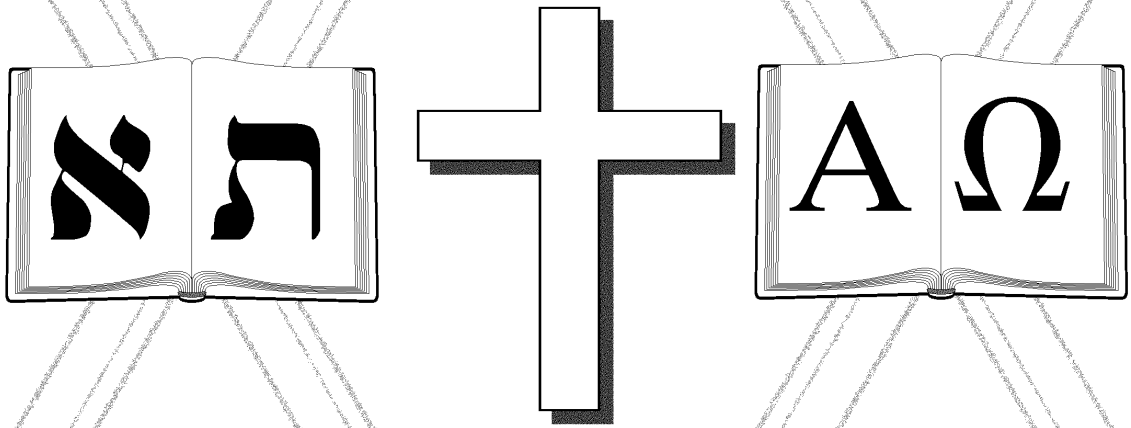


*Studies in the*  
**Holy**  
**Scriptures**



In Search of God's Wisdom

On:

**The Kingdom of Heaven**

By: James A. Jancik

1st Regular Baptist Church

**1993**

These studies discover there is a relationship between our behavior on earth and rewards and perhaps even the quality of life in heaven. I believe these principles are for the proud who think they can claim Jesus as their Savior and live as they please. While it is true, we cannot hope to please God apart from Christ, by the power of Jesus, we must strive to be obedient to His calling and His commandments. I hope and pray it will be of some service to you as you search for answers in THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

A plain ASCII text release of a Bible study our Sunday School class did on The Kingdom of heaven. These studies discover there is a relationship between our behavior on earth and rewards and perhaps even the quality of life in heaven. I believe these principles are for the proud who think they can claim Jesus as their Savior and live as they please. While it is true, we cannot hope to please God apart from Christ, by the power of Jesus, we must strive to be obedient to His calling and His commandments. I hope and pray it will be of some service to you as you search for answers in THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. Free to use and distribute if you so desire. -James Jancik

"Freely you received, freely give." -Matthew 10:8b

**Dec 27th, 2008**

These files are presented in their original, unchanged state from when they were originally used to teach adult Sunday school in the early 90's.

I am offering them free to those who may benefit from them. They may not be altered in any way, nor sold. They are free to share.

The addresses, phone numbers and emails have changed:

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I am no longer teaching at the church mentioned in the studies.

**Aug 26<sup>th</sup> 2018**

This was the first of two studies I did when teaching a Adult Sunday School Class at a Fundamental Baptist Church April 1994 - April 1996. Some of my theology has changed (fine tuned) over the years of life and study, but, the principles are still the same. Jesus taught a collections of sayings that are authoritative in defining what a "Christian" is and was and should be used as our supreme guide on what it means to be a Christian.

I suspect I will be presenting these in future YouTube and Speaker talks in up and coming mounts and this may be of interest and help to those following along.

-James Arthur Jancik

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Studies of the Kingdom of Heaven  
In Preparation for Forever!

By James A. Jancik

Prepared for Bible Studies at  
The First Regular Baptist Church of Grant Park

1993 Anno Domini

Studies in the Holy Scriptures  
In Search of God's Wisdom Found in:  
" The Sermon on the Mount"

Prepared for Bible Studies at  
The First Regular Baptist Church of Grant Park

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"...freely you received, freely give." (Matthew 10:8b)

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## Introduction

Not only did God lay out His Plan for saving the lost souls of our world, but, He formulated an outline for our lives on earth to grow and mature spiritually in preparation for the Kingdom to come!

Read Galatians 2:16

Christ paid for our sins; we need only believe that as fact to be justified by faith. No works of the Law (i.e. being good, going to church, baptism, etc.) can make us righteous before Almighty God.

Read James 2:14-22

Is this a contradiction? In the words of Paul, "May it not be so!". Faith and works are a team. Faith provides us with saving grace and the indwelling Holy Spirit, who provides us with the ability for good works. Works is the result (and evidence) of true faith. As James pointed out in verse 19b: "...the demons also believe, and shudder." [NASB] But they are doomed to Hell. It would seem belief alone isn't enough to please God.

If one is justified by faith in Christ (Rom 5:1, Gal 2:16 & 3:24) and faith without works is dead (James 2:17-18,20,22,24,26), and God recognizes faith and works (Rev 2:13 & 19); then how do we put it all in perspective? We must to the words of Jesus himself in the many parables found in the four Gospels about The Kingdom of Heaven!

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Lesson #1: How to Study God's Word  
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What's God's Role in your Studies?

READ: 1 Cor 1:17 - 2:5

The most important "tool" is God Himself! You may acquire every imaginable study help and miss the mark. Study Bibles, lexicons, commentaries, computer programs, etc. are great tools, but without the guiding hand of the Holy Spirit, your lost. Don't let perceived lack of intelligence intimidate you as Paul writes in 1 Cor 1:27,

"but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong,"

(All Bible quotes taken from the New American Standard Bible [NASB] unless otherwise noted)

Your attitude is very important as well. You must come to God with an open heart and mind, asking for truth; His Truth. Don't come to Him with your own agenda and expect Him to help you prove it! Once you "feel" a direction or answer coming, or if there's a teacher or preacher leading you to a particular conclusion, remember what John wrote in 1 John 4:1,

"Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world."

Before every study session, I entreat you to pray:

Heavenly Father; I wish to learn your Holy Truths. I ask that your Holy Spirit guide me through my (our) studies to an understanding of your Holy Word, The Bible. The more I learn about You, the more I can be like You; the more I can serve You. Jesus said in Luke 11:9, "And I say to you, Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you." He also said in John 14:13, "And whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." Highlight Scripture that You would especially want me (us) to apply to my life (our lives). I (We) ask in the name of our Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ, Amen.

What's the Bible's Role?

Read 1 Cor 2:12 - 13, 2 Tim 3:13 - 17, and Eph 3:1-7

The Bible is the Word of God. It's as if God was were talking to us personally. It's important to realize that the languages of the original inspired writings (called autographs) are not English. The Old Testament was written in Hebrew and the New Testament was written in Greek. The English translations we use today are for convenience sake since it's impractical, in most cases, to learn Hebrew and Greek (though early Church fathers and Jewish Rabbis might simply say we're lazy). When

translating from Hebrew and Greek into English, a word to word exchange isn't always available. In essence, a translator must choose the best word (or phrase) to convey the concepts expressed in the original tongue. This isn't always a simple task.

There are several ways to accomplish this. One can concentrate on the literal word by word exchange, altering the sentence structure just enough to be readable in the new tongue. This results in a high accuracy, with somewhat "stiff" readability. The New American Standard Bible [NASB] could be considered an example of this type.

Another way to is to emphasize the concepts themselves in the original tongue, worrying less about the word for word exchange, and re-arrange the text, adding extra words to elaborate in the new tongue. This is called a "paraphrase" and is extremely readable, but may, however, interfere with some of the mufti-lateral phraseology intended in the original tongue. One also risks a greater intrusion of the translator's opinions in the text. The Amplified Bible is an example of a paraphrase.

A third way combines the first two. It tries to maintain accuracy while giving attention to the readability of the new language being translated into. In trying to lose the worst traits of the first two, you also lose some of the best traits as well (as most compromises do). The New International Version could be considered an example of this type of translation.

Which "version" of God's Word is the best to study? That's easy, the Hebrew and Greek texts. Even at that level there are different "families" of texts, copied over the ages. One has to study several to get a "glimpse" of the original autographs.

There are those who swear by the Authorized King James Version, but for the wrong reasons. Some say it's the "oldest" English version, making it the "closest" to the originals. It's first edition appeared in 1611, a full 1500+ years from the last books of the New Testament. It in itself is basically a revision of the Geneva Bible (1560) used by the Puritans and by many settlers in early America. And the version we use today, technically, isn't the 1611 edition either. It's one of the many editions (1759 Edition) that proceeded from that 1611 text.

Some even go as far to say that the 1611 text was "divinely inspired". No doubt the Holy Spirit guided the men involved who called upon Him for guidance, but, by definition and tradition, the Cannon of Scripture (The Bible) is said to be the end of Divine Revelation in it's original tongue. The whole point in the canonization process was to "weed out" heresies that were creeping in from other, so called, "inspired writings". It's contrary to beliefs held from the early church until now to say that 1600 years after the end of God's Revelation, He "changed His Mind" and divinely inspired a translation.

This isn't to say the King James Version is not a fine translation. If there is any drawback, it is it's use of 17th century English, some 380 years out of date. If one chooses to use it as one's sole study guide, one must seek out an 17th century English dictionary to define the terms of the time period. The New King James Bible is said to have updated only the out-dated words, without changing the text per say. My KJV Bible has



difficult terms "flagged" and defined in the margin, which I find invaluable.

Whichever version (or versions, I recommend using them all!) you choose, it's best to get it in a Study Bible format. This will allow you to compare the uses of words in various contexts throughout the Bible. Often times this is done by placing a tiny letter next to the word which corresponds to a verse (or verses) in the margin. One can look up these other verses to further clarify their meaning. These study bibles often provide various verse by verse commentaries as well. This can prove valuable as a source of historical background and maps to aid understanding the text. It is in this area one can find a more detailed reference to related scripture when applicable.

"The Comparative Study Bible" (Zondervan) has four versions in one Bible, KJV, NASB, NIV and The Amplified Bible (a good paraphrase). In a glance, one can compare a passage of Scripture from all four versions, a great time-saver.

To give you a taste, I've included several translations of Hebrews 1:1-3 (Note: Some of the early English letters had to be transliterated to current English letters)

The Geneva Bible (1560): 1] At sondrie times & in divers maners God spake in ye olde time to our fathers by the Prophetes: 2] In these last dayes he hathe spoken unto us by his Sonne, whome he hathe made heir of all things, by whome also he made the worldes, 3] who bring the brightnes of the glorie, and the ingraued forme of his persone, & bearing up all things by his mightie worde, hath by himself purged our sinnes and sitteth at the right hand of the maiestie in the highest places,

The King James Version (1611 text, 1769 Edition): 1] God, who at sundry times in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2] Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; 3] Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

New American Standard Bible (1971): 1] God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2] in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. 3] And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of his nature, and upholds all things by His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high;

The New International Version (1978): 1] In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, 2] but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things and through whom he made the universe. 3] The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided

purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

#### Guidelines for Interpreting God's Word

Here are some simple guidelines I use when interpreting Scripture:

- 1)- Pray to Almighty God that His Holy Spirit will guide you through your studies. Submit to God's guidance. Don't let the "spirit" of pride (or any other spirit) get in the way.
- 2)- God's Word is 100% true and accurate. Cover to cover, no exceptions.
- 3)- God comes out looking like God. If your interpretation somehow casts a less than perfect light on God, your on the wrong track.
- 4)- Use Scripture to explain Scripture. There are NO contradictions. If you've seemingly found two verses that say opposing things, better re-think your interpretation.
- 5)- Don't blindly accept an extra-Biblical source. Check out the claims, be it verbal or written in the Bible, even if it's your Pastor; I'm sure he'd love to get you in the Word any way he could!
- 6)- Study with an open mind. Let God tell you what He means (not the other way around).
- 7)- Never hold a belief without scriptural references. If you can't find it in the Bible, you shouldn't be verbalizing it.

#### Lesson #1: Questions in Review

- 1] What are the two "tools" needed to learn about God?
- 2] If I'm not smart by worldly standards, can I still understand the Bible?
- 3] Which "version" of the Bible is the "Inspired Text"?
- 4] Is it O.K. to study God's Word in several different versions?
- 5] Is it O.K. to use the "King James Version" of the Bible alone to study God's Word?
- 6] Can there be additional "Inspired" text outside the Canon of Scripture (The Bible) we have today?
- 7] Name the 7 guidelines for studying God's Word listed in this lesson.

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Lesson #2: Setting the Foundation  
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The Kingdom of Heaven's Biblical Background

There are many references to the "Kingdom (of Heaven)" K-H] in the Bible. The OT Old Testament] uses "kingdom" to describe God's rightful place as our Sovereign King.

"The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all." Psalms 103:19 [KJV]

(Note: NASB has "sovereignty" for "kingdom".)

God's Kingdom is eternal and just:

"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the scepter of thy kingdom is a right ("upright", NASB) scepter." Psalm 45:6 [KJV]

God was sovereign in the past; "In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth" Gen 1:1 [KJV], and God is sovereign as Jeremiah 18 records the LORD's word liking Himself to a potter in verse 6b:

"Behold, like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel"

Most of the OT references deal with the future. God who is in control from heaven will establish a literal, physical kingdom in which He reigns on earth in the person of Christ.

READ: Daniel 7:13 - 14 and Isaiah 9:7

Daniel goes on to proclaim the prophecy that the saints will reign in this future, earth based Kingdom.

READ: Daniel 7: 18, 22, 27

In the NT New Testament, John the Baptist and Jesus Himself announced "the Kingdom is at hand" Mat 3:2 & Mat 4:17. A large slice of Jesus' ministry on earth was teaching, via parables and illustrations, the qualities of this Kingdom and it's subjects. It's about these two, the remainder of our study will focus on.

Defining Like Terms

Matthew used the term, "Kingdom of Heaven" in 13:11. Luke in recounting the same incident, user the term "Kingdom of God" in 8:10. These terms are interchangeable. Below is a chart that lists other synonymous terms as found using a "Harmony of the Gospels" (based on A.R.Fausat's found in "The System Bible Studies" 1936), which list the duplicate accounts of the same events in the Gospels KJV]:

Kingd.	K/Heaven	K/God	Gosp/K	My Sake	Glory
	Mt 4:17	Mk 1:15			
	Mt 5:3	Lu 6:20			
	Mt 11:11	Lu 7:28			
	Mt 13:11	Mk 4:11			
		Lu 8:10			
	Mt 13:31	Mk 4:30			
	Mt 19:14	Mk 10:14			
		Lu 18:16			
	Mt 19:23	Mk 10:23			
		Lu 18:24			
	Mt 19:24	Mk 10:25			
		Lu 18:25			
		Lu 9:2	Mt 9:35		
Mt 16:28		Mk 9:1			
		Lu 9:27			
		Lu 18:29		Mt 19:29	
				Mk 10:29	
Mt 20:21					Mk 1:37

We Must Be "Reborn"

READ John 3:3 - 21

We must be reborn to see the K-H let alone enter it. John 3:3 says:

"Jesus answered and said, `Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'"

One must be reborn to even be able to be aware of the K-H. Verse 5 continues:

"Jesus answered, 'Truly, truly I say to you, unless one is born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God'".

"Born of water" possibly refers to John the Baptist's baptism of repentance (some say it refers to childbirth) and "born of the Spirit" to the baptism of Christ; that's to say the installation of the Holy Spirit in us as we turn to Christ for salvation.

Matthew quotes Christ in another discourse which emphasizes the need for "conversion" to enter the K-H in Mat 18:3:

"...`Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.'"

Conversion, like rebirth, is to signify a change in what was, to what will be. The use of a child illustrates the blind faith and trust between a child and his parents. It takes faith as a child to be thrown up into the air and caught by her dad. It's fun because the dangers associated with the process are not considered by the child, due to her faith in her father. The father provides the necessary precautions, so all that's left is for the child to enjoy the moment.

We are to take our worries and cares (not only our salvation, but those day to day troubles and needs as well) and place them on our Heavenly Father, who provides in abundance. We should follow His lead in our life, and enjoy the ride!

Back to John, verses 6-13. Christ says that flesh knows flesh, and spirit knows spirit. If we aren't born of the Spirit, we can't know spiritual things. If all we know is flesh (material things) v11], that's all we'll see in our lives. If we are born again of the Spirit, we will bear testimony and witness (talk and action) to spiritual things.

As Christ told Nicodemus in verse 12, if we can't understand the concept of rebirth, an earthly analogy, how could we expect to understand heavenly things. If anyone would know, Christ would as He, in verse 13, has descended from heaven as an eye-witness and no one has ascended to heaven to bear witness.

In verses 16-18, Jesus gives an overall view of God's plan of salvation. God sent His Son not to judge the world, but to save it. Belief in Jesus yields eternal life. If we believe, we are not judged, but unbelievers are already judged.

Light has come into the world, as found in verses 19-21, and exposed the evil deeds of men. Those who reject Christ do so because He reveals their true sin nature. They seek to destroy Christ (today, His Church) as a means to remove that exposing light. We who accept Christ come closer to the light that it might further show the action of God in our lives. What we have here is not only the plan of salvation, but a character study in the Kingdom of Heaven.

What can We Draw From These Verses?

We must be careful not to read into, nor, take away from what was said. A conservative doctrine we could extrapolate from these verses could be as such:

We, in our natural flesh are judged by God. We in our flesh are unable to conceive of spiritual things, must less the Kingdom of Heaven. We must repent of our natural ways, humble ourselves and come to Jesus with a blind trusting faith, as a child does to his parents. He saves us from judgment and gives us His Holy Spirit which allows us to see and understand heavenly things. We are to practice truth openly and bear witness to God, the architect of our salvation.

Are You Born Again?

These lessons are intended for those of us who have established a personal relationship with our Heavenly Father through Jesus. If you don't know Jesus as God, a sinless individual who personally suffered for your sins, thus allowing you to be "blameless" before God and "saved" from His judgment, all you have to do is call on His Name. Romans 10:13 and Acts 2:21 both say:

"...whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved."  
[KJV]

One MUST do so win all sincerity, without reservation...

"But from there you will seek the Lord your God, and you will find Him if you search with all your heart and all your soul." -Deu 4:29

Pray this prayer with all your heart, mind, soul and might, and receive Jesus personally into your life, and be one with the Holy Spirit, being born again:

Lord God, I'm a sinner unworthy of your favor and standing in your judgment. I believe you came to earth in your Son, Jesus Christ, to personally suffer my sin debt, paying it in full, as a gift of your love for me. Therefore, I humbly ask you to send your Holy Spirit to live in me and give me spiritual rebirth. I may not fully understand the way of living as a child of God, but, I trust in You and believe You will show me. I open my heart to Your life changing Power and ask you to save me. In the name Jesus Christ, my Lord, Amen.

If you prayed this prayer in true sincerity, welcome to the Family of God! Praise the Lord! We urge you to seek out a Bible-believing Church for baptism and membership in further obedience to God.

If you are a Christian who repaired or refreshed his/her relationship with God, Praise the Lord as well! In any case, we're ready to seek, study and enter The Kingdom of Heaven!

Lesson #2: Questions in Review

- 1) What are the two aspects of the term "Kingdom" as found in the OT?
- 2) Who will reign with Christ in His future Kingdom on earth?
- 3) Name a few "like terms" for The Kingdom of Heaven".
- 4) What must we first be in order to "see" and "enter" the "Kingdom of Heaven"?
- 5) If someone asked you how to be born again, what would be your answer?

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Lesson #3: Parable of 'The Sower'  
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The Parable:

READ: Matthew 13:3-9 Mark 4:3-8 and Luke 8:5-8

This parable seems as good as any to start. Though it doesn't name the Kingdom of Heaven, it does shed light on salvation and living the Christian life; that is, bearing fruit. We are blessed by having Jesus Himself interpret the parable and it's found in three of the four gospels.

The parable depicts 4 types of "soil" the "seeds" are sown on.

- 1]- Wayside (or path, road) = No soil
- 2]- Rocky soil = Little (shallow) soil
- 3]- Among thorns (weeds)= enough soil, but competition for space and for the nutrients
- 4]- Good soil = Having both depth and room for growth

The Explanation:

READ: Matthew 13:18-23 Mark 4:14-20 Luke 8:11-15

Jesus, in His explanation, likens each to a type of those who hear the Word of God. Each gospel writer uses words to convey particular meanings of Jesus' explanation. Note that any one conveys the "just" of it; that's to say the basic point is understood. But by combining the accounts, one can construct a more detailed picture, thus achieve a better understanding thus being wiser and become a better servant.

I've combined the three Gospel accounts of Jesus' explanation of the sower into one; carefully adding the three perspectives together while trying not to lose anything:

The sower sows the seeds of the Word of God.

Those who are liken unto the roadside are those who hear the Word, but don't understand. Satan then immediately comes and snatches away the Word from their hearts so they may not believe and be saved.

Those who are liken unto rocky places without much soil (depth) are those who hear and immediately receive the Word with joy, but it has no firm root in themselves and their beliefs endure for a time. But when affliction and persecution because of the Word and temptation arises, immediately they sin and fall away.

Those who are liken to among the thorns (weeds) are those who hear the word, but as they go on, the Word is choked by the worries of the world, the deceitfulness of riches, desires and pleasures and doesn't yield mature fruit.

Those who are liken unto the good soil are those who hear the Word, understand and accept it with a honest and true heart, holds it fast and

perseveres, and bears fruit some 30 fold, some 60 fold and some 100 fold.  
compiled from KJV, NASB and NIV]

The seed is the Word of God, and the sower is anyone spreading the Word of God; that includes you and me.

The first group hears the word (physically) but do not understand or apply it. By not understanding, we leave ourselves open for Satan to take the word from our hearts. He can succeed by confusing us with "other gospels" (false teachers); He can blind us with pride, lust and covetousness of material things, etc. Why would he do this? So we may not believe and be saved. Those of us who fall into this category are like the ground, hard, rejecting the word by not letting it germinate and grow in our hearts; and are not saved.

The second group hears and receive the Word with joy. We are saved and quite happy; that is, while the going's good. Due to the small amount of our life set aside for Christ, our "soil" for the "seed", we don't allow the seed to grow deep roots. As trials and tribulation comes into our lives, we lose faith easily and sin.

Matthew and Mark in the KJV used the word, "offended". Luke in the KJV and the whole NASB and NIV versions use "fall away". When comparing some other occurrences of the greek root word in the NT, and consulting Webster's Dictionary and a Greek Lexicon (dictionary), we may see the word offend used as an "offense against God"; that's to say sin. Luke's greek word is "falling away, to withdraw ones self from". Combining the two one can construct, "lose faith and sin".

This isn't to say we couldn't come back to God by repenting of and confessing the sin(s). Therefore, this group could describe those of us who are saved, but, fall to sin in times of stress. Our time and energy in life is wasted falling and repenting. The "growth" of our "seed" (our "season") isn't long enough to bear fruit; ended prematurely by the "frost" of sin. Our "witness" is ruined by this cycle as well.

The third group hears the Word and there is enough "soil" allocated in our lives but we allow other "seeds" to take root as well. The growth of the Word of God is stunted by the competition of the plants for space as well as nutrients in the soil. As a result, the Word brings forth incomplete fruit, "green apples" so to speak, virtually useless.

The term "weeds" (or thorns, thistles) are given to the other plants, painting a visual commentary on what God thinks of the things competing in our life for His time and resources. The weeds are listed as the "cares of this world", "deceitfulness of riches" and "desires and pleasures". Let's compile a list of things in our lives that may be applicable to these three categories.

The "cares of this world" could be food, clothing, housing, employment, health, protection, etc. Read Matthew 6:25-34 and Luke 12:22-34. Jesus says in Luke 12:29-31:

"And do not seek what you shall eat, and what you shall drink, and do not keep worrying. For all these the nations of the world eagerly seek;



but your Father knows that you need these things. But seek for His kingdom, and these things shall be added to you."

"Deceitfulness of riches" are sometimes subtle and disguised in good intent. For example, we could say, "If I work a little more, we'll have more in our family to work with." The extra time working is also extra time away from our family, and potential study and prayer time in the Word of God. Note Matthew 6:24,

"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon [money]"

"Deceitfulness in riches" ties in with "desires and pleasures". It tells us to buy into the material things of this world. New cars, electronic gadgets, collecting art, fame & fashion in music videos, jewelry, etc. not only place a drain on our money, but, takes our time away from God. Video games can evaporate hours and even something like stamp collecting could be a form of idolatry in disguise. Luke 12:33-34 says,

"Sell your possessions and give to charity; make yourselves purses which do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near, and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will be your heart also."

Even through the competition with the weeds, some fruit may be born. This fruit will be underdeveloped and in most cases, isn't of much use. In essence, we in this third group, accept the gift of salvation from Christ, but, have limited desire or time to give in His service.

The members of this last group hear and understand the importance of the Word. They not only believe it but cherish it as well. They appropriate the entire field for His use and weed out the competition to the growth of the Word. They water it in drought; drain off excess in floods. They do all they can so when the crop yields it's harvest, the fruit is only limited by the potential of the seed itself. Some thirty-fold, some sixty-fold and others even one hundred-fold.

Where Do We Fit in These Four Groups?

If we're honest, we probably fall in somewhere within group #2 and group #3. The beauty of this parable is we can not only use it as a gauge for where we are in our spiritual growth, but, also as a compass to point to the spiritual "north" from where we are. We need not resign ourselves to our "category", but take prayerful steps toward the goal of group #4, the good soil.

If our ground is a bit too shallow, we can pray for the Holy Spirit to help us break up some rocky ground to make deep new soil. If our ground is cluttered with weeds, we can pray for the Spirit to help us weed out the weeds soaking up our resources. Even if we are unsaved and hard, we can cry out to Jesus to save us and send His Holy Spirit to break ground!

We all can get to the "good soil" level, but it takes commitment and

work. The picture of "breaking rocks" and "weeding" appears hard, but, there are two things to remember:

1]- We can call upon Christ for help (Mat 11:28-30)

"Come to Me all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my load is light."

2]- We will be rewarded for our efforts (James 1:12)

"Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love Him."

We notice that no fault is given to the sower for his "aim" or the "quality" of the seed. Jesus doesn't say, "If the sower picked only fertile ground, he would have better results." Jesus also doesn't say, "If the sower would have used a better strain of seed, it would survive better." The responsibility is the "ground's" in how it reacts to the seed. The Word is the Word and should be sown to everyone, everywhere.

That's not to say we should simply throw the word in someone's face either! We are to live out the love that's found in the seed we're sowing and be an example to the growing fields. We must also take care not to "add fertilizer" and cause false growth, for when left to persevere on it's own, it will wither.

Although the Bible doesn't phrase it as such, the fourth group, the "good soil", is an example of those of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Lesson #3: Questions in Review

1]- Name the four types of soil.

2]- Who is the sower?

3]- Which of the four groups are going to heaven (Saved)?

4]- Name some "weeds" in your life.

5]- Are we confined to a group? If no, how can we move up?

6]- Should we selectively witness for Christ for better results?

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Lesson #4: Parable of 'Wedding Feast'  
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The Parable:

READ: Matthew 22:1-14 and Luke 14:16-24

Jesus sketches out a picture of coming events concerning Israel's rejection of Him and the shift to the Gentiles as the center of growth in His Church. We may be able to analogize the USA and Israel as a "chosen" (or blessed) nation rejecting Christ in arrogance, and God searching elsewhere for "guests".

The king prepared a feast, in vs. 1-4, and sends his servants out to call those invited to attend. We can see the Apostles as those servants who went out among Israel with the gospel messages of salvation.

The responses are recorded in vs. 5 & 6. Some paid no attention to the servants and went on with their daily business. Others persecuted and killed them. This clearly parallels the rejection and martyrdom of the Apostles and early Christians. America is ignoring the gospel as a nation, though we haven't killed any Christians; yet.

The king was angered and in v.7, sends his armies to kill the murderers and burn their city. In 70 A.D., after years of rejecting and persecuting the Christians, Jerusalem was utterly destroyed by Rome. Plugging in the USA for Israel forecasts an unpleasant future if we, as a nation, continue to reject Christ as sovereign ruler.

The king still determined to have a wedding feast, sent his servants out on the roads to gather all they can find, both "good and bad" to fill the wedding hall. Luke gives a more vivid rendition of this in his account of this parable in 14:21-23. The Apostles penetrated deep into the Gentile nations, bringing the gospel to many; both good and bad.

The Pharisees of Israel concentrated their efforts on living a holy "external" life, while becoming corrupt inside, where it counts. Matthew, Chapter 23 records Jesus' strong words on this hypocrisy; saying in verse 28,

"Even so you too outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness."

The king sent his invitations to both the good and bad. The good need the gospel of Jesus Christ just as much as the bad do. Also, we must not pass on opportunities to share Jesus to the "bad" as well.

There is more. Both the good and bad are gathered into the wedding hall. This leaves room for interpreting that there will be both good believers and bad believers. We see here the beginnings of a distinction between "Good Saved" and "Bad Saved".

What is a "Bad Saved Person"?

In v11, the king notices at the wedding feast one man not dressed for the wedding. He asks, "Friend, how did you get in here without wedding clothes?". The man is speechless. To understand what the man is missing, we need to understand what the "wedding garments" are. We read in Isaiah 61:10:

"I will rejoice greatly in the Lord, my soul will exult in my God; For He has clothed me with garments of salvation, He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels."

This man accepted salvation, but refused to wear the garments of it. Jesus covered him with a robe of righteousness, but he took it off. This could be considered a "carnal christian". One who is saved, but who is in fact, living for and in the flesh.

A Believer's Judgment?

READ: 1 Corinthians 3:10 - 15

The approach of the king to this garmentless man, pictures a "Believer's Judgment". 1 Corinthians 3:11 has Christ as the only foundation (foundation = salvation which is a "gift of God" and not of "works", Eph 2:8-9). Verse 12 has the believer building upon that foundation (the building process is growing spiritually, but, good works is the ultimate result of that saving faith, James 2:20). Verse 13 is another indication of a believer's judgment. Verse 14 shows rewards for those whose works pass the test. Verse 15 indicates loss for those whose works fail, but they are still saved. 2 Corinthians 5:10 states this plainly,

"For we must appear before the judgment seat of Christ that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."

What happens is found in the parable in vs 13 & 14. The king has him bound and casts him into the darkness outside, that place where there is crying and gnashing of teeth. Does this mean that God will send a "Bad Saved" person to Hell? ABSOLUTELY NOT! Let's take a look at the wedding feast.

What is the Wedding Feast?

Traditionally, it's said to be heaven, which places the "Outer Darkness" as Hell. Therefore we could be saved, but then lose our salvation due to our behavior; an apparent contradiction to the "once saved always saved" doctrine (Rom 8:38-39). We can see how some Christians develop the doctrine of losing one's salvation.

Let's define the "Wedding Feast" as "the commencement of the Millennium Kingdom (MK) and the return of Jesus Christ to rule on earth" and not Heaven. There are several references to "wedding feasts" with Christ's return, and Jesus Himself as the "Bridegroom" (Luke 12:36-37, Mat 25:1-13, John 3:29, Rev 18:23, Mat 9:15, Mar 2:19 and Luke 5:34). Rev 19:7-9 says,

"Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.' And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean: for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. And he said to me, 'Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" and he said to me, 'These are true words of God.'"

The Lamb's (the Son, in the parable) bride in the MK will be the "saints" (Translated from the Greek and Hebrew words meaning "holy ones") found in Dan 7:18, 22, 27. Verse 22 states, "Judgment will be given to the saints of the Most High". Who are these saints? The Greek/Hebrew is translated two ways, angels and believers. This parable sheds some light on this and we could further narrow the believers to "good" believers.

Isn't "Gnashing of Teeth" a Picture of Hell?

Every time the KJV uses "gnashing" it's in the phrase, "gnashing of teeth" and Every time that phrase appears it's with either "wailing" or "crying". We could draw the conclusion that this phrase conveys a singular concept, the same in all seven times it's used (Mat 8:12, 13:42, 13:50, 22:13, 24:51, 25:30 & Luke 13:28).

"Gnash" is defined by Webster, "to strike or grind (as in teeth) together". The KJV, NASB & NIV all use this phrase in their translations. Looking to the phrase in the Greek, it's listed in Thayer's Lexicon as "Extreme anguish associated with eternal punishment". However, that "association" is assumed by the context the phrase is found in. That's a bit of "circle logic". Using the context the phrase is found in to determine the meaning of the phrase when the meaning of the phrase is needed to determine the context!

Of the seven occurrences of the phrase, "gnashing of teeth", two of them have the "place" one is cast to as a "furnace of fire". In studying these parables they point to damnation. The remain five (one of which is this parable) name the "place" as "outer darkness", "with the hypocrites" or simply "thrust out". In studying these parables, they point to a much lesser fate, though still unpleasant; a fate waiting for those who are saved, but "livin' like the devil". Rather than using "gnashing of teeth" as the "pointer" to damnation, we should use "furnace of fire". "Outer darkness" (or "outside, into the darkness" NIV) points to "outside the MK ranks".

What exactly is "Outside the MK Ranks"?

The simple answer is, we don't know. We do know those that go there are "cast", "thrust" or "appointed"; not terms of positive choice but of unwilling departure. Those who go there are called "unprofitable servant" and "hypocrites", again, not terms of endearment. Last but not least we have our now familiar phrase, "weeping and gnashing of teeth", which is translated by J. B. Phillips in his paraphrase of the NT as "tears and bitter regret".

We can learn from this how some Christians support the existence of a

"purgatory"; that is a place of punishment, where, we who are saved go to suffer for wrong doings in preparation for heaven. That just isn't scriptural, however. All saved don't go there, just those who are disobedient to God in their life by not yielding "fruit" relating to their ability. The parable of the "Five Talents" (which we hope to study in detail) illustrates this perfectly (Mat 25:14-30).

How long will this banishment last? That's unknown as well. We know the MK will last for 1,000 years (Rev 20:2-6). We also know that at it's completion, God will "wipe away all tears" (Rev 21:4). So, at worst, it could last 1,000 years!

What about the "Good Saved"?

Several NT writers refer to "crowns" given by Christ for service in this life (1 Corinthians 9:25, Phil 4:1, Jam 1:12, 1 Pet 5:4, Rev 2:10 and Rev 3:11) typified by Paul writing in 2 Timothy 4:8,

"in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not to only me, but also to all who have loved His appearing."

Crowns are jewelry and could be a gift. It also signifies royalty and ruling over a domain. The Greek word has that same plurality meaning, "wreath or garland given as a prize to victors", but also, "a mark of royalty or exalted rank". We can say that with each reward of a crown comes the rank of leadership, each according to our own God given gifts developed by our obedience to God Word in our life on earth.

In verse 14 we have an interesting sentence, "For many are called, but few are chosen." Looking at the greek word for "called", it may better translated "invited". The greek word for chosen shows a "choice" or "election". We could say, the "called" refer to the original invitation, but, many were invited after the original invites were refused. We could say the "called" could be those at the feast, and few of them will be "chosen", but this seems odd since the picture of a wedding feast paints a scene of many guests. However, we can expand the "invited" to include both the original and the additional invited, and the "chosen" are those that show up to the feast "dressed" in the wedding garments.

We can further refine the intended meaning of the "called" to include all those who have heard the gospel message. The "few" would be the one who not only excepted it, but live it out. This may best portray the contrast of "many & few". This still leaves room for believers, but, don't bear fruit of their faith, and are numbered among those "outside" the MK.

In order to fully understand the implications of the end of this parable, let's re-define some terms:

The King = God the Father

Son = Christ

The Invited = Israel (However, we could include those Americans brought up in a "churched" culture, but, ultimately reject Christ)

The City = Jerusalem (Using a Israel/USA exchange, America, being a nation "under God", now in the process of rejecting God)

Those Gathered in the Streets = Gentiles (Though, with a USA parallel, the "Third World Nations" or simply traditionally non-Christian nations)

The Inquiry of the King = Believer's judgment

The Wedding Feast = The reuniting of Jesus and His saved at the start of the MK.

Let's paraphrase verses 11-14, plugging in the interpretations discussed:

And when God came to see the saved at the celebration of the reuniting of His Son with His Church, He saw a man who lived his life hypocritically, not obeying God's word in his life. He asked him, "Friend, why didn't you live for Me as you should of? The man was speechless for he knew he should of lived as the Word taught. God restrained in his movement (for he wasn't worthy to serve in a post of authority in His Kingdom), and had him confined to the outer area where those who wished they lived differently shed tears and feel bitter regret. Many hear the Gospel message, but few accept it and strive to obtain the level of obedience needed to reach the spiritual maturity and serve in high places in the Kingdom of God.

What Could We as Christians Draw from This?

- 1- We are saved by the grace of the king at his invitation. (v9)
- 2- There are "good" believers and "bad" believers. (v10)
- 3- There will be a believer's judgment prior to the commencement of the MK. (v12)
- 4- Those unworthy will be very limited in their role in the MK and will mourn. (v13)
- 5- Those worthy will fully partake in the MK. (v11)
- 6- Not all saved live their lives in obedience to God, becoming worthy. (v14)
- 7- We begin to see that the Kingdom of Heaven (and it's synonyms) quite possibly refers to the Millennium Kingdom and not to Heaven itself.

#### Lesson #4: Questions in Review

- 1- Who were represented by the original "Invited" in the parable?
- 2- Who were represented by "Those gathered in the streets" after the original invitations were refused?
- 3- What happened to the City of those who rejected the invite?
- 4- How can the United States fit into this parable and what can be drawn from it?
- 5- What are the two fates of "good" and "bad" believers and why?
- 6- What is the "Wedding Feast" a picture of?
- 7- What could be another term for the "Kingdom of Heaven"?

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Lesson #5: Parable of 'The Laborers'  
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In order to get the context of the parable, we have to read preceding verses to find from what circumstances this parable arose.

The Prelude

READ Mat 19:27-30 also Mark 10:28-31, Luke 14:26-27, Luke 18:28-30

In the verses preceding Matthew 19:27-30, Jesus rebuked a young ruler who sought the Kingdom of Heaven, but, wouldn't give up his real master, wealth, to become a true disciple.

We pick up here in v.27. Peter says to Jesus that they have given up all and asks what was in store for them? He answers in v.28:

"Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

There are a couple of key words we should take a look at, "regeneration" and "judging". Regeneration appears twice in the NT and in Titus 3:5 it refers to the regeneration of the soul by the Holy Spirit when one is saved. In Matthew 19:28 it points to the time when they will receive their resurrected bodies when Jesus takes His seat at the throne of the Millennial Kingdom. John 5:24-25 & 28-29 & 11:25, Acts 24:15 and Hebrews 6:2 talks about the resurrection. 1 Cor 15 is a lengthy discourse by Paul about the reality of the resurrection.

The word "judge" in this context seems unlikely to indicate the judging of the lost of the 12 tribes. Christ's portrayal of these positions are honorable. A better translation for "judge" in this case, and there is some support in the Greek for this, is "rule". Consider Hebrews 11:35:

"Women received back their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, in order that they might obtain a better resurrection;"

And Revelation 20:4-5:

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for one thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection."

There seems to be a correlation between our suffering for Christ in this life and the rewards given at the resurrection. In Hebrews, some were tortured and refused death in order to suffer more for Christ and obtain a "better" resurrection. In Revelation, those described "reigning" with



Christ were those who suffered extreme persecution for His sake. This regeneration Christ spoke of in v.28 takes place just prior to the reign of Christ and His co-rulers are the apostles, who rule over the 12 tribes, and others who suffered for Christ sake. This 1,000 year kingdom is the Millennium Kingdom or, as we have been seeing, the Kingdom of Heaven.

#### Our Priorities in Life

Verses 27-30, with the exception of vs.28, are recorded in Mark 10:28-31 and Luke 18:28-30, with another application in Luke 14:26. Verse 29 ties in with 28 and states that anyone suffers for Christ's sake by losing his house, family or business will be compensated many times over and inherit eternal life. Mark and Luke go as far as to say you receive compensation in this age and eternal life in the age to come (Note: in KJV time = age).

This verse should NOT be used to rationalize or justify divorce or abandonment of family or business responsibilities to "go preach". What I think we can see here is, in the event of a conflict or outright hindrance of the work of Spirit of God in our life by home, work, or even family, we have to take a stand for God's work in our life. It must come first. Let's look at Luke 14:26,

"If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brother and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple."

Looking into the Greek, the word "hate" might be better stated, "love less"; a quantitative measure of "less love than our love for Jesus". We can see why Paul says in 2 Cor 6:14,

"Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?"

As an example, if we were to enter a business partnership with an unbeliever, we may risk compromising our witness in Christ if we are included in a unethical deal, initiated by our partner. Being "yoked", as the KJV says, with a Christian should prevent that from happening. Christian partners would understand and hold to the principals set down by our Savior, and actually, could provide mutual accountability for each other.

Back to v.29. We find that we will be recompensed many times over for our sufferings in Christ; in this life, according to Mark and Luke. We should be cautioned not to assume the reward will be in likeness to what was lost. If we give up (or lose) our home, per say, for the gospel's sake, we shouldn't be waiting for a mansion to befall us. Many times the Lord's gifts are spiritual or mental healing, for example, and are priceless, thus fulfilling the "many times as much" description. However, material recompense can not be ruled out either.

The spirit of giving is not to "get" something. Luke 6:34-35 & 38 records Jesus saying,

"And if you lend to those whom you expect to receive, what credit is

that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners, in order to receive back the same amount. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men... Give and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, they will pour into your lap. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return."

What is Meant by "Inherit"

After the promise of repayment, Jesus adds "and shall inherit eternal life." We might be tempted to say that by obeying Christ we "earn" eternal life. In studying the uses of "inherit" and "inheritance", we find it as more a "gift".

The use of the term "inherit" is a parable unto itself. IF we inherit valuables from a deceased aunt, we receive them by virtue of our birth; an event we had no control over. It is true, in how we treat our aunt may influence what we receive. If we honor her and do things for her, she may bestow a greater inheritance on us. Conversely, we can lose our inheritance altogether by irresponsible behavior and disrespect. But, had we not be born into that family, we'd receive nothing.

If we accept Christ as our Savior, we are "born" into the family of God, by no works of our own (Eph 2:8-9). What we then do with our life determines our "inheritance", if any.

Can we actually influence our "inheritance"? Read Col 3:1-14 and Gal 5:18-23. Paul writes the Colossians and Galatians with examples contrasting the works of the "flesh" and of the "Spirit". In Gal 5: 21b, Paul, after listing the "deeds of the flesh" writes:

"...those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God"

Thus we can see suffering for His sake increases our "inheritance" and living lawlessly greatly curtails if not outright eradicates it.

The Parable Itself

Jesus, after telling the Apostles their pending reward and positions in the kingdom, now prepares them for the parable with v.30,

"But many who are first will be last; and last, first."

At first, we might identify this sentence with the self-sacrificing servant spirit found in Jesus' teaching (as in Mat 20:25-27), but the parable defines it differently.

READ Matthew 20:1 - 16

The Interpretation

Landowner = God

Laborers = Servants of the Gospel

Vineyard = Area of service

Standing Idle = Lost, no direction  
Hired = Saved and given spiritual direction and tasks  
Foreman = Jesus

All of the laborers are hired (saved) by God and work for Him with the promise of recompense at completion. The additional hiring, at various time throughout the day, paints a picture varying degrees of "lessor" service; be it quantity or quality.

God calls Jesus to preside over a believer's judgment and "pay the wages" due. The last hired were paid first, and when the full-day workers saw the partial workers got what they themselves were promised, they expected to get more. When they received the same rate of pay they began to grumble. God said they received in full what was agreed to and it was His right to pay the other a full wage. This test exposes their true spiritual development, and God sends them on their way.

A believer with a spiritually developed heart should rejoice at the prospects that a brother or sister in the faith, with a less fruitful life, get's a full reward. Coveting and envy are sins that leads, ultimately, to destruction. Galatians 6:4 reads,

"But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another."

Furthermore, Ephesians 5:5 states:

"for this you know with certainty, that no immoral and impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God."

We can lose our inheritance by coveting our fellow Christian's rewards and miss out in our part in the Kingdom of Heaven! This is a very strong warning to those who exult themselves for what they do for Jesus, especially by measuring their work against others.

An example of this today in our lives might be found at our place of employment. How often do we hear fellow workers murmuring and grumbling how "so & so makes more money and does less work". Knowing how hard we work, we should be glad for "so & so", giving thanks to God for blessing them. Besides, we did agree to our wages prior to employment.

The Bible doesn't speak favorably about grumblers (murmurers in the KJV). Read Mark 4:3-7, Luke 5:30 and John 6:41 for just a few of many examples.

Let's look back at vs.13-14. Notice God calls one of the grumblers, "Friend." This, as in our previous lesson dealing with Mat 22:12, indicates a saved person as unbelievers fit for Hell are hardly God's "friends." A Jewish Christian who moans about the inclusion of Gentiles who don't observe the traditions of Judaism might be an example of this "friend". Also, a Christian surprised that someone from another "denomination" get's paid in full, might be another example.

In verse 14, there is the phrase "go on your way", which could be eluding to leaving the kingdom, though, by no means as strong as found in Mat 22:13. We could speculate to varying degrees of "outside" the KH, but, at best, it's inconclusive.

In conclusion, we see the assertion of God's sovereignty in vs. 14-15. God claims the right to give to whom whatever he pleases, while satisfying the original promise agreed to with fore-knowledge of the work and pay, by the laborers. He chose, in His mercy, to pay the latecomers a full days wage, which didn't violate any agreement, but did expose the heart of those grumbling.

Those of us who are long standing and hard working servants of the Lord shouldn't look at new-comers or those struggling with sin as "lessor" Christians. Nor should we look at those who lived a long life in rebellion to God only to, by God's grace, receive an "11th hour" pardon with disdain or even jealousy because they didn't live their life as we had to live ours. Instead, we should comfort and disciple those with love and the knowledge that our God is a loving, merciful God...

"who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." 1 Timothy 2:4

What Can We Draw from This as Christians?

- 1- God's service takes precedence over property, family and vocation. (v29)
- 2- Those who suffer for Jesus' sake will be rewarded. (v29)
- 3- The Apostles will rule over the 12 tribes in the Kingdom. (28)
- 4- People will be saved at various times and called for various service. (vs.2-7)
- 5- God exercises His sovereign right to be merciful however and to whomever He pleases. (vs.8-9 & 14-15)
- 6- "First/Last Test" is a test of the sincerity of a servant who may have developed some pride as a result of extended successful service. (vs.10-13)

Lesson #5: Question in Review

- 1- Who will the twelve Apostles rule over in the Millennial Kingdom?
- 2- Does our work for Christ in this life effect our rewards in the resurrection? Explain.
- 3- Are we literally to "hate" our family? Explain.
- 4- If we lose our "inheritance" (rewards) by sinful living, will we still remain saved? Explain.
- 5- Does God have the right to reward whomever, however, as long as His promises are kept to those He promised?
- 6- What would your reaction be if you were the "full-day worker"?

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Lesson #6: Parable of 'The Wheat & the Tares'  
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We looked at a few parables that were traditionally accepted as indicators of salvation. We saw, however, they may be better defined as representing a "Believer's Judgment". Those who are judged worthy in their Christian service are rewarded with a position in the Millennium Kingdom (The Kingdom of Heaven). Let us look now at a couple of parables that point to salvation and damnation.

"The Wheat and the Tares"

In the book of Matthew, this parable comes right on the heels of "The Parable of the Sower" (Mat 13:3-23). As we saw in our studies in a previous lesson, Christ portrays those who receive the "seed" of the Word of God in four categories. One rejects it, and the other three receive it in various degrees. This parable retains the "seed" metaphor as well, but narrows the results to those who believe (the "wheat" or "the Sons of the Kingdom") and don't believe ("the tares", which are weeds or "the sons of the Evil One").

READ: Matthew 13:24 - 30 and 37 - 43

We also have the privilege of having Jesus Himself explain the parable, though not as thoroughly as "The Sower". Let us then take each section of the parable and refer to Jesus' interpretation when applicable.

The principal "players" as defined by Jesus are:

"Sower of the good seed"	=	"The Son of Man" (Jesus)
"The field"	=	(The people of) "The World"
"Good Seed" (wheat)	=	"The Sons of the Kingdom" (The Saved)
"Tares" (weeds)	=	"The Sons of the Evil One" (The Lost)
"The Enemy"	=	"The Evil One" (The Devil)
"The Harvest"	=	"End of the Age" ("World", KJV)
"The Reapers"	=	"Angels"

Read vs 24-25. At first glance, we might be tempted to conclude that Jesus and the Devil have equal powers to "create" souls. This is absolutely not true and is easy to prove.

The "world" in the parable doesn't refer to the earth (or ground), but to the people of the earth. The Greek word "gen" refers to the physical earth. The word used here is "kosmos" and has a wide range of meanings, but, in this context would mean, "inhabitants of the earth". We saw in "The Sower" how the "seeds" were sown, and in this parable, Jesus brings the Gospel to all people, and the Devils brings his lies. Those who accept the seed of the Gospel are the "wheat" (believers), and those who reject it and embrace the seeds of lawlessness from the Devil, are the "tares" (the lost or unbelievers). This will be further demonstrated when we see where they reside after the "harvest".

Verse 25 is a very interesting sentence that Jesus didn't clarify in His explanation.

"But while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed also among the wheat, and went away."

The men" are the workers of the man who sowed the seed, in other words, "Believers". Because of the lack of vigilance of the Children of God, the Evil One is able to successfully sow his seeds. We see a illustration of this in Mat 26:40-41:

"And He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "So you men could not keep watch with Me for one hour? Keep watching and praying, that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Also in Mat 24:43:

"Be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into."

The "blame" for the Devil's success is ours, as we should be more dedicated to living the Gospel as well as spreading it; thus limiting the potential receptors to the Devil's deceptions.

Notice what distinguishes the wheat from the tare. Verse 26 says the baring of grain by the wheat contrasts the lack of grain of the tares, which indicates they are tares. Consider Matthew 7:16-17:

"You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor figs from thistles, are they? Even so, every good tree bares good fruit; but the bad tree bares bad fruit."

We can also see why pagans hate those Christians who are walking with the Lord, living a good witness of our faith. It exposes their evil. The pagans wish to destroy those faithful, or at least discredit their witness, which they feel would remove the "mirror" exposing their lawlessness. Lets read John 3:20:

"For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.

Our job as Christians isn't to seek and expose the evil deeds of others. That will happen on it's own due to the nature of good and evil. We are to shine as a witness of our Heavenly Father and His works in and through us. Matthew 5:16 says:

"Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is heaven."

Back to verse 27. The slaves of the landowner notice the tares among the wheat. They approach their master and question him about the tares. How often do we Christians blame God for the evils in our life and our world, when, we often contribute to our own troubles.

"And the slaves of the landowner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you

not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?'"

What is their master's response? Does he chastise the ignorant slaves for suspecting him? Does he point out that it was their over sight that allowed the tares to be planted? Look at 28a:

"And he said to them, 'An enemy has done this!'"

God knows that we are ignorant and sinful beings and the ultimate "blame" goes to Satan. Our "blame" was bore by Jesus Christ and our "price" paid on the cross thus sparing us from the wrath of God. For God to dwell on our blame would defile the suffering and atonement of His Son, Jesus.

The slaves offer to immediately gather up the tares, but, the master says in v.29:

"'...No; lest while you are gathering up the tares, you may root up the wheat with them.'"

We notice two things in the landowners reply; 1- He won't risk damaging the growth of the wheat, and 2- He holds no regard for the tares. He allows both to grow together for the wheat's sake. It's hard for us to understand that evil is allowed to continue, for ending it abruptly may damage our spiritual growth. We must simply trust that our Heavenly Father really knows what's best, and we should do our best for Him!

The bulk of Jesus' explanation (vs 40-43) deals with this last verse of the parable (v.30). Vs 41-42 says:

"The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

In verse 41, The NASB translation says, "all stumbling blocks", the KJV, "all things that offend" and the NIV says, "everything that causes sin". We discussed in a previous lesson the KJV's use of the word "offend" to refer to "an offence to God". By combining all three translations we get a clearer picture of what is removed. Things that sin, cause sin or prevent one from not sinning are removed by the Angels as well as those who "commit lawlessness" NASB, "do iniquity" KJV", and "do evil" NIV and cast into the "furnace of fire" where there is "weeping and gnashing of teeth"! This is a sad, sobering picture of eternal damnation for the "sons of the Evil One".

Why is THIS "Gnashing of Teeth" Hell?

We discussed in a previous lesson the idea that "gnashing of teeth" wasn't a pointer to Hell, but indicated "tears of bitter regret". The "place" one went was the key indicator, and in this parable it's "the furnace of fire".

Fire, with it's accompanying adjectives, denotes Hell. Here's a table of New Testament "fires" taken from the KJV:

Everlasting Fire	Mat 18:8, 25:41
Eternal Fire	Jude 1:7
Hell Fire	Mat 18:9, Mark 9:47 & James 3:5
Furnace of Fire	Mat 13:42, 50
Unquenchable Fire	Mark 9:43-46
Fire & Brimstone	Rev 14:10, 21:8
Lake of Fire	Rev 19:20, . 20:10, 14 & 15
Fire	John 15:6, 2 Peter 3:7

This is a sharp contrast with the individuals cast into "outer darkness" in other parables. Those are Christians living in sin. Christ's blood covers all sin, even those who fall away to sin after becoming Believers (1 Cor 3:15). They do lose their "reward" while retaining salvation, and have limited service in the Millennial Kingdom (The Kingdom of Heaven). Read Galatians 5:17-21, Ephesians 5:1-5 on your own and here's Matthew 7:21:

"Not everyone that says to Me 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven."

Another indication this parable is about damnation, is the two kinds of "sons" that result; the "sons of the kingdom" and the "sons of the Evil One." The latter, ostensibly are hell-bound, while the former are saved. Does the term "sons of the kingdom" assume they will serve in this MK?

Who are the "Sons of the Kingdom"?

READ Matthew 8:5-13

Jesus was constantly asked for "signs" to prove to His own people He was from God. Jesus marveled at the faith exhibited by not only a Gentile, but a Roman centurion! The Roman believed Christ could heal his servant from afar, with but a word. This prompted Jesus to say in vs. 11-12:

"And I say to you, that many shall come from the east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of Heaven but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

This seat at the "table" is a place coveted, in some cases expected, by the Jews based on their bloodline to Abraham. In their arrogance, they never considered a gentile at the table let alone themselves (sons of the kingdom, in this case) kept out. We see the "works of faith" is an outward, tangible indicator of the heart within. In a Christian context, having "saving faith" may be enough, buy the Grace of God, for salvation, but may not be enough in itself for inclusion in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Now some may get offended at that statement, but, we should praise the Lord that merit or works ARE NOT required for salvation, or there wouldn't be ANYONE in the Kingdom, inside OR outside. We should shout Hallelujah to wash feet in Heaven, rather than burn in the depths of Hell, where we belong. When we become believers (saved) we receive the Holy Spirit (a piece of God!) to live within us, which gives us power to live a "kingdom life". Rather than bicker about words (2 Timothy 2:14, 16 & 22) we should seek God's council and live the Godly life and do the good



works we were saved to do (Ephesians 2:8-10).

The last verse, v.43, we find with all sin and stumbling blocks removed, the righteous will shine in God's Kingdom. A-men!

"He who has ears, let him hear", appears in many forms and in many places in the NT (13 times in all). It's a quote referring to Isaiah 6:9-10 as God says to Isaiah:

"And He said, 'Go, and tell this people; "Keep on listening, but do not perceive; keep on looking, but do not understand." Render the hearts of this people insensitive, their ears dull, and their eyes dim, lest they see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and return and be healed.'"

This not only applies to salvation, but, God's Word holds the answers for all our questions. We need only open our eyes to see.

"But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given him."-James 1:5

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened." -Matthew 7:7-8

Parable of the Fishing Net

READ Matthew 13:47-50

This is a mini-version of the "Parable of the Wheat & Tares", in a fishermen's context. It pictures the angels removing the wicked to a "furnace of fire", which is hell.

In both cases we see the righteous being saved from damnation and the wicked being assigned there. But Paul wrote in Romans 3:10-12, quoting from the Psalms:

"As it is written, 'There is none righteous, not even one; there is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God; All have turned aside, together they have become useless; there is none who does good, there is not even one.'"

We must rely SOLELY on the righteousness of Jesus Christ. He stood in our place and, being sinless, paid for our sins on the cross. God sees those who believe on His Son through the righteousness of His Son and are saved from damnation. He gives us His Spirit to live in us and enable us to live a Godly life and do good works, something impossible to do without Him. With Jesus as our Savior and by His Spirit we can actually seek out God, and find Him! In the OT, there was a lengthy symbolic purification process that had to take place before you were "clean", and then God spoke generally only to His prophets, we have to but call out His Name, and He hears. Praise God!

Lesson #6: Study Questions in Review

- 1- Does this parable portray the Evil One as an equal to Jesus in treating "plants"? Explain.
- 2- Who was responsible for letting the tares get planted?
- 3- Who do "the wheat" and "the tares" represent?
- 4- What distinguishes the wheat from the tares?
- 5- How does question #4 apply in the Christian life?
- 6- Does living a good Christian life have any bearing on our salvation?
- 7- Where does "the wheat" go after "harvest"? The tares? Why?

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Lesson #7a: Parable of 'The Minas & The Talents'  
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If we are to get the most out of these two parables, we should study them together.

READ: Luke 19:11 - 27 and Matthew 25: 14 - 30

You are the interpreter this time. Study the parables and any adjoining verses and record your findings. You may use the following as a guide while you study.

What were the circumstances in which these parables arose?

What are the principle characters and what do they represent?

What are the main parts of the parables?

What is the significance of each?

How can we apply these to Christian living today?

What Bible verses collaborate your interpretation?

What are the differences between the two parables?

How do these add to the meaning?

How are some ways God is glorified by your interpretation?

These are by no means the only questions to use in your studies, nor are they in an "order" of sequence. Pray to God for guidance and open your heart and mind and yer off!

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Lesson #7b: Parable of 'The Minas & The Talents'  
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If we are to get the most out of each parable, we should study them together.

READ: Luke 19:11 - 27 and Matthew 25: 14 - 30

The Luke parable arises out of Jesus' perceiving the people expected the Kingdom of God to be immediately initiated. The Matthew parable was part of a discourse dealing with being prepared for Christ's return. Let us use the Lukian parable as our basis for examination and refer to Matthew when applicable.

The Key

A certain nobleman = Jesus  
Kingdom = The Kingdom of Heaven (MK)  
Citizens = Unbelievers (unsaved)  
Slaves = Believers (saved)  
Minas & Talents = Opportunities of Service

Jesus tells, in verse 12, He will be going to "receive" His kingdom which was bestowed upon Him after He was resurrected; illustrated in Revelation 5:5-14 and declared by Jesus when He appeared to the eleven disciples found in Matthew 28:16,

"...All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth"

The nobleman gives ten slaves ten minas (a measure of money, 1 mina = about 100 denarii, one denarii = about one day's wages) and commands them to continue business in his absence until he returns. This is a clear declaration that Jesus' "slaves or bond-servants", that's to say Christians, are acting in His place until His return! That's a mighty serious, sobering revelation of responsibility to those of us who never thought much along those lines. We have to live our lives as if Jesus was living them. Thank the Lord for His Holy Spirit in us which can guide us toward that awesome goal.

In Matthew's parable Jesus adds, "each according to his own ability". God knows the limits of our abilities, being all-knowing, and doesn't expect of His servants more than they can do. The trouble is we don't know our limits and are too afraid (or too lazy) to find out. If we would give our all to God and allow Him to be our Absolute Guide, we would be surprised to see what we could do! Some service or task that seems impossible may be so because we are looking at it with the eyes of the flesh. Remember Mark 10:27,

"Looking upon them, Jesus said, 'With men it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God.'"

Verse 14 depicts the rejection of the nobleman by his citizens who actively seek to prevent him from obtaining the kingdom. Not only does the world reject Jesus as Christ & Lord, but actively works against Him.

The master comes back in verse 15 after he obtains the kingdom (In Matthew, Jesus adds, "after a long time"). He orders the slaves to give an account of their stewardship in his absence. This is the "Believer's Judgment" at the start of the Millennial Kingdom or the Kingdom of Heaven. This judgment is recorded in vs 16-19 (Mat 25:20-23). Rewards are given in relation to performance, but all productive slaves are praised as "good slaves" and in Matthew 25:21 & 23:

"His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave; you were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'"

Note that whether a slave made 5 talents or 2, he enters into the joy of his master. What a wonderful reward! That alone is enough, but there's more.

An interesting analogy, furthering the concept of "in charge of many things" appears in Luke 19:17. We've discussed in earlier lessons about the saints ruling with Christ when He returns to setup His earthly Kingdom; namely the Millennial Kingdom or the Kingdom of Heaven (Review Dan 7:18, 22 & 27). We find in Rev 20:6,

"Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years."

We can find recorded in the Scriptures that certain individuals ave a specific role in the Kingdom:

The Apostles: "And Jesus said to them, 'Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" -Mat 19:28

David: "And My servant David will be king over them, and they will have one shepherd; and will walk in My ordinances and keep My statutes, and observe them ... And David My servant shall be their prince forever" -Excerpts from Ezekiel 37:21-28

Daniel: "But as for you Daniel, go your way to the end; then you will enter into rest and rise again for your allotted portion at the end of the age." -Daniel 12:13

In the parable Luke 19:17 says:

"And he said to him, "Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, be in authority over ten cities."

How we serve our Master, Jesus Christ, in His absence on earth could very well determine our position, if any, in the Kingdom to come!

The last slave stands out in contrast to the preceding slaves. The first two "immediately" (Mat 25:16) sought to invest their master's money entrusted to them. In the judgment, they came forward in joy to give

their master what they earned trading. The third slave hid his for safe keeping. We could speculate that it could be a cover story for simple laziness; but at any rate, note his attitude in Luke 19:21,

"for I was afraid of you, because you are an exacting man; taking up what you didn't lay down, and reap what you did not sow."

He feared his master, but his fear was of a hard, demanding man who takes grain he didn't sow (we might say today, "can get blood from a stone"). He feared what his master would do if he failed in investing his master's money, so he hid it, so not to lose it. How often do we view God this way. A Judge sitting high on His throne, hurling trials and tribulations down at us in punishment for our constant failures. I think the worst thing we could do as Christians is "bury" our service so not to fail. I think our loving God would much rather see us fail in a sincere attempt at serving Him than do little or nothing and play it safe. It demonstrates great faith to boldly step out in service even in the face of sure defeat. Take the witness of the three in story of the "Fiery Furnace" in Daniel 3:17-18,

"If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up."

Not only did God save them from the furnace of fire, but, Jesus, it is alleged in retrospect, visited them in the furnace as well! We see another alluding it's better to attempt and fail than to do nothing in the message to the angel of the church of Laodicea in Rev 3:15-16,

"I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I would that you were cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot or cold, I will spit you out of My mouth."

Set out on a bold course of respectful Christ-like service. The taller the goal, the more you'll need God's help and direction and will demonstrate the true existence of God Almighty. I'm reminded of Judges 7:2,

"And the LORD said to Gideon, 'The people who are with you are too many for Me to give Midian into their hands, lest Israel become boastful, saying, "My own power has delivered me."'"

The Lord had Gideon use a mere 300 men to defeat the army of Midian, providing a powerful witness to the power of the Lord. We can be that witness today. We should search the Scriptures and seek the Lord's will in our lives to make a difference for His sake.

Back to Luke 19:21. The master said in the light of the hard view the slave had toward himself, he would judge the slave as the slave believed him to be. We see this concept in several other verses and contexts: Matthew 7:2, 6:12, 14-15, Mark 4:24, Luke 6:37. How we define God and regard others will determine how God will regard us. Not for salvation, which is a gift for all believers, but in our rewards for our Christian

service, in the Kingdom of Heaven. The master judges the slave and says if he held that hard image of himself, he should of at least put the money in the bank.

In Matthew, he judges him a "wicked and lazy slave". The Greek word in which "wicked" is translated, gives a sense of "bad work ethics", and defuses the efforts to use this to say this slave was an unbeliever and thus unsaved. As we have seen thus far in the parables we've studied, the master, landowner, nobleman, etc is God (whether Father or Son) and the slave is a saved believer even though his service is poor. Praise God for His mercy and His gift of salvation!

We see this, "worthless slave" Mat 25:30 being cast to the now familiar, yet no less unpleasant, "outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

We see in verse 24, the master commands the Mina (or Talent i Mat) to be taken away from the slave who had one and given to the slave who had many and we read in Luke 19:26,

"I tell you, that to everyone who has shall more be given, but from the one who does not have, even what he does have will be taken away."

This concept appears in several verses: Mat 13:2 & 25:29, Mark 4:25 and Luke 8:18 & 19:26. It shows a "double judgment". Those who live wrongly, lose what little they have accomplished, and those who follow the Lord's commandments get even more than they reaped walking in submission to His Words. If we don't find motivation in following in the ways of Jesus because we love Him and He saved us by bearing our sin punishment, these parables may motivate by illustrating the down side of misbehavior.

The last verse in this parable in Luke shows the fate which awaits those who reject Jesus as their "king". These are the unsaved (not slave #3). The nobleman, now king, commands they be slayed in his presence. This shows the judgement of God is just and forthright, not as by evil kings seeking to kill by their pleasure in secret. The unbelievers bring judgement on themselves by their rebellion, and reaped what they sowed. John 3:18 says,

"He who believes in Him Jesus is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

Aren't you glad you believe?! A-men!

What Can We Draw From This?

1- We are acting in the place of Jesus until He returns with His Kingdom. (Lu 12-13, Mt 14)

2- The world at large rejects and seeks to rid themselves of Jesus. (Lu 14)

3- There will be a "Believer's Judgment". (Lu 15, Mt 19)

4- Accounts and rewards given. (Lu 16-19 24-26, Mt 20-23 28-29)

5- Accounts and punishments given. (Lu 20-26, Mt 24-30)

6- Unbeliever's condemned. (Lu 27)

Lesson #7b: Question in Review

1- Who did the nobleman leave "in charge" until he comes back with his kingdom? How does that relate to Jesus and Christians?

2- Was the "fear" the wicked slave had for his master wrong? Why?

3- How did the nobleman treat the "productive slaves"?

4- How can we apply questions # 2 & 3 to us?

5 On the back of this sheet write why you should obey God will in living your life.

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Lesson #8: What's the Point of these Studies?'  
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READ: Romans 3: 9 - 31

After being freed from the Law, we are to establish, uphold and promote the precepts contained in the Law. This is not a contradiction. Before, we were measured by the Law to determine our righteousness; a measurement by which ALL fall short. Now, God measures us by the righteousness of Jesus, who, for those who believe, paid for our deficiency measured by the Law by suffering the punishment that was due us. So God, in His Holy Justice, is satisfied in pouring out His Wrath for our sins on sinless Jesus giving rise to the phrase: "He died for me, therefore, I will live for Him".

If We Couldn't Live by the Law, How Can We Now?

True, if "all" that happened when we name Christ as our Savior was forgiveness, we'd be saved, but, living no more of a Godly life than before.

READ: John 14: 16 - 17, 26      John 15: 26      John 16: 7-15

Jesus promised to send His Holy Spirit ("The Helper" NASB, "The Comforter" KJV and "The Councilor" NIV) to the disciples after He left. At Pentecost (Acts 2) that promise was fulfilled and from then on, when we become "believers", the Holy Spirit indwells us, that's to say becomes an integral part of our being and begins to sanctify us; living in the world, but not of the world. It is through God's Holy Spirit we have the power to live a "Christ-like" life being "born-again from above" with power to win over temptation and insight into the written Word of God. These were lacking in our previous "unsaved" state.

There is Yet a Third Gift of Salvation!

Jesus, in clearing off our "slate" with God the Father, opened a direct channel in prayer with the Father for all believers.

READ: John 16: 19 - 28

Praying "In Jesus' Name" is saying to our Heavenly Father that we are coming in pray via the path His Son opened up with His atonement. It's a confession to God every time we pray we accept and give credence to Jesus as our Savior. Jesus tells us in John 16:26-27,

"In that day [after His resurrection] you will ask in My Name, and I do not say to you that I will request the Father on your behalf; for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and believed that I came forth from the Father."

So in review, belief in Jesus Christ as Son of God and our Redeemer has these three results:

- 1- Pays our sin "debt" to God



- 2- Installs the Holy Spirit with power to live a Godly life
- 3- Sets up a prayer line direct to God

Why Did God Save Us?

That's actually a very good question as we most certainly didn't deserve to be. Let's look at 3 examples of many verses found in The Bible.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believe in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him." -John 3:16-17

"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." -Ephesians 2:8-10

"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do men light a lamp, and put it under the peck measure, but on the lampstand; and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." -Mat 5:14-16

We can sum it all up in this statement:

God, in His loving kindness, gave us the gift of salvation so we can be a witness of His loving kindness.

What is meant by a "Witness"?

The word "witness" has come to mean, "the sharing of the Gospel message", these days. Actually, there are several aspects to the meaning of being a witness.

It could be someone who has seen or experienced for themselves an action or event (i.e. Deut 17:6). It could be an inanimate object (as in Gen 31:48) set up to mark an event or transaction. It could be the physical evidence one uses as proof (as in Exo 22:13). In addition to "verbal testimony", the works one does bears witness of the doer (as in John 10:25).

The Disciples set the standard of Christian witness incorporating all of the fore-mentioned definitions. They were eye witnesses of Jesus. They themselves were evidence of the life changing power in Christ. Some left written evidence, marking the event. Their works and testimony became widely known, even to this day.

This should be our pattern to follow. Living out the Gospel, obeying our Lords commands while spreading the Word. Let's look at the "Great Commission" found in Matthew 28:19-20,

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to

observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

If you have a King James Bible, you'll notice in verse 19 it renders "teach all nations". The Greek word translated "teach" here is different than the word used for the "teach" in verse 20. It's better translated literally, "make a learner or disciple", hence the phrase, "make disciples of all nations" in the NASB and NIV translations. A disciple is not only a "learner", but an imitator of Their teacher as well. This is why it is imperative to live out the Gospel as well as teach it. This is further illustrated in vs 20 when Jesus commands, "teaching them to observe all that I commanded you". If we taught to observe, without observing ourselves, it would be hypocritical; a term Jesus used to describe the scribes and the Pharisees!

The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses; therefore all that they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds; for they say things and do not do them."  
-Matthew 23:21

What does all this have to do with the Kingdom of Heaven?

To observe all Jesus commanded His disciples, we have to study Jesus' teachings, many of which are about the Kingdom of Heaven found in a variety of parables throughout the Gospels.

We see there will be a Believer's Judgment in which "rewards" will be given or lost depending on our Christian service and sacrifices:

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." -2 Cor 5:10

"For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and will recompense every man according to his deeds."  
-Matthew 16:27

"each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire." -1 Cor 3:13-15

Our salvation isn't at stake, but, if we fail to "build" upon the foundation of Jesus Christ (that's to say Eph 2:10), we will lose the reward God wishes to give us for service of good works.

"For whosoever gives you a cup of water to drink because of your name as followers of Christ, truly I say to you, he shall not lose his reward." -Mark 9:41

"But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men." -Luke 6:35

"Now he who plants and he who waters is one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor." -1 Cor 3:8

"Watch yourself, that you might not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward." -2 John 1:8

"Behold, I Jesus am coming quickly, and My reward is with me, to render to every man according to what he has done." -Rev 22:12

Just what is this reward we may receive or lose? This, my friends. is the point of these studies. Our reward may be our role in the Millennial Kingdom, that kingdom that Jesus will return to establish on earth. This is the SAME kingdom referred to as the Kingdom of Heaven (as well as Kingdom of God, Christ, etc). Jesus taught in His parables the character traits of those of this kingdom to come. These must be studied and adopted for those of us who don't have these characteristics may wish we had developed them as we may find ourselves, "cast into the outer darkness, in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth"; that's to say excluded from service in this 1000 year kingdom!

#### A Word of Encouragement in Closing:

We need to search the Scriptures! They contain all the answers for a victorious Christian life. We should pray to God for enlightenment while reading. We should ask God for a humble heart to accept the things that He shows us through His Word. We should pray for His supernatural power found in His Holy Spirit to alter our lives as He prescribes to serve Him as He would have us. We must, in these times, resist the teachings of various sects and cults which offer "altered gospels" made easier and more attractive, for they're lead to failure. In fact there are those that add burdens uncalled for in the scriptures, that make them impossible and lead to frustration and failure as well. We must find a good Bible based Church to be disciplined in the Ways of our Lord Jesus Christ. We must share the Gospel we received and be living examples sharing with anyone and everyone. God Bless...

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." -Jude 1:24-25 KJV

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Appendix #1: Note to Millennialists  
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There are three different opinions on the return of Jesus Christ to earth in relation to the Millennium Kingdom:

Premillennial - Christ returns before the millennium to establish it and reign on earth for a 1000 years.

Postmillennial - The church establishes the MK and Christ returns after it exists for 1000 years.

Amillennial - There won't be a earthly MK at all. Either the MK is spiritualized and is currently in place in heaven now, and/or the MK was a conditional promise to the Jews, lost by their rejection of Jesus as Messiah.

There has been a lot of hot debate by supporters of the three. These days, "Post" is pretty much discarded as it has quite a few problems aligning itself with the Scriptures and has to do some imaginative gymnastics to fulfill prophecies. The "Pre" is mostly prevalent among Conservative Evangelical and Fundamentalist Christians, in whose school of thought, I pretty much subscribe. But the majority of Christians of varying denominations and throughout time fall into the "Amill" category.

Salvation IS NOT tied to any ONE of these three!

Some churches have made their timing on Christ's return a Statement of Faith, linked to being a "true" believer. Though it's their right to do so, I strongly disagree. There are honest Bible believing saved Christians in all three categories. There is scriptural back-up for their positions (of course, tied to their interpretations). Who's right? Probably none of them; or perhaps some ideas from all of them!

When we turn to the Five Fundamentals of the Faith, a creed of the "minimums" beliefs to be considered a "christian" written at the turn of the century, number five is, "Jesus is coming again". The timing is absent as to Pre, Post or Amill. The other 4 are specific doctrines, without room for discussion:

- 1- Jesus is God,
- 2- Jesus was virgin born sinless,
- 3- Jesus died for our sins,
- 4- Jesus rose from the dead,
- 5- Jesus is coming again

line of His return. It takes the focus off reaching the lost and helping the helpless, commands from our Lord Jesus Christ. The important thing is Jesus IS coming again. The Disciples were looking for Jesus' return in their day! 2000 years later, His return is just as expected and could be

today? Are you ready to meet Him?

How do These Studies Impact Other Millennialists?

If your not a premillennialist, please don't "throw out the baby with the bath water!" I feel we've seen the scriptures are clear and consistent about rewards given, and lost, at Christ's return, whatever the time line. Pray for guidance and search the scriptures to learn how to live the "kingdom life" today, so their may be nothing but joy at His return! May it be today! A-men!

"But of that day or hour on one knows, not even the angels in heaven, notr the Son, but the Father alone. 33 Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the appointed time is." -Mark 13:32-33

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Appendix #2: Kingdom of Heaven Concordance  
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1 Samuel 2:10 The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed.

Psalms 10:16 The LORD is King for ever and ever: the heathen are perished out of his land.

Psalms 22:28 For the kingdom is the LORD'S: and he is the governor among the nations.

Psalms 24:7 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah.

Psalms 29:10 The LORD sitteth upon the flood; yea, the LORD sitteth King for ever.

Psalms 45:6 Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.

Psalms 47:2 For the LORD most high is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth.

Psalms 47:6 Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises.

Psalms 47:7 For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding.

Psalms 48:2 Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.

Psalms 103:19 The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.

Psalms 145:11 They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; Psalms 145:12 To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom. Psalms 145:13 Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.

Isaiah 9:7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Daniel 2:44 And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

Daniel 4:3 How great are his signs! and how mighty are his wonders! his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation.

Daniel 4:34 And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting h dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation:

Daniel 6:26 I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end.

Daniel 7:14 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

Daniel 7:18 But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.

Daniel 7:22 Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.

Daniel 7:27 And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.

Zephaniah 3:15 The LORD hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast

out thine enemy: the king of Israel, even the LORD, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more.

Zechariah 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

Zechariah 14:5 And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.

Zechariah 14:9 And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.

Zechariah 14:16 And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. Zechariah 14:17 And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.

Matthew 3:2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Matthew 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Matthew 4:23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

Matthew 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 6:13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Matthew 6:10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

Matthew 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteous-

ness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Matthew 7:21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Matthew 8:11 And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 8:12 But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 9:35 And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

Matthew 10:7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Matthew 11:11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. Matthew 11:12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

Matthew 12:28 But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.

Matthew 13:11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

Matthew 13:19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

Matthew 13:24 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

Matthew 13:31 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field:

Matthew 13:33 Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

Matthew 13:38 The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one;

Matthew 13:41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;



Matthew 13:43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. Matthew 13:44 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Matthew 13:45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls:

Matthew 13:47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:

Matthew 13:52 Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.

Matthew 16:19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Matthew 16:28 Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

Matthew 18:1 At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

Matthew 18:3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 18:4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 19:12 For there are some eunuchs, which were born from thier mother's womb; and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men; and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it. Matthew 18:23 Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.

Matthew 19:14 But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 19:23 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 19:24 And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

Matthew 20:1 For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard.

Matthew 20:21 And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.

Matthew 21:5 Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.

Matthew 21:31 Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.

Matthew 21:43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

Matthew 22:2 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,

Matthew 23:13 But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

Matthew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

Matthew 25:1 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

Matthew 25:14 For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.

Matthew 25:34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

Matthew 26:29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

Mark 1:14 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, Mark 1:15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel. Mark 4:11 And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables:

Mark 4:26 And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground;

Mark 4:30 And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?

Mark 9:1 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.

Mark 9:47 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire:

Mark 10:14 But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Mark 10:15 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

Mark 10:23 And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! Mark 10:24 And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! Mark 10:25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

Mark 12:34 And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question.

Mark 14:25 Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

Mark 15:43 Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.

Luke 1:33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Luke 4:43 And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.

Luke 6:20 And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.

Luke 7:28 For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

Luke 8:1 And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him,

Luke 8:10 And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

Luke 9:2 And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.

Luke 9:11 And the people, when they knew it, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing.

Luke 9:27 But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.

Luke 9:60 Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

Luke 9:62 And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

Luke 10:9 And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

Luke 10:11 Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

Luke 11:2 And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth.

Luke 11:20 But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.

Luke 12:31 But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. Luke 12:32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Luke 13:18 Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it?

Luke 13:20 And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God?

Luke 13:28 There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. Luke 13:29 And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

Luke 14:15 And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

Luke 16:16 The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. Luke 17:20 And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Luke 17:21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

Luke 18:16 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Luke 18:17 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.

Luke 18:24 And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

Luke 18:25 For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

Luke 18:29 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake,

Luke 19:11 And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.

Luke 19:38 Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.

Luke 21:31 So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.

Luke 22:16 For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

Luke 22:18 For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

Luke 22:29 And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; Luke 22:30 That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Luke 23:42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

Luke 23:51 (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) he was of Arimathaea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God.

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

John 18:36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

Acts 1:3 To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:

Acts 1:6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

Acts 14:22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

Acts 19:8 And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.

Acts 20:25 And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.

Acts 28:23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening.

Acts 28:31 Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.

Romans 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

1 Corinthians 4:20 For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.

1 Corinthians 6:9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 1 Corinthians 6:10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

1 Corinthians 15:50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

Galatians 5:21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Ephesians 5:5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

Colossians 1:13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

Colossians 4:11 And Jesus, which is called Justus, who are of the circumcision. These only are my fellowworkers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me.

1 Thessalonians 2:13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God,

which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

1 Thessalonians 2:12 That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

2 Thessalonians 1:5 Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:

1 Timothy 1:17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Timothy 6:15 Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;

2 Timothy 4:1 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

2 Timothy 4:18 And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Hebrews 1:8 But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.

Hebrews 12:28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:

James 2:5 Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

2 Peter 1:11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Revelation 1:9 I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Revelation 12:10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

Revelation 17:14 These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.

Revelation 19:16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

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Appendix #3: New Testament Concordance on a "Believer's Judgement"  
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Matthew 5:12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Matthew 5:22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

Matthew 5:25 Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

Matthew 5:46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

Matthew 6:1 Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. 2 Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

Matthew 6:4 That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly. And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

Matthew 6:16 Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

Matthew 6:18 That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

Matthew 7:1 Judge not, that ye be not judged. 2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

Matthew 10:41 He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. 42 And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

Matthew 12:18 Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in



whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles.

Matthew 12:36 But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

Matthew 16:27 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

Matthew 19:28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Matthew 23:23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

Mark 9:41 For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.

Luke 6:23 Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

Luke 6:35 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.

Luke 6:37 Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:

Luke 11:42 But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

Luke 12:57 Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?

Luke 14:14 And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

Luke 18:8 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

Luke 19:22 And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow:

Luke 20:36 Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

Luke 22:30 That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Luke 23:41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

John 5:22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

John 5:27 And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

John 5:29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. 30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

John 7:24 Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

John 8:15 Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man. 16 And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.

John 8:26 I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.

John 8:50 And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth. 51 Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.

John 9:39 And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.

John 9:41 Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

John 11:24 Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. 25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

John 12:47 And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. 48 He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

John 16:8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

John 16:11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

Acts 1:18 Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.

Acts 4:19 But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.

Acts 10:42 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of god to be the Judge of quick and dead.

Romans 14:3 Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth; for God hath received him.

Romans 14:10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

Romans 14:12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. 13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

1 Corinthians 3:8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

1 Corinthians 3:13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

1 Corinthians 4:5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

1 Corinthians 6:2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? 3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?

1 Corinthians 9:25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

1 Corinthians 11:32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of

Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Philippians 4:1 Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.

Colossians 2:18 Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

Colossians 3:24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. 25 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.

1 Thessalonians 2:19 For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?

2 Thessalonians 1:5 Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:

1 Timothy 5:18 For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.

2 Timothy 2:5 And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.

2 Timothy 4:1 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

2 Timothy 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

Hebrews 6:1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, 2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

Hebrews 10:35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.

Hebrews 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Hebrews 11:24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; 25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; 26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

Hebrews 11:35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

Hebrews 13:4 Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

James 1:12 Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

James 2:12 So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. 13 For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

James 4:11 Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.

James 5:9 Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.

1 Peter 1:17 And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:

1 Peter 2:23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:

1 Peter 4:5 Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.

1 Peter 4:17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? 18 And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

1 Peter 5:4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

1 John 4:17 Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

2 John 1:8 Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.

Revelation 2:10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of h life.

Revelation 3:11 Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast,

that no man take thy crown.

Revelation 4:4 And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.

Revelation 4:10 The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

Revelation 6:2 And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

Revelation 11:18 And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.

Revelation 14:14 And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

Revelation 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Revelation 20:6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

Revelation 22:12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

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New Testament Concordance on "Inherit" and "Inheritance"  
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Matthew 5:5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Matthew 19:29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

Matthew 21:38 But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.

Matthew 25:34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand,

Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

Mark 10:17 And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

Mark 12:7 But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be our's.

Luke 10:25 And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

Luke 12:13 And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.

Luke 18:18 And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

Luke 20:14 But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.

Acts 20:32 And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

Acts 26:18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

1 Corinthians 6:9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

1 Corinthians 15:50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

Galatians 3:18 For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

Galatians 5:21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Ephesians 1:11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

Ephesians 1:14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

Ephesians 1:18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

Ephesians 5:5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

Colossians 1:12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

Colossians 3:24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

Hebrews 1:4 Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

Hebrews 6:12 That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Hebrews 9:15 And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

Hebrews 11:8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

Hebrews 12:17 For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

1 Peter 1:4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

1 Peter 3:9 Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

Revelation 21:7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

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