

The Reward of Our Lord

Luke 22:28-30

February 2, 2025

Well, turn in your Bibles to Luke chapter 22. We are working our way through Jesus' final instructions to his Apostles, which he's giving just before his death. And I'd like to begin by reading this section that we're in, the whole section, starting with the institution of the Lord's Supper, which is in Luke 22:19.

Luke 22:19, and following, "And when he had taken some bread and given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' And in the same way he took the cup after they had eaten, saying that 'this cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.

“‘But behold, the hand of the one betraying me is with me on the table. For indeed, the Son of Man is going as it has been determined; but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed.’ They began to argue among themselves which one of them it might be who is going to do this thing. And there arose also a dispute among them as to which of them was regarded to be the greatest. And he said to them, ‘The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who have authority over them are called “Benefactors.”

“‘But not so with you. Rather, the one who is the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like the servant. For who is greater, the one who reclines at the table, or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines? But I am among you as the one who serves. Now you are those who have stood by me in my trials, and I grant you a kingdom, just as my Father granted one to me, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

"Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded to sift all of you like wheat, but I have prayed earnestly for you that your faith may not fail; and you, once you have returned, strengthen your brothers.' But he said to him, 'Lord, with you I am ready to go both to prison and to death!' And he said, 'I say to you, Peter, the rooster will not crow today until you have denied three times that you know me.'

"And he said to them, 'When I sent you out without money belt and bag and sandals, did you lack anything?' They said, 'Not a thing.' And he said to them, 'But now, whoever has a money belt is to take it along, likewise also a bag, and whoever has no sword should sell his garment and buy one. For I tell you that this which is written must be completed in me, "And he was numbered with the transgressors"; for that which refers to me has its completion.' And they said, 'Lord, look, here are two swords.' And he said to them, 'It is enough.'"

The next scene, as you can see in your Bibles, and maybe the heading that's written there, the next scene is Gethsemane, the Garden of Gethsemane, a place for Christ, for our Lord,

which is a place of deep agony, followed by his, the, the betrayal and the arrest of Jesus, followed by a series of hasty trials. And then he's led away to the cross. So these are the darkest of hours on the darkest night in human history, when the world formally, collectively, together rejects Christ.

Going back to the Upper Room, it's important for us to know and understand that Jesus is preparing his men for the new world that they will enter after the crucifixion. Everything's going to change. This is the turning point in human history. They don't realize that. They cannot discern that. It, they think there's going to be a continuity. They're going to enter into glory.

And yet there is something radical, deep, profound that will change on this, within hours of their meeting in the Upper Room. And so Jesus is preparing his men for this new world, for this new scene. He gives them, in this time in the upper room, a set of principled instructions that they will need to build the church, that they will practice in the church.



The fullest treatment of Jesus' instructions in the Upper Room are found in John's Gospel, chapters 13-17. So this account that we're reading in Luke's Gospel is obviously abbreviated. It's a, it's a focused account of what happened in the Upper Room. And Luke is wanting to move the narrative along more quickly from the Upper Room into the Garden of Gethsemane and to the cross. But Luke sees these specific, targeted instructions of the Lord on this night, these particular ones, as vital and thematic elements that define the ministry of the Apostles and their leadership in the early church. They're definitional to leadership in the church.

In fact, every good leader in the church, in observing these principles, understands that he is a servant to all. This is a pattern we've received from the Lord Jesus Christ, watched practiced among the Apostles in the book of Acts and in the epistles. And then we learn to practice, as well, as pastors and elders and deacons and leaders in the church. This is what we do. This is what we understand. These are seminal principles of leadership. They define the ministry of the Apostles in the early church, and they are practiced throughout the church age.

And so Luke isolates a short series of instructions which prepare us, his readers, and Theophilus, specifically.

Theophilus is his chief Benefactor, the wealthy patron that Luke addressed by name in Luke chapter 1 verse 3. Luke is preparing Theophilus and us for volume two of his works, which is called the book of Acts. Luke names Theophilus again in Acts chapter 1.

So these honed-down, abbreviated, sharp, moving-one-after-another principles are principles of leadership that we're going to see actually practiced and given shape in the book of Acts. These instructions of our Lord to his Apostles, again, principles of leadership that really cast the mold for apostolic leadership, cast the mold for all future leadership, and for all Christians, really, as we all engage in the task of making disciples.

So we come to our text for today, Luke 22:28-30. In this darkest of dark hours, in this darkest night of all nights in human history, we find a beam of glorious light shining into the upper room and dispelling and driving away all darkness, and



giving these men such encouragement and such hope to show what is the end of their highest aspirations.

Jesus has just given them something to aspire to, a kind of leadership, an ambition to pursue: to outdo one another in showing honor, and outdoing one another in showing service and serving to one another and now he shows them the end of that; Here's what's in your future, men.

It's rather remarkable to me how our Lord has so skillfully turned an argument over who's the greatest Apostle into an opportunity for this positive instruction on true greatness. He's so gentle in confronting and correcting and redirecting their ambitions. It's amazing demonstration of his leadership, his power, his charisma. I, I love listening to him. I love observing him. And I hope you do, too. And I hope you don't miss this aspect of his leadership: how we can take such a bad situation, a dispute over who's going to be the greatest and, and lead them out of that and into what's truly great, noble, virtuous, and glorious.

Again, as we said last time, it's not wrong that these men had ambitions. It's just that they had the wrong ambitions and the wrong valuation. Their thinking was bound by such limited, sinful pride. They, they preferred title over duty, fame over substance.

There's such wisdom not only in Jesus' instruction, but just in the way that he instructs his men. He so skillfully, as I said, brings them up from the depths of the lowest ambitions, pride-fueled, rivalry based, and he raises them up to the highest aspiration, and putting himself forward as an example to follow so that they can learn the secret of true blessing, which is in giving to others, which is in serving others, in living to serve others. And now it is with corrected, redirected ambition that Jesus wants his men to get a glimpse of what's ahead, of what's really in store, what's out there, what he has planned for them.

Look again at verses 28-30. ``Now you are those who have stood by me in my trials, and I grant you a kingdom just as my Father granted one to me, that you may eat and drink at my table

in my kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'" Those have to be some of the most encouraging verses in all of Scripture, as Jesus tells his Apostles what they stand to gain in his service. It's not that, Do this and we'll see what happens. He's saying, This is going to happen. This is your end. This is where the ambition I've laid before you and the aspiration I've laid before you, this is where it leads. This is what I planned for you. This is what I've given, and this will happen. You're going to be with me at my table and sitting on thrones. Amazing.

Far higher than all their small, limited, worldly ambitions, driven by pride, turning into petty rivalries. Far higher than all of that are the goals that our Lord has for us. He can see so much greater than we can see, and he gives us a vision of, of great hope and joy.

We are all subject to and inclined to because of the sin nature in us, being born in sin, being under that original sin, the effect of it in our life and in our soul and our bodies and our minds, we're all subject to being led astray again and again

by that first lie that was the lie of the Garden of Eden, namely, that God is not good, but he has a dark side, that he withholds the best from us, that he's stingy and rather grumpy.

In spite of all the evidence to the contrary, that's how we tend to be tempted to think about God, and so many fail to see how perfectly good, if you just study the creation account, how so good. He repeated it, he, "This is good." Day one, "it was good." Day two, "it was good." Comes day six and day seven, "very good." Everything's awesome.

He's magnanimously generous, providing so many things for them to enjoy and explore and discover and learn and eat and drink and companionship and duty and responsibility and good work to be engaged in. So many fail to see how good he is, how generous he is, how infinitely blessed and eternally happy God truly is. And he wants to bring us into that fellowship and communion and joy and blessedness.

And so rather than heed his warnings against the lies of Satan and the deceitfulness of sin and the utter emptiness of

sin's pleasures, many people dive in even deeper to their sin and they chase even harder after sin and sinful pleasure and sinful priority. They weary themselves as they are driven by their lusts and their ambitions, and it darkens their souls and hollows them out and spends their energy on that which does not gain, and eventually, pursuing sin defiles and degrades them in the end.

How tragic that many people remain in that condition, and even presented with the counter-evidence of the Scripture, they continue to pursue in blindness, chasing after, it's like the men who surrounded Lot in his home in Sodom and Gomorrah and wanted to come in and rape the angels. They wearied them, even after being struck blind by the angels, they wearied themselves trying to find those and do their sinful deeds.

How many are like that today? God wants us to see sin in the sinful system of this world, "the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life." He wants us to see all this as obstacles that keep us from his best. He wants us to see for ourselves the scales that they are that blind us,

that distort our vision, so that we call good evil and evil good. God would have us turn from our sin and repent and give ourselves holy and fully unto him so that he may bless us. That's what he wants.

I'm reminded in this thought of C. S. Lewis, who once preached a sermon called, *The Weight of Glory* and begins with an important point he makes. Quoting C. S. Lewis, here, he says, "If we consider the unblushing promises of reward and the staggering nature of the rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that our Lord finds our desires not too strong but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in the slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased." End quote.

That observation from C. S. Lewis, which is very well-known, for good reason, he made that more than sixty years ago, it's highly relevant to the text before us. We've seen, as our Lord has corrected the small ambitions of his Apostles, he's

redirected these men to higher heights, to greater greatness, to great glory and honor. And his aim, Jesus' aim, here, is to fulfill the true desires of their hearts, which they themselves do not yet know or understand because they are far too easily pleased.

These men, like many of us today, they were still in their infancy in Christ, still ignorant and immature and untrained in the nature of true honor, in the vision of true divine glory, in the understanding of the depth and the breadth and the height and the length and the width of our eternal reward.

And what we find in these verses, in the promise of future reward, is that our deepest longings are fully met in him, in his promise. As we'll see in this text, longings for acceptance, longings for meaningful work, for honor, for glory, all of that is met if we follow him, if we listen to him, if we do his will in his way.

We start in this section with our deepest need: to be accepted and received and even commended by our Lord, by our

Lord. First point, Jesus will receive us. If you're taking notes, just point one, very simple: Jesus will receive us. Or if you want to scratch out the, will, you just say, Jesus receives us.

Amazingly, after, I said, after correcting the selfish ambition of his disciples and redirecting their ambition to the highest aspiration of self-denying service to others, in verse 28 Jesus commends these men for their loyalty. He says, “Now you,” and it's emphatic in the Greek, “you yourselves, you are those who have stood by me in my trials.”

In Jesus' humanity, knowing the full range of emotion, it's while he is right here, feeling the deep pain of Judas Iscariot's betrayal, that he, in contrast, rejoices in the fellowship with these men, these men who are his true friends, who don't leave him, who don't abandon him. They're here.

And now, even though he's disappointed in his friends, even as he sees their petty rivalries, their selfish ambitions, their low view of things, their limited understanding, Jesus still

finds reason to rejoice in their ultimate loyalty in contrast to Judas' betrayal, because they, they stood by him in his trials.

The verb, here, translated, stood by, is an intensified form of the verb *meno*. *Meno*, which means, to abide, to remain. You find it repeated, repeated usage of that in, *the vine and the branches*, passage in John chapter 15: *Meno, meno, meno*; abide, remain, if you continue in me, if you abide in me, if you remain in me.

This verb, it attaches a prefix, a prepositional prefix, to the verb *meno*. It's *diameno*, which is an intensified form. It means, to continue or to persist. And in the tense that Jesus uses here, the perfect tense, it's emphasizing loyalty: so to remain constant with someone, to stand by someone, and especially here, stand by them in difficulty. One commentator says, "This is the idea of persistent loyalty." That's what he's talking about, persistent loyalty, perfect tense; you have stood by. So that indicates, have stood by, there was a starting point sometime in the past when they started doing this, started remaining with him, standing by him and that point continues all

the way up into the present moment. And Jesus actually points to a future of standing by him, being with him at his table in his kingdom.

This is in a participle form, also, so it points to the fact that these, this is, the, the indication here is Jesus talking about the character of these men. They are characterized by standing with him, even standing with him in trials, even standing with him in difficulty. That is to say, loyalty like this is their nature, it's their habit. It's their, their way of life. I realize that they're going to be, in very short time, it's going to be tested, exposed to be weak, weakened by sin, weakened by cowardice. But they will return, and they will remain with him for all of them except one, their deaths by martyrdom.

We've seen this kind of loyalty in these men throughout our study of Luke's Gospel, how his disciples have been faithful, loyal, standing by Jesus, serving him, not perfectly, obviously, but consistently. Going back to the very beginning, Jesus called and they came. He commanded them to follow and they followed.

Jesus sent them to preach the kingdom of God and heal the sick in Luke 9:2, and they went and did exactly that. They did it in this prescribed manner that he gave them.

Remember when Jesus fed the multitude, he supplied miraculous bread and fish, just kept pumping it out. The Twelve served as his waitstaff. They were running food back and forth from him to the hungry multitude so that the Lord's miraculous supply of food could fulfill his intent, satisfy the physical needs of all those multitudes of people, and to serve as an object lesson to illustrate the deeper spiritual needs, that he himself is the bread of life.

These men are faithful, they're reliable, they do what they're told, they're loyal to him. Were they perfect? Obviously not. Did they always get what he was saying? No, they didn't. Did they sin at times? Were they weak in their faith? Yes. Did they vacillate sometimes and disappoint him with petty arguments and selfish ambitions, rivalries? Yeah, we've seen all that, too.

But in the end, were they loyal? Did they remain? Did they continue with him? Well, they did, and that is no small thing. Loyalty counts with him. Remaining counts with him, and in any of your, I know that there are some sensitive consciences out there as regard to your own salvation and sense of assurance, and I share in that for myself. There can be times of deep doubt and questioning: Do I really belong to him?

Well, just look around and see where your feet are. Are you still with him? Do you still identify with his people? Do you still walk with people who walk with Christ? Are they counted as your family, as your closest friends? Because we are family. You understand that, we're put into one family with our Father God as the head, Jesus Christ as our eldest brother, and the Spirit conforming and shaping all of us into the character of our father in Heaven. We are family. Look around. Do you remain with people like that? There is good reason for that; it's because God has changed you. God has made you into, and he is perfecting, the image of Christ in you.

These men stood by Jesus, not just when it was easy, not just when he was admired, popular. He was the headline news. Everybody wanted to make him king and try to make him king by force. They didn't just stand by him then; they stood by him when it was hard to do so, "in my trials," he says, *peirasmōs*. This is a word that we translate depending on the context, trials or temptations. Every trial that God gives can, because of our sin, turn into a temptation. But God does not tempt us to evil. "He himself is not tempted by anything." You know, James, chapter 1, right?

Christ, these are his trials. He calls them, my trials. But at the same time, Jesus realizes that his trials were trials and then temptations for these men, that their sin nature, their weakness, their fallibility, their finiteness, their limited understanding, and vision, it would be too much for them. And in fact, sometimes it was too much for them, so that they vacillated and they fell. He's so sympathetic to that. He, being tested and yet never sinned, has become a faithful high priest to all those who do sin, all his little brothers and sisters.

So what Jesus commends in these men is not their sinlessness. Clearly not the case. They doubted, they feared, they argued, they put themselves forward. But what he commends is that they followed him, and they stayed with him, and they remained loyal to him, and they pursued obedience to him, that was their characteristic pattern, that's what they were like. Unlike Judas Iscariot, who decided to walk away for good, even though he was with him a long, long time. He faked it for a good long while. These men, though they have had their ups and downs, though they will face even darker days ahead, in the end, they stayed.

They stayed when it wasn't popular. They stayed when he was misunderstood. They stayed when he was lied about, when he was maligned. They stayed when the best and the brightest of the political and religious leaders, all the respected men in the establishment of Jewish, Jewish religion, when they warned everybody about him, they tried to warn everybody, telling everyone he did what he did. "By the power of Baalzebub, he's aligned with Satan."

They assassinated his character. They impugned his motives. They tried to align him with the devil, eventually swaying the majority in that opinion, and these disciples stayed. They held fast to the minority report because even though it was in the minority, it had the weight and the gravity of truth.

Jesus regards loyalty, that is, remaining in him, abiding with him, he regards loyalty as the chief mark of true discipleship. Matthew 10:34, on the negative side, he gives this warning, “‘Whoever denies me before men, I will also deny him before my Father who is in heaven.’” Man, that thought stings when you think about what Peter's about to do, and even all the other disciples who've scattered and abandoned, leave him behind.

The sin of denying Christ? Extremely serious, shameful in its cowardice. It's going to plunge Peter's believing heart into a bitter weeping before the night is through. This, even this, is not the unpardonable sin because Jesus restored Peter.

What a comfort to us as well, isn't it, when we cave? God will restore us, too, when we commit shameful sins, any shameful sin, through the confession and the repentance that he's provided in Christ's atonement, even for the cowardly sin of being ashamed of his name, even when we are, we soften the hard edges, when we try to hide when we should be standing forward, unpopular truths of the Bible that we should stand up and proclaim, ashamed to stand for his cause.

All those things we do and have done, and we find when Jesus restores Peter in John 21, ah, man, aren't we filled with hope? Aren't we filled with gratitude? I mentioned Matthew 10:34 about denying Christ, but the previous verse, Matthew 10:33, there's a far more positive, encouraging promise. "Everyone who confesses me before men, I will also confess him before my Father in heaven." What is this but the hope of receiving the commendation of our Lord, the approbation of Christ, which satisfies our deepest longing, that we would hear from him, "Well done, good and faithful slave; enter into the joy of your master."

Look, we all want a good reputation with others, don't we? Who doesn't want a good reputation? Maybe some sociopath, okay, but we all want a good reputation. We all want to be thought well of by others. But the opinions of men, as we know with any experience in this life, are easily won and just as easily lost.

It's true that the opinions of men should mean very little to us and that we ought not to be controlled by the fear of man. But the fact of, fact is we are concerned about our reputations. We are concerned about what people think. And does that not point to a deeper reality that's in the human condition? It's not a part of the Fall. It's a part of actually how God designed us and created us. Yes, it's been distorted by sin. Yes, it's been perverted. Yes, it's been corrupted. Yes, it leads us astray, but does it not point to a deeper longing that we have of God's good opinion of us?

This is what makes Jesus' words to his Apostles, even as he's just had to correct and redirect their ambitions, this is what makes his word so precious, "You, you yourselves, you men, you are those who have stood by me in my trials. And just as my

Father has granted me a kingdom, so I also grant you a share in my royal privileges and royal prerogatives and royal rule."

Man, to be accepted, to be received by Christ, to be approved by him as here, to be commended by the Lord Jesus Christ, that is worth more than all the world, more than all its fame, more than all its acclaim. "For what does a man profit if he gains the whole world," if he gains and maintains the world's approval and loses and forfeits himself? That is, what does it matter if he gains and maintains the world's approval and good opinion and favor, but doesn't have God's approval, doesn't have the reception and the commendation of Jesus Christ? In the end, wouldn't that be the most tragic?

God receives all those and only those who will receive his Son, who wholly trust in his finished work on the cross, who refuse to trust in any righteousness of their own since they actually count themselves as unworthy sinners. They count themselves as under God's just condemnation for their sins. God receives those who trust in the atoning work, in the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ.

This Son, Jesus Christ, he will receive all those, and only those who trust him, who believe him, who follow him in faith, who practice and pursue practicing loving obedience. All those who remain with him, who are loyal to him, who stand with him, he receives and he brings them to the father. "And so, little children," 1 John 2:28, "abide in him," remain in him, "so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink away from him at his coming," but rather we will run to him who has already received us and accepted us and approved us and commends us, fully assured that he will at that, in that day accept, receive, and commend all of us.

For all who receive him, they will remain, they will endure, they will persevere to the very end. In the end, like the Apostles, as Jesus says this to the foundation members, foundation stones of the church we stand in now, in your case sitting in, Jesus will receive you. He will say to you, "You stood by me and my trials. Well done, good and faithful slave. Enter the joy of your master."

I hope that encourages your heart today. It's encouraged mine throughout this week as I've been studying this. We need to hear this, don't we? We need to hear this. Jesus promised to accept and receive his Apostles. He commended them for standing with him in his trials, being there in his suffering. But he goes even further and he addresses their desire not just for acceptance, but for glory, for honor, for a meaningful place of honor in his kingdom, which takes us to a second point: Jesus will reward us. Jesus will reward us.

On the basis of this loyalty, which actually, God, by his Spirit, produces in us, but it's on the basis of this loyalty since his disciples have stood with him even in his trials, even when it's not popular, even when it's costly, he says in verse 29, "'and I,'" and there's a real strong connection between there of, of what they, what he commends them to be and what he's going to grant them, "'and I, I grant you a kingdom, just as my Father granted one to me.'" It's clear in the original, but what he gives is tied to the loyalty that he just commended in them. Their loyal service results in his reward.

As we said, though, their loyal service is produced in them by the Word, in the Spirit, just as any loyal service in our lives is produced by the Word and by the Spirit, right? So he produces something in us that makes us loyal, faithful, serving, giving, loving, worshipping, and then he rewards us as if we did it. That's why in the end, in that picture, that heavenly scene, the elders around the throne, they take their golden crowns and they cast them before him.

"Who am I to receive a crown? Why would you put a crown on my head? I know what I am. I know what I am. Oh, but you do, too. You crown me. Okay, so what I can do then is take this off and cast it before you because you're the reason for me. You're the reason."

The reward, here, it's beautiful. It's royal authority, from which comes royal privilege and then royal responsibility. Look at verse 30, "'I grant,'" verse 29 and 30, "'I grant you a kingdom, just as my Father granted one to me, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'"

Again, those verses are about reward for service, which Jesus rejoices to give, rejoices to share. And the reward has three components here: royal authority, royal privilege, and royal responsibility. If you've been taking notes, you can jot these down as three sub-points, A, B, and C, just to keep it straight. That's how I'm keeping it straight in my notes.

So sub-point A: Jesus rewards his loyal servants with royal authority. Jesus rewards his loyal servants with royal authority. To see this, let's, got to clarify just a few things here. First, in my translation, which is the Legacy Standard Bible, you probably see this in the, the New American Standard as well, but the verb translated, I grant, and my father granted, that translation I think, here, doesn't provide the best and clearest sense of the verb *diatithemi* that's used.

Diatithemi can refer to a grant, but when it's translated as, grant, it's more like an inheritance, dispersal of property and money and things like that after somebody has died, which is does not fit the context here. The sense of *diatithemi* in this

verse is, I assign to you, as the ESV translates it, or I appoint to you, as in the King James Version. So in verse 29, Jesus says, "'I appoint a kingdom to you just as my father appointed one to me.'" That's the better idea.

Raises a second point for clarification. The kingdom, here, the word is *basileia*. The kingdom is referring to the Father's kingdom. It's called the kingdom of God or the kingdom of Heaven, and we need to understand we're talking about this word *basileia*. In this sense, technically, formally speaking, a kingdom has to do with a place, has to do with a territory of dominion, a sphere of authority. It's a place where a ruler rules. It's his territory.

And this is how Jesus uses the same word, *basileia*, in verse 30, "'eating and drinking at my table in my kingdom.'" He's talking about a place. It's, at my table, and then, in my kingdom, in my kingdom where there are thrones set up for you. So these are lesser thrones, but it's within one kingdom, one kingdom.

Jesus is not granting to his disciples their own kingdom. You see what I'm saying? He's not talking about giving them their own place in verse 29. It's not as if they're going to be given a fiefdom that they rule over as little lords of their own territories, and they're subservient to the larger kingdom of God. Jesus is speaking of the kingdom he proclaimed, here, from the very beginning when he said "'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'" It's just one kingdom, here, the Father's kingdom, and Jesus is its anointed king.

So this brings us to a third point of clarification. If Jesus didn't give his twelve men twelve little fiefdoms of their own, well, then, what did he assign or appoint to his disciples? For that matter, what, what exactly has been assigned to him since his father has assigned one to him?

We'll take that second question first. As I said a moment ago, there's only one kingdom. It's God's kingdom, and Jesus is the anointed king of God's kingdom and what Jesus received from the Father is the authority to reign and to rule in that kingdom. That's the best way to render *basileia* in verse 29, not

as a place, a kingdom, but as the royal authority to rule in that place.

You see the distinction I'm making? Jesus is talking about the authority that he has received from his father, which his father has assigned to him, so that he can rule and reign in the kingdom of God. As he says in Matthew 28:18, "'All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth,'" that is, authority to rule the place. All of heaven and earth becomes God's kingdom, is God's kingdom.

And we could go to a number of passages to illustrate this, but just one will do just to make the point, illustrate it. After Christ raises all who are his from the dead, Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 15:24, "Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when he has abolished all rule and all authority and power." Christ will "put all his enemies under his feet." He will abolish the last enemy, which is death itself. And then he says this, "When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself also will be subjected to

the One who subjected all things to him, so that God may be all in all."

One kingdom, with Christ ruling and reigning as the King of that kingdom that he then hands back over. Once he has dominated everybody and everything and abolished any errant particle out of this universe, even death itself, he's going to hand it back over to his father, "so that God may be all in all." He's going to be ruling as the human co-regent of his father. It's his father's kingdom, and he rules as co-regent of his father's kingdom.

So in verse, Luke 22, verse 29, Jesus refers to the right and authority to rule, to exercise dominion. His father has appointed him to rule. And now he tells his Apostles, hey, you're joining me, fellas. You're going to be with me. We're going to do this together. "I assigned to you, just as he assigned to me," my father, royal authority, "that you may eat and drink at my table and my kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

It's been hinted at other places, but it's really explicit here, when Jesus is revealing his intention to rule and reign and exercise dominion and authority of his father's kingdom by means of these eleven men. They're going to be his agents, as it were, in his kingdom, imperfect as they may be at this moment. They're loyal, these eleven. And there's going to be a twelfth man, Matthias, added in Acts 1:26, as the story continues. He will replace Judas Iscariot so that the Twelve are the Twelve. These men are to be agents of his messianic rule.

So verse 29, "'I assigned to you royal authority,'" and then the subordinate clause shows the purpose of their authority, a two-fold purpose of privilege and honor: to feast with him at the royal table and to rule with him on royal thrones.

This brings us to sub-point B: Jesus rewards his loyal servants with royal privilege. Jesus rewards his loyal servants with royal privilege. Privilege extends from the royal authority that Jesus is pleased to share with his men; access to the

king's table, to feast with the king, to eat the king's food, to drink the king's wine. Royal privileges. Amazing!

By the way, these are privileges that were offered to Israel, to Israel's leadership during Jesus' ministry back in Luke 13:22, just a few chapters back if you want to look at it there. Luke 22 and following, Jesus extended the offer of the kingdom to city after city as he went around preaching the kingdom of heaven and saying, "'Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,'" sending his disciples out to do that, sending the seventy out to do that.

And then he says this in Luke 13:24. He tells all these people as he's passing from one city and village to another teaching, he says, "'Strive to enter through the narrow door, for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. "'Once the head of the house gets up and shuts the door and you begin to stand outside and knock on the door saying, "Lord, open up to us," then he will answer and say to, "then he will answer and say to you, 'I do not know where you are from.' Then you'll

begin to say, "We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets."

"'And he will say, "I tell you, I do not know where you're from. Depart from me, all you workers of unrighteousness." In that place there will be weeping, gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves being cast out. They will come from east and west, from north and south, and will recline at the table in the kingdom of God. And behold, some are last who will be first and some are first who will be last.'"

The men with whom Jesus shared his final Passover, all the Jews and the Jewish religious leadership counted all those men as the very last. They're the outcasts. They're the dregs, they're the losers. And there's a great reversal that's about to happen to see the first, last; the great, the mighty, the majority excluded from the table, and these the outcasts brought in to the table to see these eleven men included and elevated and honored and exalted and esteemed.

Jesus committed to his men, you can go back to Luke 22, but Luke 22:18 he committed to them that he would not drink of the fruit of the vine again; that is to say, he would not indulge in any of his royal privileges, not until the kingdom comes, when he can join them. And then when that kingdom comes, that's the end of, as we might put, at the end of his Nazarite vow that he took it at verse 18. It's the beginning, then, of celebration, of kingdom come, of God consummating his, his plan to sum up all things in Christ.

That's when Jesus is going to rejoin his men, and they will eat and drink together at his table in his kingdom. Just these, as they shared in his trials, so they will share in his joy as well. They, too, just like their Lord and Savior, are to endure the suffering first and then enjoy kingdom glory. They are represented, there, as Jesus speaks about Abraham and Isaac and Jacob at that table in that kingdom.

Guess who else is going to recline at that table? Gentiles from among the nations, as Jesus pointed out in Luke 13, there. They're, they're coming from the east and the west, north and

the south. They were just Gentile dogs, scum, refuse not to be included with the Jewish nation according to the way the Jews thought and yet they're outcasts no longer.

We, too, beloved, will recline with Christ. We're in that number. For all those who've been excluded or marginalized or kept out of conversations of the great; for all who've never quite fit in; for all who've been excluded from the inner circle, excluded from friendships, relationships, discussions, planning, at this table, which is the only table in the world, in all of human history, that really counts, ever, listen, there is a place with your name on it, a little name card that has your name, your fork, your spoon, your knife, plate. There's probably a dessert fork and a spoon up above. Little pallet cleanser. Drink, there. It's reserved for you. It's open to you.

So what the Lord promises to these eleven Apostles, we can see by extension, and joining other passages of Scripture together, we can see he's promised this to us as well. He invites us to join, to rejoice in the fellowship, to exalt in the relationships, to participate in the most meaningful of all

conversation, and to enjoy holy communion with him in that kingdom.

So, royal authority, first, royal privileges. Sub-point C: Jesus rewards his loyal servants with royal responsibilities, or if you prefer to shorten it, royal duties. Jesus rewards his loyal servants with royal duties. They enjoy privileges of royalty, eating and drinking, but then they leave the King's table to get to work, to exercise kingdom authority, having the power to enforce that authority. Eating and drinking at his table in his kingdom, that's the lunch break. That's every lunch break. But then it's back to work. And it's not a, it's not a, a dreadful work. It's not one you groan over. It's one you can't wait to get back to, joyful work of governing and administering his kingdom.

For these men, for the twelve Apostles, here, they'll sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. The Jews use the word throne historically and through their writing as we do the Oval Office. So, throne, largely is a metaphor that means ruling and reigning, exercising dominion. So it's governance, it's

administration, it's execution of royal authority. Christ is going to rule over the entire Jewish nation through these men, who act as his agents, first in the millennial kingdom, sitting on twelve thrones to rule over the twelve tribes of Israel.

This is a repeat, by the way, of what Jesus had already promised to them earlier back in, it's recorded back, not in Luke, but back in Matthew 19:28. It's after the incident, the account of the rich young ruler, where he departed. He loved the riches and the esteem and the fame and the glory of this present world. And so he walked away from Jesus. He forfeited all that's been promised here. He gave up on the glory of the kingdom to come because he wanted the glory of the kingdom on earth here.

Immediately after that, Peter asked Jesus, "'We've left everything and followed you.'" Peter, he left a fishing business, thriving, boats, servants, tackle. He had everything. He's all set up for life, provide for his family, be a big man in Galilee. "'We've left everything and followed you. What then will there be for us?'" Remember how Jesus answered? "'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 shall also sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'" This is the second time in Luke 22 that we're hearing this, second time they're hearing this.

So this refers to the administration of the kingdom of God, its governance over the Jewish nation in particular, but really over the whole earth during the millennial kingdom. We read in Psalm 2:7, the Father proclaiming the eternal decree to the Son. "'You are my Son, and today I have begotten you.'" And then he says this, "'Ask of me, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance, the ends of the earth, east, west, north, south, I'll give you the ends of the earth as your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron, you shall shatter them like a potter's vessel.'"

So Christ will rule not just over the Jewish nation, but over all nations, over Gentile nations, too, Revelation 12:5. At his second coming, Christ comes to judge, Revelation 19:15 says. He's going to destroy at that time all unbelievers. He's going to remove them from the earth. He's going to cast, send his

angels to cast the dragon into the abyss so that he will no longer deceive the nations until the thousand years are complete.

But during these thousand years, Christ is going to rule over the nations from his throne in Jerusalem. He will empower his people, agents of his rule, starting with these enthroned Apostles who judge the twelve tribes of Israel. He's also going to honor, at that time, Tribulation martyrs, those who died during that seven-year Tribulation period. He's going to make them also agents of his administration, give them honored places. John says in Revelation 20 verse 4, "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them." Okay, so who are, they? Who are, them? Saints martyred during the great Tribulation. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

Well, guess who else will be his agents at that time? Guess who else is going to be administrating his rule over the nations of the earth during the millennial kingdom? Church age Gentiles like you and like me. Turn over to 1 Corinthians 6, chapter 6:2-

3. And I just want to isolate those two verses because the rest of the context is kind of a rebuke from the Apostle Paul to the Corinthian church. I don't want you to, to, to hear the rebuke. I want you to see the promise.

But he's rebuking the Corinthian church in 1 Corinthians 6 because they're being so worldly minded. They're suing one another in secular courts. They're, like, taking their own, their own rivalries, their own contentions out of the church where it ought to be judged, where it ought to be dealt with, and, and they're parading it before the world, as if unbelievers can have a better judgment over our issues and our disputes than we do.

So he chides them, saying in 1 Corinthians 6:2, "Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is judged by you, are you not competent to constitute the smallest law courts? Do not know that we shall judge angels? How much more matters of this life." Such honor bestowed, these Corinthian Christians, Gentile Christians.



Listen, it's in the local church that we practice sound principles of wisdom and governance, of righteous jurisprudence, of clear judgments. We exercise discipline over our membership. All this, the governance in the local church, a sound governance, healthy church, training for future duties, training now for what we will do then.

Do not minimize your service to the church, beloved. If you think that what you do here doesn't count, oh, you're sorely mistaken. Don't let that discouraging thought have one more moment in your mind. Let your heart be satisfied that you get to do what you do to serve Christ, to serve his people, to serve his church because this is training for a future duty and responsibility that you have no idea.

Go to Revelation 2 verse 27. Revelation 2 inverse 27, Jesus tells John to write to the church in Thyatira, and there's a significant sin that needs to be rebuked in that church. But he also says to be sure and encourage the faithful, encourage those who who overcome, encourage those who continue in obedience.

Jesus says, "'To, to him who overcomes,'" in Revelation 2:27, "'I will give authority over the nations.'" Thyatira, Gentile, predominantly Gentile church, right? "'To him who overcomes, I will give authority over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron.'" Where do we get that language from? Psalm 2 verse 7, "He will, shall rule them with a rod of iron." He says, "'I will give authority over the nation as I also have received authority from my Father.'" Sound familiar? That's Luke 22:29-30. We just heard the same language. It shows up again, here in Revelation 2:27.

So, royal authority from which comes royal privilege to dine with the king at his table in his kingdom. And then royal authority which comes with royal responsibility, royal duty to engage in the work of governance in Christ's kingdom on earth. Isn't this amazing, this privilege, this responsibility?

Earlier I quoted from C. S. Lewis' well-known sermon, *The Weight of Glory*. All of you should read that. You can find a free copy online: *The Weight of Glory*. But he reminds his

readers of the promises of Scripture and he summarizes, Lewis summarizes these promises of Scripture under five main heads.

He writes, Lewis writes this, "It is promised, firstly, that we shall be with Christ. Secondly, that we shall be like him. Thirdly, with enormous wealth of imagery, that we shall have glory. Fourth, that we shall in some sense be fed or feasted or entertained. And finally, that we shall have some sort of official position in the universe, ruling cities, judging angels, being pillars of God's temple." End quote.

Beloved, those are the promises of Christ; to accept us, to receive us to himself, to bestow upon us, us, small, undeserving, sinful, inconsistent, finite little us. As David says, we cry out with him, "What is man that you're mindful of him, the Son of Man, that you care for him?" Why would you regard us? And yet he does. He's "made us a little lower than the angels and crowned him with glory and honor."

That's this. Promises of Christ to accept us, share with us his royal privileges and prerogatives, involve us in his work of

glory, honor us with his royal honor. What amazing love he's given to us. So beloved, stop making mud pies in the slum. Stop being so easily pleased. We don't deny the reality of desires and longings that we may have, but we, we must not attempt to fulfill them with the sin and the folly of this world.

God does allow us to fulfill desires for different pleasures that we have, but in a righteous way, in a lawful way. He's given us families to enjoy, all good things to enjoy: food and drink and, and work and pleasures, enjoyments, entertainments, recreations. Enjoy them to the fullest, but never for a moment try to find your satisfaction fully in them. That's idolatry. It's sinful, it's foolish, it's stupid.

We must let our God who created us, who knit us together in our mother's womb. He knows us. He's wired us together. He not only knows us now, and even in our sinful condition, he knows what we will be. We must not attempt to fulfill all these things in us, any longings, desires, in any sinful way, with the folly of this world. We've got to let our God, who knows us, who created us, who loves us, who redeemed us, who will glorify us,

we should trust him to know what's best for fulfilling all our sanctified desires. He of all beings in the universe knows best how to give perfect satisfaction and perfect contentment and perfect meaning and significant to us in him.

So beloved, as Jesus said earlier in this Gospel, “Seek his kingdom, seek his kingdom.” Make that your number one priority. “Seek his kingdom, and all these things will be added to you.” “Do not fear little flock, for your Father is well pleased to give you the kingdom.” Let's pray.

Our Father, what great and glorious things you have planned for us in your Son, Jesus Christ, as you bring all things to their fulfillment and completion, summing up all things in Christ, and Christ then giving things, all things over to you, that you may be glorified, father, in all things, for all things are from you and through you and to you.

We're caught up in that. We're not incidental to the plan, but we're, we're seminal to it, though each of us small, finite creatures before you, and yet you regard us as you regard your

own son. You'll elevate us and lift us up to his very stature and prominence.

We know where this comes from. It's from you, by your eternal decree, from your goodness, by your wisdom. It's all going to perfect and resolve, redounding to your glory and honor and praise, which we are happy to give now, but we look forward to the day when all sin and weakness is removed, and we can see fully and clearly and give all praise and honor and glory with unstained lips to you.

Thank you for your kindness to us in Christ. Thank you for your eternal goodness. Thank you for your infinite store of treasure and joy and blessing and pleasures forevermore. Let us seek that from you, and nothing small, nothing weak, nothing foolish, nothing stupid. Saturate our minds, please, with Scripture by your Spirit, that we can think rightly and pursue you with a godly ambition and an aim for the things that Christ has promised, for they are ours, "yes and amen in Christ." It's in his name we pray. Amen.