are Israel's teacher," said Jesus, "and do you not understand these things?...14 Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, 15 that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. u 16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, v that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. 36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him."

5:21 For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. 24 "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. 25 I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. 26 For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself. 28 "Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice 29 and come out those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.

6:27 Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval." 6:40 For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." 6:44 "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day. 6:47 I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life. 6:53 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. 54 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. 55 For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. 56 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. 57 Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live

because of me. 58 This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever." 63 The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. 64 Yet there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. 65 He went on to say, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him." 66 From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. 67 "You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve. 68 Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. 69 We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."

8:24 I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am [the one I claim to be], you will indeed die in your sins." 24 I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am [the one I claim to be], you will indeed die in your sins." 8:47 He who belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God." 8:51 I tell you the truth, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death."

10:9 I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it abundantly. 10:24 The Jews gathered around him, saying, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly." 25 Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me, 26 but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. 27 My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. 30 I and the Father are one."

It appears that eternal life is given as a result of following. A sheep: 1) v26 believes; 2) v27a listens; 3) v27b are known; 4) v27c follows; 5) v28a are given eternal life; 6) v28b shall never perish; 7) v28c can not be snatched out of Jesus' hand. There might be a sequential logic to the verses or they are parallel or might conform to some other structure. The decision must be made on the basis of evidence in the immediate context, not one's theological bias.

11:23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." 24 Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." 25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; 26 and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" 27 "Yes, Lord," she told him, "I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world."

wt demonstrates the expectation of a resurrection.

12:23 Jesus replied, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24 I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. 25 The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 26 Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.

v25 The requirement for eternal life is hating one's life (and expending it for the goal of reproduction). The motivation for serving Jesus in the process is being with Jesus and honored by the Father as was Jesus.

12:46 I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness. 47 As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him.

For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it. 48 There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day. 49 For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. 50 I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say."

v50 the command which will judge us leads (results in?) eternal life.

The Upper Room Discourse (below) contains the clearest uses of love as a motivation for obedience. Note that the discourse is at the end of Jesus' ministry speaking with His most mature disciples. Note also that the reward motif is not lacking.

Jn 13:14 Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. 15 I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. 16 I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. 17 Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

v17 The motivation for humble service is being blessed for obedience.

14:15 "If you love me, you will obey what I command.

14:23 Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. 24 He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.

15:1 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. 3 You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. 4 Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. 5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.

Note the "in me" designation of the branches. The issue is fruitfulness. The fruitful get pruned; the unfruitful get burned. The key to avoiding burning is the ongoing abiding (remain) relationship with Jesus in His word.

7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. 8 This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. 9 "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. 10 If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. 11 I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. 12 My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. 13 Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command.

*17:1 After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: "Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. 2 For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. 3 Now **this is eternal life**: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. 4 I have brought you **glory on earth** by **completing the work** you gave me to do. 5 And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.*

21:15 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." 16 Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." 17 The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep.

20:30 Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Compare with Jn 10:10 "life...abundant life". Perhaps "that you may **believe**" equates with life, and "that by **believing** (imperfect tense stressing ongoing action) you may have life in his name' equates with abundant life. The first half of John's gospel presents the seven signs of Jesus' divinity to provide the basis for belief resulting in justification, and the second half presents the sayings of Jesus to provide the basis for believing behavior resulting in glorification.

3 The kingdom and rewards

THY KINGDOM COME

It is my contention that there are no verses which support a present "mystery form" of the kingdom. There are clearly none which demand it, a few which allow it, and a few which indicate that the kingdom is yet future. (The parables at the end of Jesus' ministry regarding the kingdom are discussed separately, as are the references to the kingdom in the epistles.)

3.1 A. Jesus's teachings on the kingdom

There are four major sections of our Lord's teachings about the kingdom: 1) at the beginning of His ministry (including the sermon on the mount); 2) the parables in light of His rejection (Mat 13); 3) the parables as the end of His ministry; 4) His post-resurrection teachings (Acts 1).

The message of John, Jesus, and the apostles was that the kingdom was **near**. It had not arrived. The institution of the kingdom promised in the OT was dependent upon the receptivity (and repentance) of Israel. To understand John's (et al.) view of the kingdom one only needs to look at the context of John's quotes from Isaiah 40 and following, in which the characteristics of the Millenial kingdom are specified.

3.2 B. Clearing up the mist surrounding the mystery form of the kingdom

B1. Where they get the mystery about the mystery is a mystery

The parables about the kingdom in Mat 13 indicate hitherto unrevealed information about the kingdom. A mystery is that which was previously undisclosed in the OT. Thus Mat 13 gives us previously unrevealed truth (mystery) about the kingdom promised in the OT. [It does not give previously unrevealed truth (mystery) about the mystery form of the kingdom.] There is no indication that there is a mystery form of the kingdom, but just previously unrevealed information about the kingdom which was expected by faithful believers. [cx. Ryrie.]

B2. Truths about the Kingdom not Revealed in the OT (legit mysteries)

Mt 13:11 He replied, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them.

There would be different responses to the message of the kingdom Mt 13:19 When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path.

Those who responded properly would coexist with evil until the future judgments. *Mt 13:24 Jesus told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field.... 41 The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. 42 They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.*

The kingdom would be preeminent *31 He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field.*

The kingdom would be omnipresent 33 *He told them still another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough."*

The kingdom would include Israel and the Church (see previous notes) 44 *"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.* 45 *"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls.*

The kingdom involve a separation of the wicked and righteous 47 *"Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish..."*

3.3 C. The Muddle about the Kingdom in the Midsts

C1. The Beginning Teaching

C1a. The Kingdom is Near

Mt 3:2 and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

Mt 4:17 From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

Mt 4:23 Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.

Mt 9:35 Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness.

Mt 10:7 As you go, preach this message: 'The kingdom of heaven is near.'

Mt 12:28 But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

In this debate with the Pharisees, Jesus is advancing a position that the Pharisees wouldn't accept, for arguments sake, not as an inauguration of the kingdom (which would contradict the rest of His teaching on the kingdom).

C1b. Those who get the kingdom

Those who are humble in spirit *Mt 5:3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

Those who are attacked because of their commitment to obeying God *Mt 5:10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

Those who practice and teach *Mt 5:19 Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*

Those who have an obvious inner and outer relationship with God *Mt 5:20 For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.*

Those who seek it as their top priority *Mt 6:33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*

Those who do the will of the Father *Mt 7:21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.*

Those who are born again *Mt 11:11 I tell you the truth: Among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.*

Those who forceably lay hold of it *Mt 11:12 From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it.*

Mt 12:28 But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

C2. The Middle and Muddled Teaching

Lk 17:20 Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, "The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, 21 nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is within/among you." 22 Then he said to his disciples, "The time is coming when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, but you will not see it. 23 Men will tell you, 'There he is!' or 'Here he is!' Do not go running off after them. 24 For the Son of Man in his day will be like the lightning, which flashes and lights up the sky from one end to the other.

Luke 17:20 is one of the most misinterpreted verses regarding the kingdom, purportedly indicating that the kingdom of God/heaven is not that promised in the OT (with a descendent of David reigning over the nation of Israel on the earth) but rather the kingdom is within one's heart. A look at the surrounding context shows how impossible such a view is. First it should be noted that the kingdom is still viewed as future, adding weight to the view that the kingdom being at hand does not mean it has arrived. The audience is the Pharisees, those rejecting the kingship of Jesus. To say that the kingdom is anywhere Jesus is king or ruling, and then state that is in people's heart on the basis of this verse is a gross distortion of Scripture. (Incidentally there is no other verse on which the false doctrine of the kingdom being in one's heart is purportedly based.) The Pharisees were obviously rejecting the rulership of Jesus, and could not have the kingdom in their heart (if the kingdom was going to be in anyone's heart).

The word for "within" (NIV margin = among) provides additional refutation of the non-literal view of the kingdom. Up until this point in the Gospels, and continuing beyond, a literal view of the kingdom has been demanded. One cannot on the basis of this verse state that the kingdom is now figurative. That is not the point of this passage, nor is it in harmony with subsequent teachings about the kingdom. "Within" is used only one other time in the NT * to refer to wine within a cup. Obviously the wine is not within the molecules of the structure of a cup (within the metal itself) but rather in the midst of the container formed by the walls of the cup. In the same way, Christ was not stating that the kingdom was within the bodies of the Pharisees, but rather that it was in the midst of them, standing in front of them.

This view of the passage makes use of a figure of speech where the cause is put for the effect (metonymy of cause). Jesus is the one who causes the kingdom to come. If the Pharisees were looking for the kingdom, they would have recognized the King when He arrived. But in fact, the Pharisees had no desire for a kingdom from the heavens because they were too busy building their own little kingdoms on earth.

C3.The End Teaching

Lk 21:31 Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near.

Lk 22:16 For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God."

Lk 22:18 For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

Lk 23:42 Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

Note in Luke's gospel here and above, how the kingdom is view as yet future after chapter 17. At the other end of our Lord's kingdom teaching is the data in Acts 1. For forty days after the resurrection Jesus had instructed the disciples **about the kingdom**. This is significant for two reasons: first, it demonstrates the importance of understanding the kingdom (since that is what Jesus spent His last time on earth teaching about) and second, after receiving such instruction, the disciples were still expecting the promised Davidic kingdom to be restored to Israel. Their interest and eagerness to see the kingdom restored is understandable in light of Jesus' promises that they would be ruling with Him over the twelve tribes of Israel. Jesus' response doesn't say the kingdom is here, nor that it will not occur, but indicated instead the responsibility they had until He returned to set up the kingdom.

3.4 D. Paul's expectation

2 Tim 4:18 The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

2 Tim 4:1 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge:

v1 parallels Christ's appearing and kingdom. Both are viewed as future and are designed to provide motivation to Timothy to preach the word to a hostile or unreceptive audience. Knowing that Christ would appear to judge and reward faithful believers and set up His kingdom would give Timothy the desire to be pleasing to God rather than men, so that he would be rewarded.

3.5 E. Some events preceding the kingdom

E1. Figures of Speech must have a corresponding reality

See the outline of events of the end times in the OT Bible Knowledge Commentary just before the book of Daniel. The following sampling of judgments from the Book of Revelation must occur before the kingdom is set up and Christ rules. Even though some of the judgments are described in figurative language, the figures must stand for some reality. It should be obvious in light of the detail and diversity of the judgments that they refer to yet future judgments, after which the kingdom will come.

Rev 5:10 You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."

Rev 11:15 The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever." 16 And the twenty-four elders, who were seated on their thrones

before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, 17 saying: "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign.

In 5:10 the reigning is viewed as future, when the Lamb begins to judge. This verse gains weight when viewed in concert with 11:15, which in a premillennial scheme of the book of Revelation occurs after the judgments are poured out and Christ returns.

E2. A Few of the Judgments that haven't happened literally

1. Changes in the sky and hiding on earth *Rev 6:12 I watched as he opened the sixth seal. There was a great earthquake. The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair, the whole moon turned blood red, 13 and the stars in the sky fell to earth, as late figs drop from a fig tree when shaken by a strong wind. 14 The sky receded like a scroll, rolling up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. 15 Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and every slave and every free man hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. 16 They called to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! 17 For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?" 7:1 After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth to prevent any wind from blowing on the land or on the sea or on any tree.*

2. A third of everything destroyed *Rev 8:7 The first angel sounded his trumpet, and there came hail and fire mixed with blood, and it was hurled down upon the earth. A third of the earth was burned up, a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up. 8 The second angel sounded his trumpet, and something like a huge mountain, all ablaze, was thrown into the sea. A third of the sea turned into blood, 9 a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed. 10 The third angel sounded his trumpet, and a great star, blazing like a torch, fell from the sky on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water-- 11 the name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters turned bitter, and many people died from the waters that had become bitter. 12 The fourth angel sounded his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them turned dark. A third of the day was without light, and also a third of the night.*

3. Torture of the unsealed *Rev 9:1 The fifth angel sounded his trumpet, and I saw a star that had fallen from the sky to the earth. The star was given the key to the shaft of the Abyss. 2 When he opened the Abyss, smoke rose from it like the smoke from a gigantic furnace. The sun and sky were darkened by the smoke from the Abyss. 3 And out of the smoke locusts came down upon the earth and were given power like that of scorpions of the earth. 4 They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any plant or tree, but only those people who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads. 5 They were not given power to kill them, but only to torture them for five months. And the agony they suffered was like that of the sting of a scorpion when it strikes a man. 6 During those days men will seek death, but will not find it; they will long to die, but death will elude them. 12 The first woe is past; two other woes are yet to come.*

4. A third of mankind destroyed *Rev 9:13 The sixth angel sounded his trumpet, and I heard a voice coming from the horns of the golden altar that is before God. 15 And the four angels who had been kept ready for this very hour and day and month and year were released to kill a third of mankind. 16 The number of the mounted troops was two hundred million. I heard their number. 18 A third of mankind was killed by the three plagues of fire, smoke and sulfur that came out of their mouths. 20 The rest of mankind that were not killed by these plagues still did not*

repent of the work of their hands; they did not stop worshiping demons, and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood--idols that cannot see or hear or walk. 21 Nor did they repent of their murders, their magic arts, their sexual immorality or their thefts.

5. The future Seventh Trumpet *Rev 10:6 And he swore by him who lives for ever and ever, who created the heavens and all that is in them, the earth and all that is in it, and the sea and all that is in it, and said, "There will be no more delay! 7 But in the days when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as he announced to His servants the prophets." 15 The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever."*

6. The Two Witnesses *Rev 11:3 And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth." 4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. 5 If anyone tries to harm them, fire comes from their mouths and devours their enemies. This is how anyone who wants to harm them must die. 6 These men have power to shut up the sky so that it will not rain during the time they are prophesying; and they have power to turn the waters into blood and to strike the earth with every kind of plague as often as they want. 7 Now when they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the Abyss will attack them, and overpower and kill them. 8 Their bodies will lie in the street of the great city, which is figuratively called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. 9 For three and a half days men from every people, tribe, language and nation will gaze on their bodies and refuse them burial. 10 The inhabitants of the earth will gloat over them and will celebrate by sending each other gifts, because these two prophets had tormented those who live on the earth. 11 But after the three and a half days a breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and terror struck those who saw them. 12 Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they went up to heaven in a cloud, while their enemies looked on. 13 At that very hour there was a severe earthquake and a tenth of the city collapsed. Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the survivors were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven. 14 The second woe has passed; the third woe is coming soon.*

7. THE SEVENTH TRUMPET *Rev 11:15 The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever." 16 And the twenty-four elders, who were seated on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, 17 saying: "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign. 18 The nations were angry; and your wrath has come. The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your saints and those who Reverence your name, both small and great--and for destroying those who destroy the earth." 19 Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a great hailstorm. Rev 12:10 Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down.*

8. World Rule and Worship of the Beast *Rev 13:6 He opened his mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander his name and his dwelling place and those who live in heaven. 7 He was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them. And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation. 8 All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast--all whose*

names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world. 9 He who has an ear, let him hear. 10 If anyone is to go into captivity, into captivity he will go. If anyone is to be killed with the sword, with the sword he will be killed. This calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of the saints. 11 Then I saw another beast, coming out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon. 12 He exercised all the authority of the first beast on his behalf, and made the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed. 13 And he performed great and miraculous signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to earth in full view of men. 15 He was given power to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that it could speak and cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed. 16 He also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead, 17 so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name. 18 This calls for wisdom. If anyone has insight, let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is man's number. His number is 666.

9. SEVEN BOWL JUDGMENTS *Rev 16:1 Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, "Go, pour out the seven bowls of God's wrath on the earth." 2 The first angel went and poured out his bowl on the land, and ugly and painful sores broke out on the people who had the mark of the beast and worshiped his image. 3 The second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it turned into blood like that of a dead man, and every living thing in the sea died. 4 The third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. 5 Then I heard the angel in charge of the waters say: "You are just in these judgments, you who are and who were, the Holy One, because you have so judged; 6 for they have shed the blood of your saints and prophets, and you have given them blood to drink as they deserve." 7 And I heard the altar respond: "Yes, Lord God Almighty, true and just are your judgments." 8 The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and the sun was given power to scorch people with fire. 9 They were seared by the intense heat and they cursed the name of God, who had control over these plagues, but they refused to repent and glorify him. 10 The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom was plunged into darkness. Men gnawed their tongues in agony 11 and cursed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, but they refused to repent of what they had done. 12 The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the East.*

15 "Behold, I come like a thief! Blessed is he who stays awake and keeps his clothes with him, so that he may not go naked and be shamefully exposed." 16 Then they gathered the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon. 17 The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and out of the temple came a loud voice from the throne, saying, "It is done!" 18 Then there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder and a severe earthquake. No earthquake like it has ever occurred since man has been on earth, so tremendous was the quake. 19 The great city split into three parts, and the cities of the nations collapsed. God remembered Babylon the Great and gave her the cup filled with the wine of the fury of his wrath. 20 Every island fled away and the mountains could not be found. 21 From the sky huge hailstones of about a hundred pounds each fell upon men. And they cursed God on account of the plague of hail, because the plague was so terrible.

10. Total Destruction of Babylon in an hour *Rev 18:2 With a mighty voice he shouted: "Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great! She has become a home for demons and a haunt for every evil spirit, a haunt for every unclean and detestable bird. 8 Therefore in one day her plagues will overtake her: death, mourning and famine. She will be consumed by fire, for mighty is the Lord God who judges her. 10 Terrified at her torment, they will stand far off and cry: "Woe! Woe, O great city, O Babylon, city of power! In one hour your doom has come!" 17 In one hour such great wealth*

has been brought to ruin!" "Every sea captain, and all who travel by ship, the sailors, and all who earn their living from the sea, will stand far off. 18 When they see the smoke of her burning, they will exclaim, 'Was there ever a city like this great city?' 19 They will throw dust on their heads, and with weeping and mourning cry out: "'Woe! Woe, O great city, where all who had ships on the sea became rich through her wealth! In one hour she has been brought to ruin! 21 Then a mighty angel picked up a boulder the size of a large millstone and threw it into the sea, and said: "With such violence the great city of Babylon will be thrown down, never to be found again. 22 The music of harpists and musicians, flute players and trumpeters, will never be heard in you again. No workman of any trade will ever be found in you again. The sound of a millstone will never be heard in you again. 23 The light of a lamp will never shine in you again. The voice of bridegroom and bride will never be heard in you again. Your merchants were the world's great men. By your magic spell all the nations were led astray.

11. Wedding Feast of the Lamb Rev 19:6 *Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. 7 Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. 8 Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.) 9 Then the angel said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!'" And he added, "These are the true words of God."*

12. Defeat and Binding of Satan Rev 19:13 *He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. 14 The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. 15 Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. 16 On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: King of Kings and Lord of Lords. 19 Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against the rider on the horse and his army. 20 But the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who had performed the miraculous signs on his behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped his image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur.*

Rev 20:1 And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. 2 He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. 3 He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

20:4 I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

7 When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison 8 and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth--Gog and Magog--to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore. 9 They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. 10 And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur,

where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever. 11 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them.

12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. 14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. 15 If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

3.6 F. Alleged evidence for a present kingdom

Col 1:12 giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. 13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves,

v13 the NIV "brought" is "translated", referring to a change of citizenship. We are now citizens of Christ's kingdom, camping while we travel through Satan's domain.

3.7 G. Teaching regarding the wedding feasts and banquets

The parable of the wedding feast occurs in the context of failure to do (21:31) "what the father wants." The consequence of failing to do results in the loss of the possession of the kingdom. In this section of Matthew there is an emphasis on what happens to the kingdom in light of the rejection of it.

Mt 21:43 "Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit.

Mt 22:2 "The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. 3 He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come. 5 "But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. 8 "Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. 9 Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.'
vv5&8 The original invitees refused to come to the feast because they were more concerned about their own business interests.

22:10 So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, both good and bad, and the wedding hall was filled with guests. 11 "But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. 12 'Friend,' he asked, 'how did you get in here without wedding clothes?' The man was speechless. 13 "Then the king told the attendants, 'Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' 14 "For many are invited, but few are chosen."

Apparently the king had provided the appropriate garments for the recently invited guests. The man tossed outside had either refused the offer of garments or was unprepared. He failed to take advantage of the provisions his host had made. While the provision usually is said to refer to the

death of Christ, the context and other usages of "garments" "in the book of Revelation" would point to someone being inappropriately attired for a great feast, lacking festive garments like glory (II Cor 5) or the "righteous acts of the saints"

(*Rev 19:7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife has made herself ready. 8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. 9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed [are] they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.*).

The "weeping and gnashing of teeth" is more likely the pastime of the unprofitable servants who failed to follow the path of discipleship in faithfulness.

The parable ends with the point: not everyone is chosen. "Chosen" can refer to that which is choice, excellent or outstanding. (See notes on Titus 1:1 in Study Guide). The parable is given as a motivation for action. The traditional understanding of "chosen" (referring to whether or not God designated someone to be justified) provides no incentive for action or obedience. I have no control over whether or not God has designated me to be justified. However, I have total say in the matter of obedience. Will I respond to God's gracious (and just) promptings to obey?

Lk 13:22 Then Jesus went through the towns and villages, teaching as he made his way to Jerusalem. 23 Someone asked him, "Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?" He said to them, 24 "Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to.

v24 to be saved requires effort, and trying, and is difficult (narrow) and only a few will pursue it.

25 Once the owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you will stand outside knocking and pleading, 'Sir, open the door for us.' "But he will answer, 'I don't know you or where you come from.' 26 "Then you will say, 'We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets.' 27 "But he will reply, 'I don't know you or where you come from. Away from me, all you evildoers!' 28 "There will be weeping there, and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves thrown out. 29 People will come from east and west and north and south, and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God. 30 Indeed there are those who are last who will be first, and first who will be last."

In vv 23-24 Jesus teaches that one must make every effort to be saved. This implies an uncertainty, for how does one know if they've made every effort or missed a few? Verse 30 is used to illustrate a principle regarding reward in the kingdom (cf Mark), and the first-last indicates relative position rather than forgiveness. "Saved" most likely refers to reward in the kingdom (see Matt 7) and is dependent upon effort. Apparently many people who thought they were doing well will be thrown out of the reward banquet because they haven't made every effort (particularly the Jews in first place).

Lk 21:27 At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. 28 When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." 29 He told them this parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees. 30 When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. 31 Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near. 36 Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man."

Mat 24:10 At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, 11 and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. 12 Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, 13 but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.

v13 Being saved is dependent upon standing firm during the tribulation of the end times. The context would indicate that "saved" is deliverance out of temporal trials or perhaps glorification (See Hebrews). Apparently the admonition is addressed to believers who were following the faith.

Mt 25:1 "At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2 Five of them were foolish and five were wise. 3 The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. 4 The wise, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. 5 The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep. 6 "At midnight the cry rang out: 'Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!' 7 "Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. 8 The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.' 9 "No,' they replied, 'there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.' 10 "But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut. 11 "Later the others also came. 'Sir! Sir!' they said. 'Open the door for us!' 12 "But he replied, 'I tell you the truth, I don't know you.' 13 "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.

Being excluded from the joy of the banquet was the result of not being prepared with enough oil. Note that the issue isn't that there never was any oil, but that they hadn't **wisely** chosen the right objective, being prepared for the return of the lord.

Lk 14:24 I tell you, not one of those men who were invited will get a taste of my banquet."

4 Study Guide to rewards in the epistles

4.1 Preliminary inheritance passages

Most of the inheritance passages are in the future tense, and dependent upon faithful actions in the present.

1 Cor 6:9 Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders 10 nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

Gal 5:21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

1 Th 2:12 encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

v12 kingdom and glory are parallel and future.

2 Th 1:5 All this is evidence that God's judgment is right, and as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering.

2 Pt 1:11 and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Js 2:5 Listen, my dear brothers: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him?

Heb 12:28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe,

4.2 Acts

Act 20:32 "Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

v32 Our inheritance/reward is determined by our interaction with God's word. Our sanctification is a prerequisite to our inheritance .

4.3 Romans

Rom 2:6 God "will give to each person according to what he has done." (Ps 62:12; Prov 24:12 7) To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. 8 But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. 9 There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; 10 but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first

for the Jew, then for the Gentile. 16 This will take place on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares.

5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. 3 Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; 4 perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5 And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us. 17 For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

8:1 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit, 8:11 And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you. 13 For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, 14 because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship/adoption . And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."

v1 the lack of condemnation is limited to those in Christ who walk according to the Spirit. Life and death are terms of covenantal blessing or cursing. To live is to exercise dominion or power, to die is to be deposed from a position of exercising power.

8:17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs--heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we co-share in his sufferings in order that we may also co-share in his glory. 18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. 19 The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. 20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. 22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. 23 Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. 24 For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? 25 But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

v17 indicates that all believers are heirs of God but only co-heirs with Christ to the degree that they share in his sufferings. The conjunction "de" is used to indicate not a strong contrastive ("alla") nor a coordinate item ("kai") but a complementary and somewhat contrastive item. Our sharing in Christ's glory is dependent upon sharing in the process he used to get His glory, i.e., the path of discipleship.

4.4 I Corinthians

To correct the carnally (temporally) minded believers at Corinth, who were engaging in self centered behavior in the attempt to gain power (I Cor 1, 12-14), pleasure (I Cor 5), and possessions (I Cor 6) now, Paul exhorts them to live in light of their future. Chapter 15, on the

resurrection and the glory given to believers at that time serves as the final motivation for his instructions in the letter.

1 Cor 3:8 The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor. 9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. 10 By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds. 11 For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, 13 his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. 14 If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. 15 If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.

v15 is one of the clearest teaching on what happens to temporally minded believers who fail to live as disciples. All for which they've exchanged their lives (temporal gratification) will be destroyed, yet they, because they are forgiven they will not be cast into the lake of fire. The unfaithful suffer loss or destruction of their eternal reward.

4:5 Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.

v5 warns of the future judgment when all will be clearly seen, including motives. This indicates that it is important that we examine our motives for each decision we make. If the motive is our temporal comfort or power, pleasure, or possessions, we will suffer the loss of I Cor 3. If our motive is self-sacrificial service, we will receive praise and commendation from Our Lord as in Luke 19.

5:5 hand this man over to Satan, so that his body/flesh may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.

v5 The motivation to exercise church discipline is so that, 1) while outside the protection of a body of believers, 2) the temporal-seeking aspect of his life may be destroyed by Satan's unrestrained attacks, 3) resulting in repentance and the exchange if the remaining days for that which is pleasing to God when He judges. [Spirit/soul = that which a man gives in exchange for something; saved = glorification aspect.]

6:2 Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? 3 Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life! 9 Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders 10 nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

9:14 In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel. 15 But I have not used any of these rights. And I am not writing this in the hope that you will do such things for me. I would rather die than have anyone deprive me of this boast. 16 Yet when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, for I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! 17 If I preach voluntarily, I have a reward; if not voluntarily, I am simply discharging the trust committed to me. 18 What then is my reward? Just this: that in

preaching the gospel I may offer it free of charge, and so not make use of my rights in preaching it.

v16 Paul is compelled to preach because of the direct commission given to Him by the Lord, distinct from any evangelistic responsibility given to us today. If he carried out this responsibility without self denial (i.e., received compensation for it) he would not be rewarded for "I am simply discharging the trust committed to me." (It's worth noting the equation between reward and boast.) His reward is based upon the sacrifice or limiting of his God given rights, much the same as Our Lord in Phil 2. So with us, if we're just discharging our Christian responsibilities without sacrifice or denial (convenient Christianity) we will have no reward.

9:19 Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. 20 To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. 21 To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. 22 To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. 23 I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings. 24 Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. 25 Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. 26 Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. 27 No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

v23 Paul's conducted his other-centered ministry on the basis of the good news about the coming kingdom "that I might share in its blessing."

v24 makes it obvious that blessing = prize = reward. We are commanded to run (=live) in such a way that we win our reward. This is as much a command as "don't commit adultery," ignored to our peril.

v27 Paul viewed it as a real possibility that he could be disqualified or disinherited from his reward. It is not automatic, but earned. This passage, along with II Cor 5, Phil 3 and II Tim 4 irrefutably indicate Paul's motivation (which we're called to imitate). For someone who piously states that they want a purer motive than Paul, check out the motives of Abraham, Moses, and Jesus in Heb 11 & 12.

10:1 For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. 2 They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. 3 They all ate the same spiritual food 4 and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. 5 Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered over the desert. 6 Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. 31 So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

v1 is in a reward context, and is providing a reason for the preceding instruction (that the Corinthian Christians should limit their own rights to comfort and preferences for the benefit of others. The reason they should follow Paul's example is because what will happen to them is the same thing that happened to Israel at Kadesh-Barnea (Num 13-14). 1) The Israelites are shown to be as much believers as the Corinthian brothers; 2) they were more concerned about their comfort and safety than about God's reputation; 3) they were deprived of their inheritance; 4) the same thing can happen to believers today which is why the passage was recorded in the Scriptures.

15:1 Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. 2 By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

v1 Believers are saved by the Good News that Paul preached, only is they hold firmly to it. The glorification aspect of salvation is in view as seen by the rest of the chapter's emphasis on gaining future glory, and by the motivational thrust of the book.

15:3 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,

v4 the rest of the chapter is an elaboration of the implications of the resurrection for believers, we will get glory as well if we continue believing God and laboring (v58).

15:19 If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men. 30 And as for us, why do we endanger ourselves every hour? 31 I die every day--I mean that, brothers--just as surely as I glory over you in Christ Jesus our Lord. 32 If I fought wild beasts in Ephesus for merely human reasons, what have I gained? If the dead are not raised, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." (Isaiah 22:13)

v32 If the dead are not raised to receive a reward, than one would be a fool not to live for all the rewards this life has to offer. But is there is a future reward promised for foregoing immediate temporal gratification of the flesh, then it is worth facing wild beasts to gain our glory. (See II Cor 4-5 for Paul's perspective on the possibility of not receiving glory.)

15:40 There are also heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies; but the splendor of the heavenly bodies is one kind, and the splendor of the earthly bodies is another. 41 The sun has one kind of splendor, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendor. 42 So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; 43 it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; 44 it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. 50 I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 58 Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

v41 There are different degrees of glory (splendor). Therefore (v58) stand firm (cf v1-2) and labor, knowing that there is a pay-off or reward. It might be worth emphasizing that the motivation presented by Paul appeals to self-interest. Gratitude or love of God are not emphasized as motivation for self-sacrificial service of others.

4.5 II Corinthians

2 Cor 1:20 For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God. 21 Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, 22 set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

v21 It is God's grace that enables us to be saved (cf. Eph 2) be that justified, sanctified, or glorified, yet one must respond to His grace appropriately. The HS is given as the downpayment indicating that there are future payments awaiting us. A guaranteed reservation is enjoyed only when you show up to claim it. (See I Pt 1 and the role of faith.)

3:7 Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, fading though it was, 8 will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious? 9 If the ministry that condemns men is glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness! 10 For what was glorious has no glory now in comparison with the surpassing glory. 11 And if what was fading away came with glory, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts! 12 Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold.
v12 note the equation of hope and glory.

3:17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 18 And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

v18 Transformation into the image of Christ (or becoming more Christlike) is accompanied by differing (and increasing) degrees of glory.

4:4 The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. 5 For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. 6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. 7 But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. 8 We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; 9 persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. 10 We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. 11 For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body. 12 So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you. 13 It is written: "I believed; therefore I have spoken." With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak, Psalm 116:10

4:14 because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence. 15 All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God. 16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. 17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. 18 So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

vv16-18 **Outward** = wasting away = light and momentary troubles = what is seen = temporary;
5:1-3 = earthly tent being destroyed = what is mortal

Inward = renewal = eternal glory = what is unseen = eternal; 5:1-3 = building from God =
eternal house in heaven = heavenly dwelling = clothed = life. In the midsts of difficult times Paul
fixed his eyes on the reward his endurance of those trials was gaining/achieving for him.

5:1 Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. 2 Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed

with our heavenly dwelling, 3 because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. 4 For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. 5 Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. 6 Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. 7 We live by faith, not by sight. 8 We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. 9 So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

The contrast is between being found naked (as Adam and Eve were after they sinned and lost their glory) and being clothed with a bright glory suit (cf I Cor 15). In v5 we find that God has made us for the expressed purpose of blessing us with future glory. The HS is the first installment of our glory indicating more is to come. See on I Pt 1 for the guarantee requiring ongoing faith. The necessity of faith can be seen in v7. The glory is conditional as can be seen in vv9-10. Paul's motivation or goal to please the Lord can't be divorced from the upcoming judgment. We will be judged and receive what's coming to us based on our works as believers. Those whose goal is to please Christ will receive reward. Those who's goal is to please themselves or gain someone other than Christ's approval will receive what is due them.

5:11 Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade men. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience.

v11 The fear of failing in the future judgment for believers motivated Paul to minister.

6:1 As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. 7:1 Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for/fear of God.

v1 Those who fail to purify themselves are those who fail to have God's grace reach its intended goal of reaping God's promises.

4.6 Galatians

Gal 3:18 For if the inheritance depends on the law, then it no longer depends on a promise; but God in his grace gave it to Abraham through a promise.

4:4 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, 5 to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. 6 Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." 7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir. 11 I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you.

6:7 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. 8 The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. 9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

vv7-10 The motivation for doing good (note also the priority) is reaping our reward.

4.7 Ephesians

Eph 1:13 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the praise of his glory. 18 I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, 21 far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.

2:6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, 7 in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. 11 Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (that done in the body by the hands of men)--12 remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. 19 Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. 21 In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. 22 And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit. 3:6 This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus. 7 I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power. 8 Although I am less than the least of all God's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, 9 and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. 10 His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, 11 according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.

A major motivational emphasis (the first half of Ephesians) for walking in a worthy manner worthy of believers hope in accord with God's eternal purpose is that Gentiles would share in the promised blessings. Through faithful believers God wants to demonstrate to Satan that he should have obeyed rather than rebelling if he wanted glory..

4:1 As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. 25 Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. 26 "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, 27 and do not give the devil a foothold. 28 He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need. 29 Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. 32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. 5:5 For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person--such a man is an idolater--has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of

God. 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient.

6:7 Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, 8 because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free. 9 And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.

v7 The motivation for both slaves and masters is our future judgement and reward.

4.8 Philippians

Phi 1:21 For me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. 22 If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! 23 I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; 24 but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body.

2:9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 12 Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed--not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence--continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose. 14 Do everything without complaining or arguing, 15 so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe 16 as you hold out the word of life--in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing.

v9 Jesus' exaltation was the result of His giving up His comfort with the Father and serving us in our greatest need. It is that model which serves as the basis for the exhortation to obey. We are to work out our salvation, knowing that God is at work in us producing both the willing or desire to do His pleasure and doing or accomplishment of His will. All we have to do is cooperate with the gracious promptings of the HS. Note in v 14 that Paul's motivation included the reward he would get if his ministry among the Philippians was successful. (See comments of faithfulness to balance the last comment.)

3:10 I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.

v10 Sharing in Christ's suffering was viewed by Paul as a prerequisite to sharing in the glory of the resurrection. (cf. Rm 8:17) In the next verse he equates such conformity to Christ with being mature, complete or perfect.

3:12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. 15 All of us who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you.

v12 Paul exercised effort to fulfill the purpose of his justification, a sharing in the Messiah's glory in ruling with Him in His kingdom. Note the effort Paul exercised, all for the prize. Note also that the mature believer is to have a similar perspective.

3:19 Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things. 20 But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

v19 The contrast is between those who seek immediate gratification in the temporal realm, and those who eagerly await their glorification.

4:1 Therefore, my brothers, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, that is how you should stand firm in the Lord, dear friends!

v1 Paul viewed the lives of the Philippians as his joy and crown, looking ahead to his reward.

5 Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.

v5 The motivation for exhibiting Christlike character is the future judgment.

17 Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be credited to your account.

v17 Paul's encouragement of the Philippians in giving is the motivation of the reward they would get for engaging in sacrificial Christlike behavior.

4.9 Colossians

Col 1:3 We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, 4 because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints-- 5 the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel

v5 Christian character and service springs from the hope that one hears about in the good news. This hope is said to be stored up for us in heaven, not a present position as is justification. The apostles proclaimed the possibility of believers sharing in the Messiah's kingdom when he reappears in glory. This is the believer's hope, not our justification nor just the fact that Christ returns, but that He returns to judge and reward. (See Rev 22).

1:12 giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. 13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

v13 By virtue of our forgiveness, we have been qualified to share in the inheritance. The rest of the letter indicates what we must do to gain it (ie, 3:1) or refrain from losing it (i.e., 1:23, 2:18).

1:22 But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation-- 23 if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you

heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant. 27 To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

v27 The message proclaimed by the apostles included the hope of future glory. Yet, v23 such a hope is realized only by those who pursue sanctification.

1:28 We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. 29 To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.

v28 Paul's goal in ministry was to enable believers to gain their hope (previous verse).

2:1 I want you to know how much I am struggling for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not met me personally. 2 My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, 3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Note the progression that culminates in knowing (more than intellectual apprehension).

2:18 Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions.

v18 It is possible for a believer to be disqualified from their inheritance/reward by following attractive but incorrect teaching.

3:1 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. 3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Some manuscripts our 5 Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. 6 Because of these, the wrath of God is coming on those who are disobedient

Believers are commanded to set their hearts on their future glory, and take appropriate action in their life to avoid God's wrath. ("At the right hand" is the position of power and honor, in some contexts, given to the future commander of a conquered territory at a victory banquet.)

*3:22 Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. 23 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, 24 since you know that you will receive an **inheritance from the Lord as a reward**. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. 25 Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong, and there is no favoritism. 4:1 Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven.*

v23 The motivation for obedience is the reward believers will receive, which is stated as our inheritance. Notice also the negative motivation, being repaid for whatever wrong we do.

4.10 I Thessalonians

1 Thess 2:11 For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, 12 encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory. 19 For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you? 20 Indeed, you are our glory and joy. 3:4 In fact, when we were with you, we kept telling you that we would be persecuted. And it turned out that way, as you well know. 5 For this reason, when I could stand it no longer, I sent to find out about your faith. I was afraid that in some way the tempter might have tempted you and our efforts might have been useless. 8 For now we really live, since you are standing firm in the Lord. 9 How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you?

v11ff The above group of verses indicate a concern of Paul's that those in whom he had invested his life lead lives that are pleasing to God. Here, and in Gal and Phil his motivation appears to be not so much the truth that it is in his readers' best interests to obey, but rather that he stands to profit or lose from their obedience. In any event, notice the possibility of the tempter succeeding and believers not standing firm.

3:13 May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.

v13 It should go without saying that being blameless and holy when Christ returns is not automatic. The major thrust of Paul's ministry (See also Col 1:28-29) was to cause believers' holiness in light of our Lord's return.

4:2 For you know what instructions we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus. 3 It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; 4 that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, 5 not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God; 6 and that in this matter no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him. The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you. 7 For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life.

v6 The possibility of believers living an impure life, focused on gratification of temporal rather than eternal desires is all to evident in our present society. Notice that Paul is addressing believers in v6 and warns more than once that God will punish believers for such sins. The guilt was done away with on the cross, but the consequence still remains. Just like Adam and Eve had their guilt covered over by the blood of the animal skins, yet they endured the consequence of being kicked out of the garden.

4.11 II Thessalonians

2 Thess 1:4 Therefore, among God's churches we boast about your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring. 5 All this is evidence that God's judgment is right, and as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering. 6 God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you 7 and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. 8 He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power 10 on the day he comes to be

glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you. 11 With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith. 12 We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2:13 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth. 14 He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. 15 So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter.

v13 Here is a use of "saved" incorporating sanctification and glorification. The goal held out to believers to submit to the Spirit and continue to believe the truth is that of sharing in the glory of God, which was an integral part of the gospel.

3:6 In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us. 14 If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of him. Do not associate with him, in order that he may feel ashamed. 15 Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.

v14 It should be obvious that not all believers are receptive or obedient to the truth. The apparently uncharitable behavior the believers were to exhibit towards their brother is actually in the brother's best interest because it will highlight the distance between God and the wayward, and motivate him to repent. The basis of fellowship among believers is "Jesus is Lord." If a believer refuses to acknowledge Jesus' lordship over their life then their association with other believers for worship or being of one mind, intent on one purpose is a sham.

4.12 I Timothy

1 Tim 2:15 But women will be saved through childbearing--if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.

v15 This verse defines the sphere and method in which women lay up rewards, in contrast with the instructions given to men.

3:13 Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.

v13 Service results in some sort of favorable position. Would not the converse be true?

4:7 Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly. 8 For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.

v7 Training oneself in godliness requires effort yet also has a payoff.

6:12 Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when

you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

v12 and vv17-19 See earlier comments on eternal life in the gospels. There is apparently some aspect of eternal life (life of the coming Messianic Age) which Timothy did not possess, but which he would gain through faithful service of his Captain.

6:17 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 18 Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 19 In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

v19 "life that is truly life" is an obscured translation of "eternal life" because the translators apparently couldn't reconcile the clear teaching that eternal life is dependent upon good works. The context is laying up treasure, i.e., reward. Good works are necessary for reward among both the rich and poor. (see above v12)

4.13 II Timothy

2 Tim 2:1 You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2 And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others. Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. 4 No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs--he wants to please his commanding officer. 5 Similarly, if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not receive the victor's crown unless he competes according to the rules. 6 The hardworking farmer should be the first to receive a share of the crops. 7 Reflect on what I am saying, for the Lord will give you insight into all this. 8 Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel, 9 for which I am suffering even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But God's word is not chained. 10 Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

vv1-10 A believer who wishes to be "strong in grace" labors for his reward. The three illustrations are all related to being pleasing to our Captain when He returns and thus being rewarded. V3 focuses on the cost one must pay; v5 brings in the negative aspect of not paying the cost; v6 brings in the positive aspect of being a hardworking servant, i.e., sharing in the reward. It's interesting that we are specifically told to reflect on the meaning of these verses, with the prayer or promise that the Lord will give insight into the meaning and application. V8 follows the examples and exhortation with a reminder of the Messianic position of Jesus , the anointed one who will come and rule.

*11 Here is a trustworthy saying: If we died with him, we will also live with him;
12 if we endure, we will also reign with him.
If we disown him, he will also disown us;
13 if we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself.*

vv11-13 These three verses are the best summary of the issue of rewards and eternal security. The outer two elements deal with justification, the inner two with glorification. If we deny Him our sacrificial service, He will deny us (Matt 7, et. al.) i.e., He will not recognize us as servants with whom He had an intimate relationship and with whom He will continue that relationship in sharing His glory and rule. Even if we are faithless He won't send us into the lake of fire because

in so doing He would be denying His promise of forgiveness to those who trusted Him and the work of justification that He did on our behalf.

However, if we endure, He will share His glory with us. This is a trustworthy saying. Stake your life on it.

15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

v15 And you thought Bible Study was supposed to be easy. It was difficult for someone who shared the language, culture, and heard lectures on the subjects given by God Himself.

19 Nevertheless, God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness." 20 In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for noble purposes and some for ignoble. 21 If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work.

v19 The first "inscription" might relate to justification, the second to sanctification, vv20-21 to glorification.

4:1 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: 2 Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage--with great patience and careful instruction. 3 For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. 4 They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.

In the face of a potentially hostile audience (vv3-4) Paul had reminded Timothy that the Scriptures made Him adequate for the task of developing godliness in people (3:16-17) and now gave Timothy both the motivation and methodology for his ministry.

The motivation was the future judgment of Christ, which is elaborated upon in v8.

4:6 For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Now there is in store 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 longed for his appearing.

vv6-8 Form a glimpse of the motivation of perhaps the most mature believer at the end of his ministry. Paul "did" v7 looking forward to the result of v8. Paul states that the future reward: of rulership based on or sourced in his righteousness or (less likely) a reward which consists of righteousness, is store for all who long for His appearing. Those who long are those who are currently sharing in suffering or injustices of involved in serving the Savior. The long for Him to return and justly judges, setting all things right, and fulfilling His promises.

18 The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

4.14 Titus

Titus 1:1 Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ for the faith of God's elect and the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness-- 2 a faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time,

v2 *faith and knowledge* were supplied by the NIV translators. It is godliness which is based upon the hope of eternal life. If we are seeking the hope of glory, we will be developing and demonstrating godliness. Those without such a hope never become godly by accident.

2:11 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. 12 It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, 13 while we wait for the blessed hope--the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

v12 The blessed hope is not just Christ appearing it is the "appearing of the glory" in the Greek. This hope is to motivate us to say "No" to temporal desires and do good works that have eternal benefit.

3:4 But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. 8 This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone. 14 Our people must learn to devote themselves to doing what is good, in order that they may provide for daily necessities and not live unproductive lives

4.15 Philemon

*Philemon 6 I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ. (See on gospels.)
19 We love because he first loved us. 20 If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. 21 And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.*

4.16 II John

2 Jn 1:8 Watch out that you do not lose what you have worked for, but that you may be rewarded fully.

v8 In the context of extending hospitality to self-centered teachers, John indicates: 1) the possibility of losing one's reward for not gross sin but unwise behavior, 2) the importance of exercising diligence to insure a full rather than a partial reward, 3) the fact that a reward is earned or worked for.

4.17 Jude

Jude 1:24 To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy-- 25 to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.

v24 God is able to keep us faultless, yet it remains that many who have trusted Christ's death on their behalf have not availed themselves of the ability of God to keep them from falling. Those who trust also in God's ability will stand joyfully before the Lord when He distributes or shares His glory or authority to rule.

4.18 Revelation

Rev 2:4 Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love.

5 Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.

7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

10 Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life. 11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt at all by the second death. 13 I know where you live--where Satan has his throne. Yet you remain true to my name. You did not renounce your faith in me, even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness, who was put to death in your city--where Satan lives. 17 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it.

2:25 Only hold on to what you have until I come. 26 To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations-- 27 'He will rule them with an iron scepter; he will dash them to pieces like pottery'--just as I have received authority from my Father. (Psalm 9) 28 I will also give him the morning star.

3:3 Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you. 4 Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. 5 He who overcomes will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels.

11 I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown. 12 Him who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he leave it. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on him my new name.

18 I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see. 19 Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent. 20 Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me. 21 To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.

4:9 Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say: 11 "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being."

5:9 And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. 10 You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth." 12 In a loud voice they sang: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!"

7:14 I answered, "Sir, you know." And he said, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 Therefore, "they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. 17 For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

v17 The tears (of those coming out of the tribulation = Jews?) get wiped away at the end of the Millenium

19:7 Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. 8 Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.) 9 Then the angel said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!'" And he added, "These are the true words of God."

20:4 I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

20:11 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done.

21:6 He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. 7 He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son. 8 But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars--their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."

22:3 No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. 4 They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. 5 There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever. 7 "Behold, I am coming soon! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy in this book."

22:11 Let him who does wrong continue to do wrong; let him who is vile continue to be vile; let him who does right continue to do right; and let him who is holy continue to be holy." 12 "Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. 13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. 14 "Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. 15 Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

22:16 "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star." 17 The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life. 18 I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book. 19 And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

22:21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people. Amen