A man in a light blue button-down shirt and blue jeans stands in a dimly lit room, holding an open book in his left hand and gesturing with his right hand towards a table of golden vessels. The table is covered with various golden items, including a large pitcher, a candelabra, and several chalices. The background is dark, and the lighting is focused on the man and the table.

IDOLS OF THE SOUL (AND OTHER LESSONS FROM JESUS)

Lesson 9 for
May 28, 2016

THE GREATNESS OF HUMILITY

"Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

(Matthew 18:4)

What does being humble like a little child mean?

Obedience is important. We must accept God's Word before our own will.

True humble people act like they actually are. They don't try to pretend being someone else. True greatness before God comes from who we are, not what we do.



THE GREATNESS OF FORGIVENESS

"Then Peter came to Him and said, 'Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.'" (Matthew 18:21-22)



Forgiving 490 times?



Jesus taught us that we should never stop forgiving.

Forgiving those who offend us benefits both the forgiven person and us. It also restores broken relationships.

Which steps should we follow to forgive other people's offenses, according to Jesus in Matthew 18:15-17?



Talk to the person directly.



If he ignores us, bring one or two witnesses.



If he still ignores us, bring up the issue before the Church.

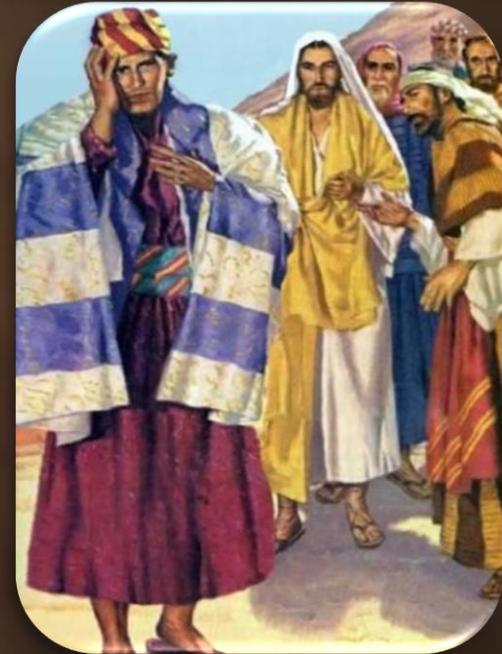
If we follow other steps to deal with offenses and mistakes of others, we may be criticizing and slandering them.

THE GREATNESS OF LEAVING THINGS BEHIND

"Jesus said to him, 'If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.'" (Matthew 19:21)

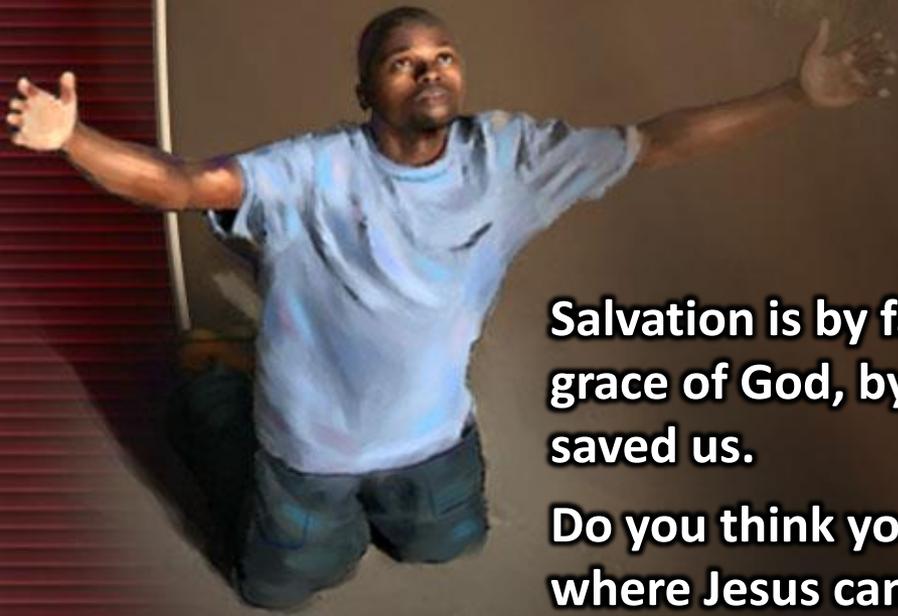
That rich young man kept the commandments zealously. Nevertheless, he felt that was not enough to be saved. He longed for salvation.

Jesus taught him that perfection can only be achieved by leaving all the "idols of the soul" behind. The young man was actually getting perfection mixed up with salvation.



Salvation is by faith. Perfection can only be achieved by the grace of God, by leaving everything behind for He who saved us.

Do you think you could have a hidden place in your heart where Jesus cannot get in while in Heaven? Open your full heart to Jesus today.



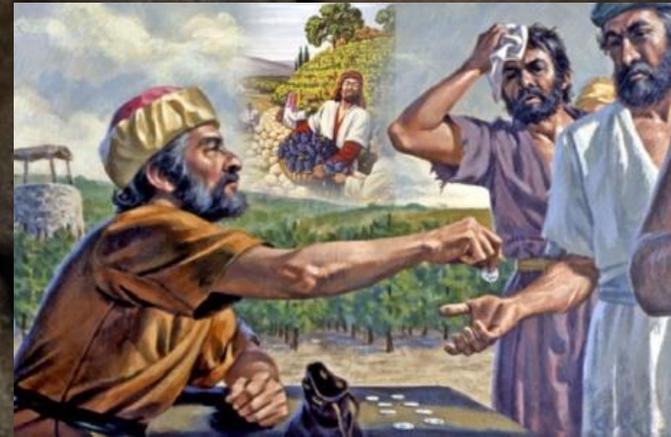
THE GREATNESS OF THE REWARD

"Then Peter answered and said to Him, 'See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?'" (Matthew 19:27)

This shouldn't be the reason we follow Jesus, but it's good we know the benefits of being His disciples: they "shall receive a hundredfold" of everything they must leave behind, "and inherit eternal life." (Matthew 19:29).

Jesus explained that in the parable of the laborers. The master arranged a wage of one denarius to the first laborers. Then, he hired other laborers during the day. When he paid the wages, everyone received the same pay, no matter how long they worked: a denarius.

The future reward is the same for all of us: We'll receive what Jesus promised (Matthew 20:1-16).



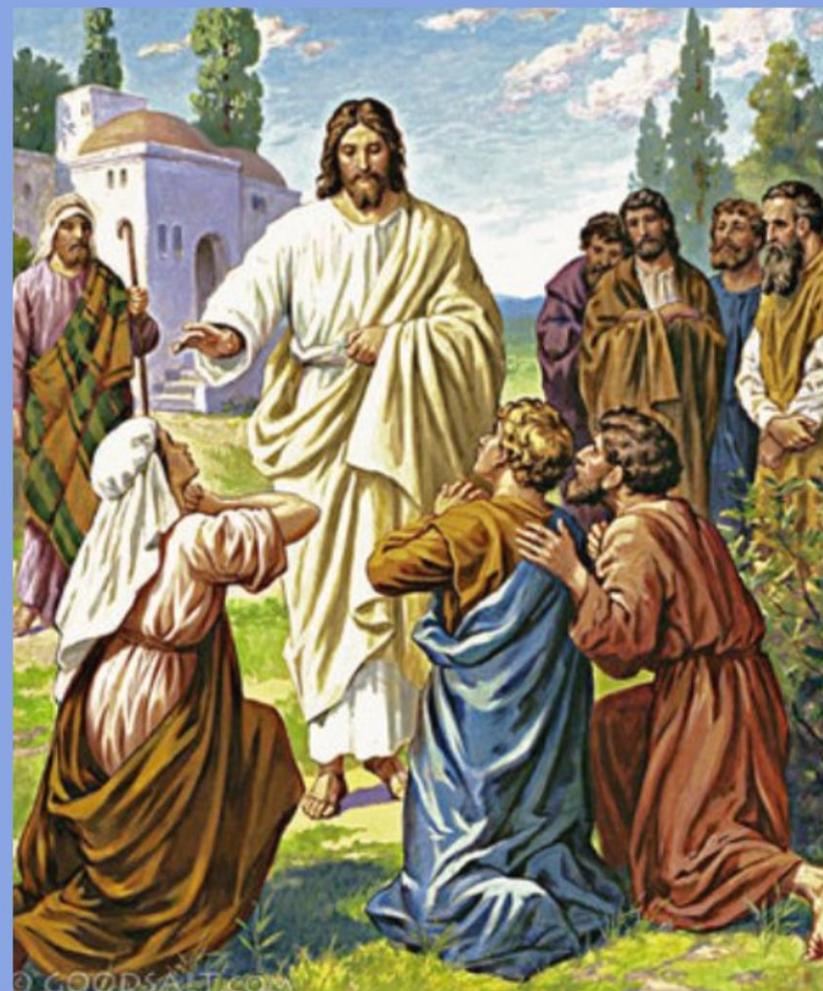
“The Lord desires us to rest in Him without a question as to our measure of reward. When Christ abides in the soul, the thought of reward is not uppermost. This is not the motive that actuates our service. It is true that in a subordinate sense we should have respect to the recompense of reward. God desires us to appreciate His promised blessings. But He would not have us eager for rewards nor feel that for every duty we must receive compensation. We should not be so anxious to gain the reward as to do what is right, irrespective of all gain. Love to God and to our fellow men should be our motive.”

E.G.W. (Christ's Object Lessons, cp. 28, pg. 398)

THE GREATNESS OF SUFFERING WITH JESUS

“So He said to them, ‘You will indeed drink My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared by My Father.’” (Matthew 20:23)

James and John had just been reprimanded because they wanted to destroy a Samaritan village (Luke 9:51-56). Then, they requested important positions in Jesus’ Kingdom (Matthew 20:20-23).



THE GREATNESS OF SUFFERING WITH JESUS

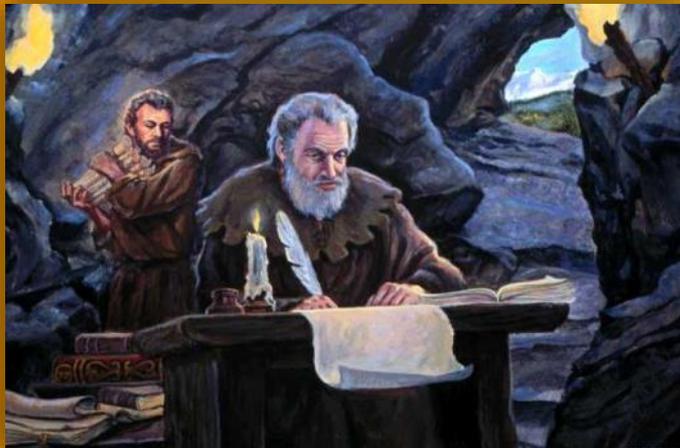
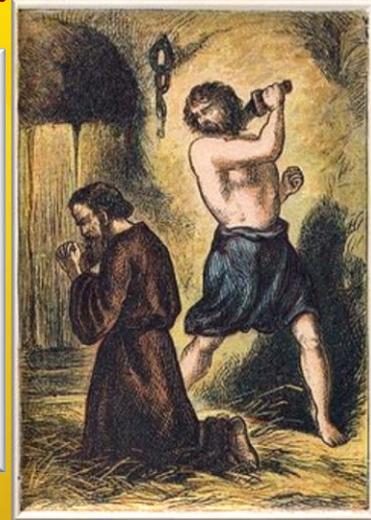


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(Matthew 20:23)

Jesus told them that there are two basic requirements to get an important position in the Kingdom:

- 1. Living Jesus' sufferings.**
- 2. Serving our brothers and sisters.**



Jesus has prepared important positions in Heaven for those who are willing to fulfill those requirements on this Earth.



“In the kingdom of God, position is not gained through favoritism. It is not earned, nor is it received through an arbitrary bestowal. It is the result of character. The crown and the throne are the tokens of a condition attained—tokens of self-conquest through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ...

The one who stands nearest to Christ will be he who has drunk most deeply of His spirit of self-sacrificing love,—love that “vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, ... seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil” (1 Corinthians 13:4, 5),—love that moves the disciple, as it moved our Lord, to give all, to live and labor and sacrifice even unto death, for the saving of humanity.”