

*Nuggets and Gems from the Bible*

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SALVATION  
AND  
GOD'S  
REWARD

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***Living Stream Ministry***  
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# **GOD'S SALVATION AND GOD'S REWARD**

## **TEACHING ABOUT THE ACCEPTANCE OF GOD'S INVITATION**

In Luke 14:15-24 we have the Lord's teaching about the acceptance of God's invitation. "A certain man was making a great dinner and invited many; and he sent his slave at the dinner hour to say to those who had been invited, Come, for it is now ready" (vv. 16-17). This great dinner is different from the marriage feast in Matthew 22:2-14. That marriage feast is for the reward of the kingdom. This great dinner is for God's full salvation. God, as the certain man, has prepared His full salvation as a great dinner and sent the first apostles as His slaves to invite the Jews (Luke 14:16-17). But because they were occupied by their riches, such as land, cattle, or a wife, they refused His invitation (vv. 18-20). Then God sent the apostles to invite the street people—the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame. Because of their poverty and misery, they received

God's invitation ([vv. 21-22a](#)). Yet God's salvation still had room for more; so He sent His slaves to go out further to the Gentile world, as the roads and hedges, to compel the Gentiles to come in and fill up the room of His salvation ([vv. 22b-23](#); [Acts 13:46-48](#); [Rom. 11:25](#)).

In this parable the Lord's intention was to let the Pharisees know that God had invited them to His great feast, but they had all asked to be excused. Each one of them denied God's invitation. That made it necessary for God to go to those of the lower class—to the poor, crippled, blind, and lame. After that, because there was still room in God's salvation, God sent His slaves into the Gentile world to gather more people into His feast. Therefore, eventually those who had first been invited by God—the Pharisees, the scribes, and the lawyers—will not be able to enter into the kingdom of God.

This parable is an excellent parable concerning salvation. In order to be saved it is not necessary for us to do anything. We simply need to answer God's invitation. To be saved all we need to do is come and receive what God has prepared for us. As long as we answer His invitation and accept what He has prepared for us, we shall be saved.

## SALVATION AND REWARD

God's economy, however, includes more than salvation. It also includes the reward of entering into the blessing of the kingdom age. Hence, to be saved is one thing, and to receive the kingdom reward is another thing. This is the reason for the Lord's teaching in [Luke 14:25-35](#).

Verses 25 and 26 say, "Now great crowds were going along with Him, and He turned and said to them, If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, and moreover, his own soul life also, he cannot be My disciple." The tone here is very different from that in [14:15-24](#). For salvation there is no need for us to do anything. This means that for salvation there are no terms, no conditions. We simply need to answer God's invitation and receive what He offers us and we are saved. But there is more to God's economy than just being saved. After we are saved, we need to enter into the coming kingdom to receive a reward. Therefore, to be saved by grace is one thing, and to be rewarded according to our following of the Lord is another thing.

We all need to see the difference between

salvation and reward. God's salvation is for us to enjoy the jubilee today, and His reward is for us to enjoy the jubilee in the coming age.

The New Testament jubilee is of three stages: first, the jubilee in the present age, the age of grace; the second, the jubilee in the coming age, the age of the kingdom; and third, the jubilee in eternity, in the new heaven and new earth. Enjoying the jubilee today is a matter of salvation. However, enjoying the jubilee in the coming age is a matter of reward. The enjoyment of the jubilee in eternity in the new heaven and new earth will be the full taste of God's full salvation.

## **ENJOYING CHRIST FAITHFULLY TO RECEIVE THE REWARD**

Today everyone who accepts God's invitation and receives the offer of what He has prepared for us has the ground to participate in the New Testament jubilee and enjoy Christ in this age. But in order to receive the reward of the jubilee in the coming age, we need to enjoy Christ faithfully in this age. Many saved ones are not faithful to enjoy Christ today. For this reason, God has set up a reward as an incentive that we may enjoy Christ faithfully in this present age. If we

do not enjoy Christ faithfully today, we shall lose the enjoyment of Christ in the coming age. Here we see that in His wisdom God has made the enjoyment of Christ in the coming age a reward for the faithful ones, the ones who enjoy Christ faithfully in this age.

Most fundamental Christians emphasize God's salvation, but they do not pay any attention to God's reward. This reward in the coming age has been set up by God as an incentive to encourage all the Lord's believers to enjoy Him and follow Him faithfully in this age.

We have pointed out that there are no terms, no conditions, for enjoying Christ in this age. As long as we believe in Him, accepting God's invitation and offer, we may enjoy Christ today. Nevertheless, we need to enjoy Him faithfully in order to receive the reward in the coming age of the kingdom. Otherwise, we shall lose the enjoyment of Christ in the coming age.

The kingdom will be a reward in the thousand years to the faithful enjoyers of Christ, and that reward will also be a jubilee. Today's jubilee is real, but it is only a foretaste, not the full taste. God has presented us such a foretaste, and we need to have a high regard for it. So many Jews have excused themselves from accepting God's

invitation and have denied this jubilee and as a result cannot share its enjoyment. But we Christians have accepted God's invitation and His offer. Therefore, we are on the right ground to enjoy this jubilee. Yet we still need to be faithful to enjoy the jubilee; that is, we need to be faithful to enjoy Christ.

Many genuine believers, truly saved Christians, are not faithfully enjoying Christ. All these unfaithful ones will miss the jubilee in the coming age. This means that they will miss the coming kingdom. We all need to see that today's jubilee is a matter of salvation, that the jubilee in the coming age is a matter of reward, and that the jubilee in the new heaven and new earth will be the full taste of God's full salvation.

According to the New Testament, God's kingdom today is Christ as our enjoyment. This enjoyment is the jubilee. The kingdom of God, which is Christ Himself, has set us free from the bondage of sin, Satan, the world, and the self. The kingdom of God has also recovered our right to the divine inheritance, the right to enjoy the Triune God in Christ. Today in God's salvation we have the right to enjoy Christ, the right to enjoy the jubilee. Now we must remain

faithful in this enjoyment. Properly and faithfully, we need to enjoy God's Son who is the all-inclusive Christ as the all-inclusive Spirit. This faithful enjoyment of Christ will qualify us to enter into the kingdom in the coming age and there to enjoy a fuller jubilee. That fuller jubilee will be a reward. Receiving this reward requires the fulfillment of a condition, and this condition is that we faithfully and continually enjoy Christ today.

In our daily living we may fail to enjoy Christ. If you fail, simply repent and confess your failure, and the blood of Jesus will cleanse you. Then you will be brought back to the proper enjoyment of Christ. We may need to do this again and again, each time we fail. When you go to bed at night, you may sense your failures that day. But if you confess them, you will have a new beginning concerning the enjoyment of Christ.

Every day we should exercise to keep ourselves in the faithful enjoyment of Christ. Actually, this is to keep ourselves in God by praying ourselves into Him. It is also to keep ourselves in the kingdom of God for the enjoyment of Christ in this age. This enjoyment will then qualify us to enter into the coming kingdom,

which will be a fuller jubilee as a reward to the Lord's faithful ones.

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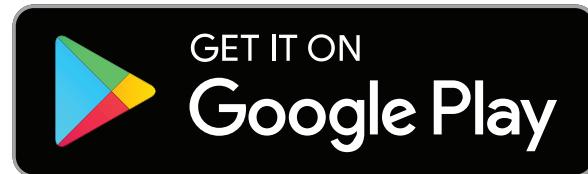
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