

The Poverty of Riches/ The Riches of Poverty

Scripture: Matthew 19:23–29

Code: 2344

INTRODUCTION

Matthew 19:23-29 follows the Lord's encounter with the rich young ruler, who refused eternal life because he wouldn't accept the Lord's terms. Out of that experience comes the Lord's teaching about true riches and true poverty. Proverbs 13:7 sums up the lesson of our text: "There is he that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing; there is he that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches." That is a paradoxical truth. The Bible has a lot to say about both riches and poverty. Yet there is perhaps no more direct passage than what is taught in Matthew 19:23-29 by our Lord.

I. THE POVERTY OF RICHES (vv. 23-26)

A. The Restriction for the Rich (vv. 23-24)

1. The decree of difficulty (v. 23)

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you that a rich man shall with difficulty enter into the kingdom of heaven."

The term "kingdom of heaven" is synonymous with the term "kingdom of God" (v. 24). They both refer to the sphere of God's gracious rule. They are both synonyms for eternal life and salvation. In Matthew 19:16 the young man said, "What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" In verse 23 Jesus refers to eternal life as entering "into the kingdom of heaven."

Our Lord is making a clear statement: it's extremely difficult for rich people to be saved. The young man was not willing to forsake all and follow the Lord. Jesus had reiterated the importance of being willing many times. In Matthew 10:38 He said, "He that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me" (cf. Matt. 16:24). Mark 10:21 tells us that Jesus said to the rich young ruler, "Sell whatever thou hast ... take up the cross, and follow me." To take up one's cross is to be willing to die. You've got to be willing to abandon everything, even your own life, if Jesus requires it. A person must strip himself to go through the narrow gate that leads to salvation (Matt. 7:13-14). The young man was not willing to admit his sinfulness or to say no to all that he possessed. The price of salvation was too high for him.

Jesus draws this conclusion: "Verily, I say unto you that a rich man shall with difficulty [Gk. duskolos] enter into the kingdom of God" (v. 23). That Greek word is only used three times in the New Testament, and each time in a gospel account of this passage (cf. Mark 10:23, Luke 18:24). It is difficult for a rich man to enter salvation, but how difficult is it? The answer comes in the next verse.

2. The degree of difficulty (v. 24)

"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."

a

) The phrase interpreted

How difficult is it to stick a camel through the eye of a needle? It's so difficult, it's impossible! You can't put a camel through the eye of a needle.

(1) The proper interpretation

Where did that phrase come from? It was a colloquial expression. The Talmud alludes to the Babylonian saying of putting an elephant through the eye of a needle (Temurah 21a). It was used to express something that was impossible. Since there were no elephants in Palestine, the Lord simply substituted a camel for an elephant to make the phrase relevant. So how difficult is it for rich people to get saved? It's impossible.

(2) The improper interpretations

It is important to understand that the phrase means just what it says: salvation for a rich man is just as impossible as sticking a camel through the eye of a needle. Yet it is amazing what people will do to avoid that interpretation. They want to make it difficult, but not impossible.

(a) A needle gate

Some claim that the needle refers to a gate in one of the walls of Jerusalem. It was supposedly so small that when anyone wanted to take his camel through it, he had to unload everything off the camel's back, make him kneel down on all fours, and force him through this needle gate. There are several problems with this view. First, verse 24 doesn't say "needle gate"; it says "needle." Second, we know that the phrase was a colloquialism that was extant at the time our Lord used it. And finally, we have no proof that there ever was such a gate in Jerusalem! Even if there were, the people weren't stupid: they wouldn't jam their camels through a tiny gate when a huge gate was only fifty feet further up the road.

(b) A scribal error

The Greek word for camel is kamelos while the Greek word for the cable that was used to tie up a ship is kamilos—a difference of one vowel. But that interpretation doesn't help because you can't stick a cable through a needle either. Plus, we can't assume that every scribe made a mistake. If we start to do that with the Bible, you could make every passage mean whatever you wanted.

(c) A molecular change

Some have suggested that if you could line up the molecules in a camel, you could shoot him through the eye of a needle. One individual even suggested that if you reduced a camel to liquid, you could put him through the eye of a needle with an eyedropper!

b) The principles identified

It is not difficult to enter the Kingdom; it is impossible. That's what our Lord had in mind in Matthew 7:14 when He said, "Narrow is the gate, and hard is the way, which leadeth into life, and few there be that find it." In Matthew 11:12 He said, "The violent take [the Kingdom] by force." They fight to get in.

It is impossible to be saved when you come for salvation on human terms. Jesus is saying, "I demand the impossible." No one can get saved on their own terms. In one fell swoop, Jesus eliminates all works-righteousness systems. Many Christians say, "Salvation is easy. Just believe." The young ruler was ready to do that, but the Lord put up impassable barriers. When the man refused to accept Jesus' terms, salvation became impossible for him. He had no power to do it himself. Jeremiah 13:23

says, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." Man can't be saved by himself. No amount of works, religion, activity, desire, or willfulness will work—it's impossible.

The impossibility of salvation is crystallized in the case of rich people for three reasons.

(1) Rich people have false security

That's why they can't save themselves. They don't need God because they've got all the resources they think they will ever need. There is no need for them to depend on God.

The city of Laodicea was one of the wealthiest of all the cities in Asia Minor. In A.D. 60 it was flattened by an earthquake. The Roman government commissioned several emissaries to go to Laodicea to help finance the rebuilding of the city. But the rulers of Laodicea refused their help. The people of Laodicea raised their entire city out of the ashes without taking a dime from the Roman government, which swelled their pride. That attitude spilled over to the church, which became the dead Laodicean church (Rev. 3:14-19). The Lord told them, "Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (v. 17).

Instructions for the Rich

Rich people tend to feel smugly complacent. Paul wrote to Timothy under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit about how to minister to the rich (1 Tim. 6:17-19).

1. Trust in God

He said, "Charge them that are rich in this age, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy" (v. 17). It is the particular problem of rich people to trust in their uncertain riches and think they don't need God—they think they can buy anything they need.

2. Give to the needy

The apostle Paul said rich people are to be told to "do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to share" (v. 18). Why should a rich man be told those things? Because if he's not willing to submit everything to the lordship of Christ, the gospel is meaningless to him. When you present the gospel to a rich man, don't say, "Wouldn't you like to ask Jesus in your heart? We'll worry about all the other stuff later." That isn't a biblical approach. If a rich man comes to you, the best question you can ask him is: "If the Lord Jesus wants every dime you have, will you give it to Him?" If he isn't willing, you can end the discussion there.

3. Obtain eternal life

If rich people will do good and be ready to share what they have with others, they'll lay "up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (v. 19). The Greek word used in verse 19 is not aionios, which means "eternal life" but ontos, which means "real life." Life does not consist in the abundance of the things a man possesses (Luke 12:15). But the rich think real life is in money.

The rich man doesn't get saved by giving away his money, but doing so demonstrates that he is more concerned with the lordship of Christ than with holding onto his resources. When anyone comes to Christ, he must come on Christ's terms: forsaking all and following Him. That doesn't mean He'll take away all you have. He may give you more than you can handle, like He did for Abraham. Or, like Job, He may give you back far more than He ever took from you. But the issue is not whether He will or won't, but whether you're willing to let Him do it.

(2) Rich people are bound to this world

(a) The contentment of the godly

First Timothy 6:6 says, "Godliness with contentment is great gain." Have you ever met a totally contented person? Most people in our materialistic society aren't content because they want something they don't have. Paul continued, "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content" (vv. 7-8).

(b) The captivity of the rich

Paul said, "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil, which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (vv. 9-10). For rich people, everything revolves around this world: how much they have in the bank, how many possessions they have, or how many cars they have. Jesus said, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt. 6:21). If all a man cares about is in this world, then he has no thought for the heavenly realm. When he is confronted with the gospel, and learns that Christ wants him to subject all his money and possessions to His lordship, he won't give them up.

i) Choked by riches

Jesus said that seed on the thorny ground represented "the cares of this age, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful" (Mark 4:19). There are people who hear the gospel and say, "Oh, isn't that wonderful?" They respond, but soon they are deceived by their substantial riches and they abandon the gospel. The concern people have for things in this world needs to be dealt with first before the gospel will ever be fruitful in their lives. It is impossible for rich people to be saved because they are bound to this world in their humanness. They live and die for their possessions and trust in them as their security.

ii) Captured by folly

Luke 12:16-21 is a parable about a big fool: "The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no place to bestow my crops? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease. Eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

Don't stockpile for some unknown future. You are a steward of whatever God has given you. Use it for the advance of His Kingdom and the glory of His name. Lay up eternal treasure right now. I can't get too involved in the future when I see immediate needs.

Rich people are bound to the world because their only hope is in their money.

(3) Rich people are selfish

I know a man who works for a multimillionaire whose holdings total about 300 million dollars. He said all the millionaires he has worked for have three things in common: they are capable of being richer,

they are eccentric, and they are extremely self-centered. The rich indulge themselves. Luke 16:19-31 is the story about a rich man and a beggar named Lazarus. The rich man fared sumptuously every day while Lazarus laid in the gutter begging for crumbs from the rich man's table. The dogs were even licking his sores as he lay in the gutter. What kind of a man would allow that to happen? The rich man ended up in hell while the beggar was in Abraham's bosom being comforted. The world is full of people who indulge themselves. It's impossible for rich people to be saved because they can't overcome their humanness. And their evil nature manifests itself in the love of money and possessions.

Rabbinical Teaching on Riches

Jesus shocked the rich young ruler, and also the disciples, when He said it was impossible for the rich to be saved. The rich young ruler had been taught differently. He no doubt had been instructed from rabbinical Judaism, and perhaps was even the ruler of a synagogue. The rabbis taught that one should never give away more than one fifth of what he possessed. Doing so was thought to be unlawful and sinful. That law allowed them to appear holy and selfish at the same time. If they could continue to pile up riches and call it the blessing of God, and then give away one little part of it, they thought they could buy their way into the Kingdom. They believed that the larger the fifth they gave away, the more they were assured of purchasing salvation.

Note the following quotations from the Apocrypha: Tobit 12:8 says, "It is better to give alms than to store up gold; for almsgiving saves one from death and expiates every sin" and Sirach 3:29 says, "Alms atone for sins." The Talmud says that almsgiving is more excellent than all offerings and is equal to the whole law and will deliver from the condemnation of hell and make one perfectly righteous (cf. Baba Bathra 10a). So, the more money one had, the more he could give; and the more he could give, the more he seemed assured of purchasing his salvation, and the higher his status became in the Kingdom. But Jesus says that the richer you are, the harder salvation becomes. That was a shocking statement to those who thought they could buy their way into the Kingdom.

B. The Reaction of the Disciples (v. 25)

1. Their exclamation (v. 25a)

"When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed"

That means they were dumbfounded, thinking, Is He saying rich people can't enter the Kingdom? Christ's teaching was contrary to everything they had been taught from tradition. The disciples thought rich people could atone for everything. They could fill the thirteen trumpet-shaped receptacles that lined the court of the women in the Temple. But Jesus is saying by giving alms it is impossible to enter the Kingdom. No wonder James said, "Come now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you" (James 5:1).

2. Their question (v. 25b)

"Who, then, can be saved?"

If rich people can't be saved, who can be? Poor people couldn't even purchase significant sacrifices.

If it is impossible for rich people to be saved, it certainly would be impossible for everyone else.

C. The Resource of Salvation (v. 26)

1. It's impossible with men (v. 26a)

"Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible"

Salvation is impossible on human terms. You can't overcome your own sinful nature. Rich people can't overcome their dependency on riches, their love of things in this world, and the consumptive selfishness that characterizes their life-style. Salvation is impossible for men. With one statement Jesus wiped out all works-righteousness systems. All the religions in the world can't save men. It's not just difficult; it's impossible.

2. It's possible with God (v. 26b)

"But with God all things are possible."

Even rich people can be saved. Humanly speaking, they are tougher to save than others, but with God all things are possible. That's good news. Why is God the only one who can save men? Because only God can change the heart.

The rich young ruler came to Christ to be saved, which was asking for something that was impossible. When he went away unsaved, that confirmed the impossibility of salvation. The young ruler demonstrated that salvation is impossible on human terms. Repentance and the affirmation of the lordship of Jesus Christ is mandatory. That is a doctrine of salvation that is not being taught today, but it needs to be. Only God can overcome the love of money, selfishness, and an earth-bound mentality. Only God can change man's heart. John 1:12-13 says, "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the children of God, even to them that believed on his name; who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Only God can save a man.

Gentle Evangelism

Second Timothy 2:24 says that the servant of the Lord doesn't fight. When we present the truth of Jesus Christ, we should "be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose him" (vv. 24-25). We are not to intimidate or badger people to repent. We are to teach them gently and patiently, recognizing that only God can "give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth" (v. 25). We don't know if God will give them repentance, but it's something only God can do. In John 6:65 Jesus said, "No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." Evangelists must be gentle, patient, and meek to those who oppose the gospel. Yet they must be careful not to manipulate people. We can only beseech God that He would grant repentance.

Am I Preaching Salvation by Works?

Some people have accused me of preaching salvation by works because I feel so strongly about repentance. To those people I would answer with 2 Timothy 2:25-26: God must give the unsaved "repentance to the acknowledging of the truth ... that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil." Repentance is an element of salvation that only God can perform. There is no work involved here. I'm not attempting to say that repentance or an affirmation of the lordship of Christ is a pre-salvation, human work. But I am saying that where real salvation occurs, God brings about repentance, submission, and a forsaking of everything to follow Christ. That is no less the work of God than the redemptive transaction itself.

II. THE RICHES OF POVERTY (vv. 27-29)

A. The Faithfulness of the Disciples (v. 27)

1. The affirmation (v. 27a)

"Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee"

Peter is affirming that the disciples came to Christ on His terms. The rich young ruler didn't, and they could see the contrast. He went away sorrowing, unwilling to forsake all and follow Christ. The disciples left their nets and their tax tables. They said goodbye to their employment and their families. They left everything to follow Him. They took up their crosses and denied themselves. Peter's statement in verse 27 was his definition of salvation. He hadn't seen the crucifixion or the resurrection yet, so on this side of the cross he saw salvation as the Lord presented it—a forsaking of sin and a following after Christ. Salvation is submitting to Christ's direction and lordship.

There was one disciple who was not a legitimate follower, but Peter didn't know that at the time. Judas never did abandon his love of money. When he knew he wasn't going to receive the money he thought would come his way through his involvement in this new political entity called the kingdom, he tried to get as much as he could by selling out the Savior. His intention was to grab the money and run. But the guilt was overwhelming and he killed himself. It was only on the outside that Judas appeared as if he had forsaken all and followed Christ.

2. The anticipation (v. 27b)

"What shall we have, therefore?"

The rich man kept all his riches but lost eternal life. The disciples had abandoned everything in life, and they wanted to know what they would gain. That's not a bad question to ask. After all, they had followed Christ in anticipation of the kingdom. They followed Him hoping that He would right the nation of Israel and throw off the Roman yoke. They hoped He would bring in the glorious splendor the prophets had spoken of. I think Peter's heart was right as he summed up all the anxiety of the disciples by asking, "What's in it for us? What are we going to receive?" I don't believe Peter was totally frustrated—just partially. He was interested in what Christ had to say about what God had prepared for them. Since they came to Christ on His terms, they wanted to know the benefits of their salvation.

B. The Future for True Believers (vv. 28-29)

1. Sharing in the triumph of Christ (v. 28)

"And Jesus said to them, Verily I say unto you that ye who have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye shall also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

a

) The rebirth of the earth

What is the "regeneration"? The Greek word for regeneration is palingenesia, and it refers to the millennial Kingdom. It is used in only one other place in the New Testament, and that's in Titus 3:5. There the word refers to our new birth in Christ. In Matthew 19:28 Jesus is talking about the rebirth of the earth. That rebirth is a perfect parallel to our individual palingenesia as we are born again in Christ. Just as our new birth is incomplete until we enter heaven, the earth awaits its rebirth in the millennial Kingdom. We wait for the new heaven and the earth waits for the new earth.

b) The reign of Christ

In Matthew 19:28 our Lord is talking about the millennial Kingdom, when He will sit on the throne of His glory. Psalm 2:9 indicates that the Lord Jesus Christ is going to rule the nations with a rod of iron. He is going to be the King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:16). He's coming to reign in glory and power. He's coming to rule the earth for a thousand years, and the saints will reign with Him (Rev. 20:4-6). The Old Testament saints (Dan. 7:18), New Testament saints (1 Cor. 6:2), the Tribulation saints (Rev. 20:4), and the apostles (Matt. 19:28) will all be there. All the redeemed of all ages will reign with Christ when He sits on the throne of His glory. He will come in power and glory after the Tribulation (Matt. 24:29-30). He will then set up His Kingdom of glory and rule for a thousand years. At that time the nation of Israel will be restored and the twelve apostles, with Matthias supplanting Judas (Acts 1:15-16), will guide and judge the tribes of Israel.

In Acts 3:21 Peter called the millennial Kingdom the "times of restitution" when the earth rests from the curse and is restored to its original state before the Fall. Matthew 12:32 calls it the age to come. According to the prophets, it is the time when truth will dominate, righteousness will flourish, peace will prevail, and joy will abound on the earth. It is the time when the Holy Spirit's power will be demonstrated and Satan will be bound. Jerusalem will be exalted. Life will be long because health and healing will be prevalent. The earth will produce food like never before. The desert will blossom like a rose. It is in this great millennial Kingdom that the Twelve will sit on twelve thrones—places of rulership over the twelve tribes of Israel.

The first thing that comes to the poor of this world is that they will share in the triumph of Christ. We are going to rule with Christ. First Peter 2:9 calls us a royal priesthood.

2. Receiving more than they gave up (v. 29a)

"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"

a) The price of salvation

Christ is acknowledging that when you came to Him, you might have had to turn your back on a relationship. Becoming a Christian may alienate you from your spouse. It probably won't cause a divorce, but there is still a recognizable division. Perhaps you were alienated from your parents, or brothers and sisters. Maybe you were kicked out of your family when you came to Christ and lost an inheritance. There was a price to pay, but no one has forsaken anything for Christ's sake that he won't get back a hundredfold. When you gave up your family, you inherited all those in the body of Christ: you have mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, husbands, wives, houses, and lands worldwide. You are embraced by a fellowship of those who love the Lord Jesus Christ.

b) The reward of salvation

The hundredfold you get isn't just future. Mark 10:30 gives the same list as Matthew 19:29 but precedes it with, "Now in this time." When you meet a Christian for the first time, isn't it amazing how immediate the bond becomes? You may travel somewhere and you find a home to stay in and someone to provide a meal for you. You meet a family of people who love Christ. There's far more compensation in the family of God than anything you ever give up. Whenever you think about what you gave up, just look at what you have gained.

3. Inheriting eternal life (v. 29b)

"And shall inherit everlasting life."

The poor will be rewarded for eternity. I think what Christ means is that they will enter into the fullness of what God has planned in eternity. We'll be blessed now and in the Kingdom. Ultimately we will have the fullness of all that God has prepared for us in eternity. We will receive our full inheritance—the completion of salvation for which our bodies now groan, awaiting their redemption (Rom. 8:23). First Corinthians 15:53 says, "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." It is then that this marvelous thing will come to pass: "We shall be like [Christ]; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2). Ephesians 2:7 says, "In the ages to come he [will] show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

To be poor in this life for the sake of Christ is to be rich. Rich in eternity with all that God could ever imagine to give to His beloved children. Take your choice: Rich now, poor forever; or poor now, rich forever. If you're willing to be poor, God may make you rich, even in this life. But keep this in mind. I'm poor in the sense that I don't own any of what I do have. The Lord keeps depositing it with me to see how I manage it. That's a helpful perspective. None of the things I have are mine; they're all His. I gave up everything when I came to Christ. But He has a lot that He sorts out among us to manage for His glory in the advance of His Kingdom. Jim Elliot, a missionary who was murdered by the Auca Indians in Ecuador some years ago, said, "He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."

Focusing on the Facts

1. Are the terms "Kingdom of heaven" and "Kingdom of God" synonymous? What do they refer to?
2. What did Jesus mean by telling men to take up their crosses?

3. Where did the phrase, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle" come from? What does it tell us about rich people getting to heaven?
4. What are some of the erroneous interpretations of that phrase? What are the people who come up with those interpretations trying to make Matthew 19:24 say?
5. Why is salvation impossible for men on their own terms?
6. Why is it impossible for the rich to be saved?
7. What were the instructions that Paul gave Timothy regarding his ministry to the rich (1 Tim. 6:17-19)?
8. Why are many people in our society discontent?
9. What must be dealt with first in the lives of rich people before the gospel will ever become fruitful?
10. Relate some of the teaching that Jewish leaders, such as the rich young ruler, received from the Rabbinical schools.
11. Why were the disciples "exceedingly amazed" after hearing Jesus speak about the impossibility of salvation for the rich (Matt. 19:25)?
12. How is it possible for all men to be saved? Why is that the only way men can be saved (Matt. 19:26)?
13. When we present the gospel to the unsaved, what kind of attitude should we adopt? Why (2 Tim. 2:24-25)?
14. Explain why the need for repentance and a submission to the lordship of Christ are not pre-salvation, human works?
15. What did Peter affirm in Matthew 19:27? Which disciple was he mistaken about?
16. What were the benefits that the disciples would receive for forsaking all and following Christ (Matt. 19:28-29)?
17. What does the word "regeneration" refer to in Matthew 19:28?
18. Who will reign with Christ when He sits on His throne of glory?
19. What does Christ promise to give those in return for what they had to forsake to come to Him (Matt. 19:29)?

Pondering the Principles

1. Review the reasons for the impossibility of salvation for the rich (see pp. 3-6). Examine your life in light of those reasons. Is there a sense in which you gain a certain amount of security in your resources and possessions? In what ways do you see that your dependence on those things binds you to this world? Be specific. To what degree do you see a selfish attitude in your life? Can it be traced to your dependence on your money and possessions, and if so, how? As a Christian who has been given salvation because of God's grace, you should be totally dependent on God and not on your money and possessions. How can you specifically apply Paul's instructions to Timothy regarding the rich (see 1 Tim. 6:17-19)?

2. Review the section on the benefits of salvation for true believers (see pp. 10-12). Two of those benefits are future and one is both present and future. Thank God for the future you will spend with Christ in eternity. Many of you can thank Him for one of the benefits of salvation right now. Make a list of what God has given you that you could classify as being more than what you gave up. Offer God praise for each one.

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