

Message #108

Luke 22:28-30

One of the most moving stories I have ever read occurred in Chicago, in December 1984. A fire broke out in a home and trapped a mother and her five children. When the firefighters finally got the fire under control, they found the mother and five children huddled in the kitchen. One of the firefighters said this: "She could have escaped with two or three of the children, but she couldn't decide who to pick. She chose to wait with all of them for the firefighters to arrive. All of them died of smoke inhalation." That mother was so loyal to all of her children that she stayed right by their side even when it meant her life.

That kind of loyalty and commitment is something most people don't understand. In fact, the Apostle Paul wrote that as we near the end of the Church Age and the Rapture by Jesus Christ, loyalty will all but disappear. Paul says there will be many in the church who will be "unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips" who will hate those who are good (II Tim. 3:3). Loyalty will disappear on the job, in the home and in the church.

Jesus Christ picked His disciples very carefully. They were not perfect by any stretch of the imagination. **They struggled and failed at times, but all but one had hearts and minds that were loyal to Him.**

It didn't matter what Jesus faced, eleven of those men were committed to the word of God and will of God. They stood right at Christ's side even in the face of great opposition. What Jesus wanted His disciples to realize is that their loyalty meant something to Him and it meant something to them. What Jesus teaches here is this:

DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST, WHO REMAIN LOYAL TO HIM EVEN WHEN FACING DIFFICULT TRIALS, WILL BE ETERNALLY COMPENSATED AND HONORED.

Those who determine to stay faithful and committed to God's word and work even in the face of opposition will be greatly compensated in eternity. Loyalty and faithfulness to God and one God has sent eventually will pay great eternal benefits.

It is amazing how many times this theme of loyalty really becomes a critical key to the blessings of God and how disloyalty brings the negative cursing of God. For example, in the case of Moses, Joshua was extremely loyal to Moses and God promoted him. On the other hand, Aaron and Miriam were not loyal to Moses, but spoke behind his back and God judged them (Ex. 12). Elisha was loyal to Elijah and God blessed Elisha. In the N.T., Timothy and Luke were loyal to Paul and God blessed them. So this is a very important theme in the program of God.

There are two simple parts to this message Christ gives to His disciples:

PART #1 – Jesus Christ evaluates His disciples. **22:28**

This is very important because by this point these disciples knew one of them was a traitor. A traitor is someone who does something hurtful and negative behind your back. In fact, they had been arguing about which of them would be the greatest disciple. Furthermore, one of them was about to be sifted by Satan (v. 31). So this evaluation was timely.

There are a couple of grammatical facts I want to point out about **verse 28**:

- 1) This evaluation occurs in Greek in the Indicative Mood, meaning this is a factual evaluation. This is not an evaluation of possibility or probability or wishful thinking, it is a fact.
- 2) The participle “stood” is perfect tense, meaning these men had stood with Jesus Christ from the moment He called them in the past, at the present and into the future.

These men had proved themselves to be very loyal to Jesus Christ. One was a traitor but eleven weren't. Now it would be well for us to remind ourselves of some facts about these men:

Fact #1 - They were from all walks of life.

These guys were not polished ministers. They were unsophisticated, uneducated and by the world's standards unimportant. They were crude and rough and had come out of some wild backgrounds (i.e. I Pet. 4:3). There wasn't anything spectacular about any one of them.

Fact #2 - They all had their lapses of faith. **9:41**

At one point Christ became so frustrated with this disciples that He called them “unbelieving and perverted” and asked “how long shall I...put up with you.”

These were not men who had a stable faith. In fact, when Christ revealed one would be a traitor, they started questioning themselves because they sensed their own lack (Luke 22:23).

Fact #3- They all struggled with grasping deep teaching. **9:45**

Their spiritual condition was so weak at times that they did not even understand what Jesus Christ was talking about when He was teaching them.

Fact #4 - They argued about who was the greatest. **9:46; 22:24**

There were moments when their pride got the best of them. There were times they got into arguments because of it.

Fact #5 - They did not completely understand the program of God. **9:54-55**

They did not grasp many things about the program of God even though Christ plainly told them.

Certainly there was nothing spectacular about these men, yet in the final analysis Christ saw them as faithful and loyal to Him and He wanted them to know they would be compensated for their faithfulness and loyalty.

It is very evident that this compensation would not be based on their perfection. It would be based on their continual commitment to and loyalty to Jesus Christ. They had some setbacks, but they were loyal to Jesus Christ. Their allegiance to Him would pay off in the end.

Jesus Christ faced tough things.

He had one on one confrontations with Satan.

He had head to head confrontations with religious leaders.

He had head to head confrontations with open rebellion and rejection and sin.

Jesus faced loneliness, poverty, mockery, rejection.

He didn't have a place He could call home and there were nights He slept in some field. His transportation was mostly by His feet. **He did not have it easy and these men stayed with Him and were loyal to Him.**

It is relatively easy in moments of success and triumph to jump on the loyalty bandwagon and enjoy the ride. But true allegiance is evidenced by faithfulness and loyalty in the midst of opposition, trouble, trials and tragedies.

Jesus never promised these guys or us an easy road. In fact, He said, "If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you" (John 15:19-19).

Paul wrote: "and indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted" (II Tim. 3:12).

John wrote: "Do not marvel, brethren, if the world hates you" (I John 3:13).

If we purpose to live a godly life and obey the word of God, we will experience trouble. When we purpose to stay faithful and loyal to Jesus Christ, God's word and God's church in the midst of the troubles, Jesus Christ takes special notice of that. He will honor one who honors Him.

One of the most familiar names to college football in this state is Bo Schembechler, who was called by his colleagues the "grand daddy" of football coaches. In the early 70's he spoke here in Kalamazoo and I went to hear him. One of the things he spoke about was a man named Elliot Uzelac. Mr. Uzelac was one of his assistant coaches to Schembechler before he became a winning coach.

Uzelac stuck by Schembechler's side in bad seasons and Schembechler said this about him: "No coach I ever had has been more faithful, loyal or dedicated no matter if we win or lose."

When it came time for WMU to hire a football coach back in 1975, they picked Elliot Uzelac in part because of his connection to Bo Schembechler. Loyalty pays off.

If we purpose to stay loyal to Jesus Christ and the word of God and the church of God, we will never regret it.

PART #2 – Jesus Christ promises to compensate His disciples. **22:29-30**

Jesus Christ is not a cheap employer. If you work for Him and remain loyal to Him, there are some large bonuses you will earn that are literally out of this world:

Reward #1 - Loyal disciples will receive a legal grant directly from Jesus Christ. **22:29**

That word "grant" is one that speaks of a legal appointment. It was used to refer to a legal decree or contract.

What Christ is saying here is because of your loyalty, I am legally granting you the right to My kingdom. Now the kingdom is a grant from God the Father to God the Son, in which He reigns over everything (Luke 1:32-33). Christ is giving His loyal disciples a legal grant to share in His kingdom reign.

This grant not only guarantees eternal residency, but also an honorable eternal position.

Reward #2 - Loyal disciples will receive intimate fellowship with Jesus Christ. **22:30a**

Richard Lenski, the Lutheran Greek scholar of the 1800's, said **verse 30** sits appositionally to **verse 29**. What that means is that here are some of the specifics of the grant.

The imagery of eating and drinking at Christ's table in the kingdom is imagery of having exclusive, intimate fellowship with THE most royal and regal Person ever.

Access to Jesus Christ, at meals in the Kingdom would mean one would share in the eternal things of the kingdom of God. Just the conversations that one would be able to hear would be amazing.

If you asked most people what ultimate dinner party would you like to attend, you would probably get a variety of answers.

- 1) Some would say I would like to be invited to the home of some great political leader.
- 2) Some would say I would like to be invited to the home of some movie star.
- 3) Some would say I would like to be invited to the home of some sports star.
- 4) Some would say I would like to be invited to the home or yacht of a business tycoon.

None of that will come close to the dinner party that will feature the Presence of Jesus Christ. Loyal disciples will get to go to that dinner party.

Reward #3 - Loyal disciples will receive prestigious positions from Jesus Christ. **22:30b**

Loyal and faithful disciples will sit on thrones. What that tells us is that they will be in recognizable leadership capacities and they will reign over others who are not in those positions.

As we have said there will be management responsibilities in eternity and faithfulness to God earns those responsibilities.

Reward #4 - Loyal disciples will receive judgment responsibilities from Jesus Christ. **22:30c**

It is specifically stated that one of the things that these loyal disciples would do would be to sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

We would understand this to mean that during the 1,000 year millennium, they would sit as judges over things specifically connected to the twelve tribes of Israel.

Certainly we would conclude that this would include land matters and law matters and legal matters.

Now the potential of reigning with Jesus Christ is not just for these Apostles. There are several passages that make it clear that faithful and loyal people of God will reign with Christ from the church age:

Paul wrote to the Corinthians: “Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world?”
(I Cor. 6:2).

Paul wrote to Timothy: “If we endure, we shall also reign with Him” (II Tim. 2:1).

John wrote to Laodicea: “He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My Throne” (Rev. 3:21).

John wrote to all the churches: “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them” (Rev. 20:4).

Loyal people of God in this N.T. age will be given prestigious positions in eternity.

There are times when believers will go through hardships and heartaches. Stay faithful; stay loyal to God and His word because you have a paycheck coming.