***The Parable of the Ten Minas

RV238-01***

Our subject is "The First Resurrection." This is segment number three in Revelation 20:4-6.

**Thrones**

John, in Revelation 20:4, sees a vast company of saints sitting upon thrones, exercising judgments as rulers. We read, "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them." One group of saints that is mentioned, as this verse continues, who will have these thrones, are the tribulation martyrs who refuse to worship the antichrist during the tribulation. These tribulation saints are promised an area of royal jurisdiction in the earthly Millennial Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Thrones are also promised to the 12 apostles, elsewhere in Scripture, over the people of Israel. And the church saints are promised thrones as they are represented by the 24 elders in heaven seated upon their thrones. These royal thrones are for exercising some area of jurisdiction in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ here on this earth during the Millennial reign. It is a reward from God to certain faithful and worthy believers, and I must stress to you that the thrones do not go to every Christian. The thrones are a reward to certain faithful believers who've proven themselves worthy. One is qualified for a throne in the kingdom by one's life of godliness and Christian service, which produces divine good works through the Holy Spirit.

Jesus, on several occasions, took the trouble to remind believers of the responsibility of accounting for what one has done with his life in God's service. And every one of us will someday account for whatever number of days we have lived, and what we have done with that period of time.

The questions that will be raised are, in part: what use has one made of his spiritual and natural gifts? What amount of time has been invested in God's work? What financial support has been given to the needs of God's work? What personal level of integrity has been maintained as a representative of God? What devotion has been exercised in learning doctrine by attending services and being a student of the Word? What amount of time has been spent in temporal fellowship, and thus being filled with the Spirit? What time has been spent in personal and group prayer? What degree of fulfillment has one achieved of your particular mission to which God has called you?

**Zacchaeus**

We have looked (in the last session) at the story of Zacchaeus in Luke 19, which illustrates for us the wisdom of investing one's material possessions in God's work. Zacchaeus said, "I'm going to give half of everything I own. I'm a rich tax collector. I'm going to give half of everything I own to the poor (God's work) with that particular area of need. And if I have cheated anybody on collecting taxes more than I should have, I'm going to turn his money back plus four times more as well." That was the Old Testament order of restitution.

So, Zacchaeus was a very serious person once he was born-again and had met Jesus Christ. And Jesus said to him that to make himself poorer on earth is to gain eternal rewards in heaven that are infinitely greater. In effect, Jesus told Zacchaeus, "Go for it." Making wealth uses up the days of our lives. So, when we give money to God's work, we literally are giving to Him part of our very life span. And that's the issue. To whom will your life be given?

Let's take a look at this business of earning a throne. Consider yourself fortunate to be in this service today. You may have never even heard this doctrine before, and you're not likely to hear it promoted very often, and taught very often, because it makes Christians squeamish, and it makes preachers controversial.

**The Parable of the Ten Minas**

Take a look at Luke 19, please, in your Bibles. This is the earning of a throne. The principle of the ten minas stewardship in Luke 19:11: "While they were listening to these things (that is, the incident just before with Zacchaeus, and the Lords comments to Zacchaeus), He (Jesus) went on to tell a parable, because he was near Jerusalem, and they (the crowd following) supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately."

All the Jews knew, from Old Testament Scripture, that there was going to come a time when Jesus Christ is going to rule on this earth as King of all the world, and that that (we were told in Revelation 20) was going to be specifically a 1,000-year kingdom. People listening to Jesus, who recognized Him as the promised Messiah in the Davidic line, assumed that He was on His way to Jerusalem to set up the kingdom. He wanted to correct that impression because Christ knew what was going to happen. He knew He would be rejected. He knew He would be crucified. And He knew that the kingdom itself was going to have to be postponed while God did something else; namely, the bringing together of church-age saints. The period of the church age had to pass first, and then the kingdom would be established. That kingdom was postponed by the rejection of Christ as Messiah, and so the King leaves.

Verse 12 says, "He said, therefore, 'A certain nobleman went to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself, and then return.'" The nobleman here represents Jesus Christ. He is going away to be invested with the kingdom, as Christ went back to heaven with the Father, and is there now during the church age. And at a certain point in time, He would return again. It is not too hard to understand that. It is very clear. Christ, the nobleman, has been rejected. He is going back to the Father, in the case of Jesus. He's going to come back when the kingdom is ready to be set up, which will be at the Second Coming of Christ.

Verses 12-13: "And he called ten of his slaves, and he gave them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business with this until I come back.'" The nobleman invests his money with ten servants who are to use that money to gain more money while the government is off receiving his kingdom. The people in verse 13 are born-again believers. These slaves represent Christian believers. And each servant is given one mina. A mina, in Old Testament times, amounted to three months of labor. It was a wage that one would receive for three months of work. So, it was no small amount. All of them had the same potential to invest. Every one of them got one mina, as every Christian has a life to invest for the master. Whatever his abilities, it's only a matter of choosing to do so. Every Christian has a period of life to invest.

The Bible says that God's normative plan now is 70 years. If you hit 70 years, you have reached the allotted lifespan. If you go beyond 70 years, the Bible says that it is a grace act of God because you are given special physical capacity to do that. Therefore, having that continuance means: "Keep doing the Lord's business." You have the capacity, so go about doing the business with the minas that He has given you. So, here these servants all begin on equal ground, with three months' labor of money to invest for the master while he's gone.

There was a group that didn't like this nobleman. Verse 14 says, "But his citizens hated him. And they sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to reign over us.'" These are the unbelievers. They have no use for this nobleman, Jesus Christ. They hate Him, and they don't want Him to reign over them. They don't want Him to come into a kingdom where He will be in authority over them.

Move your eye over to verse 27. When he returns, we're told what he's going to do with his enemies: "But these enemies of mine, who do not want me to reign over them, bring them here, and slay them in my presence." That principle is expanded in the further doctrine in Matthew with the separation of the sheep and the goats. That's exactly what they're doing there. There the goats are put to death, and the sheep enter the Millennial Kingdom. It is also in the passage in the Old Testament which describes the separating of saved Israel and unsaved Israel when Christ returns. Those of the unsaved Israel are put to death; and those of the saved Israel go into the millennium. So, here is the dealing with the unbelievers. They will not be forgotten as the enemies of the noblemen.

Now, the enemies of the noblemen are executed, and they represent the unsaved, which are actually going to stand at the great white throne judgment that you read about in Revelation 20:11-15 – the judgment where all unbelievers will finally face the music of having turned their backs upon the offer of free grace salvation.

Well, the day of reckoning arrives. Verse 15: "And it came about that when he (the nobleman) returned after receiving the kingdom, he ordered that these slaves, to whom he had given the money (his born-again servants), be called to him in order that he might know what business they had done." The nobleman returns, and the ten servants are brought to account for what they did with the potential given to them. The comparison (the symbolism here) is that we as Christians are going to be called to account for every day of our life – every day of the lifespan that God gave us. The Bible calls that the Judgment Seat of Christ. It takes place after the church is caught up to meet the Lord in the air, which we refer to as the rapture of the church. So now they are called to account.

Verses 16 says, "And the first appeared, saying, 'Master, your mina has made ten minas more.' And he said to him, 'Well done, good slave. Because you have been faithful in a very little thing (and here it is), be in authority over ten cities.'" Now, don't just blow that off as some kind of poetic language. This is literal, serious talk. Be in authority over ten cities. This servant, who was faithful in dealing with the money given to him, and reproduced it tenfold, receives a special "Well-done." He receives a throne, and he receives a realm of authority over ten cities in the Millennial Kingdom. He will read over ten cities in the Millennial Kingdom of Christ, because he has proven himself worthy by how he handled a small sum of money.

Here is the connection with Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus, in service of Jesus Christ, could receive the same reward of ruling power in the kingdom. That's the point here. Jesus is saying, "Zacchaeus, go for it. Go ahead and invest half your vast holdings in God's work, and I'll tell you what's going to happen. You are going to prove yourself by that act as being worthy of a kingdom, because you will have made such an impact upon the Word of God, you will turn and untie hands that can make a great impact, and you will put in motion forces that can make a great impact upon the world upon the world in which we live with the Word of God. And your name will go down in heaven as a saint worthy of authority. And when that kingdom comes, you will have a throne, and you too will reign."

The second servant steps up in verse 18: "The second came saying, 'Your mina, master, has made five minas. He said to him also, 'And you are to be over five cities.'" You'll notice there's no commendation of, "Well-done." Perhaps that is because this servant, while he went about the nobleman's business, he was not as diligent. Perhaps he told himself, "Well, I am kind of tied up now, and I really should be more about my master's business. I should be doing more with this money that he has given me, but I'm a little tied up now. I've got so many things flying that I can't really stop to handle the money in the right way. I'm going to get to it," but he never got to it. The time ran out. Nevertheless, what he did do is not forgotten and ignored. He is given authority in the kingdom over ten cities.

What's the application? Zacchaeus could hold back from his intended generous investment of half his holdings, and he could come off poorer in the kingdom, because he could fall for the mistake of giving little from possessing much. It is not unreasonable when I caution all of us: when we put money in those offering boxes, we should have in our mind's eye how much we kept back, and how much the reserves are from which we give. One of the greatest commendations Jesus ever made in respect to financial stewardship, as you know, is that poor widow who had two small copper coins, so to speak. It was everything she had, and she gave it all to God's work. And Jesus said, "Do you see that woman? Her reward is infinitely greater than all these rich men that you have seen pouring money into that treasury box, because they have so much left that they'll never miss what they gave. But this woman has given her very life." If God does not provide for her, she'll die. Something has to be provided, but she says, "I'm investing for eternity, and I trust God to care for me now." That is quite true.

Then we come to a third believer in verse 20. Did you hear what I said? "A third believer." Don't fall for this mistaken notion that suddenly we're shifting gears here to an unbeliever. This is not an unbeliever. These are all people who were in the kingdom. These are all saved people. That's why they're in the kingdom of this nobleman. That's the analogy. But they are performing differently within the kingdom. They're acting differently. They're living differently. They're using up their life in a different way. So, let's go to the third believer:

"And another came saying, 'Master, behold your mina which I kept put away in a handkerchief. For I was afraid of you because you are an exacting man. You take up what you did not lay down, and reap what you did not saw.' He (Jesus) said to him, 'By your own words, I will judge you. You worthless slave! Did you know that I am an exacting man, taking up what I did not lay down, and reaping what I did not sow?'" Here, "he" is referring here to the nobleman (by analogy, to Jesus).

Verse 23: "Then why did you not put the money in the bank, and having come, I would have collected it with interest?" This servant says that he feared investing the money because he might lose it, and he knew that his master was an exacting man who demanded results, not excuses. The truth of the matter is that this servant didn't take the master's return seriously. He knew about it. He knew that he probably was coming back. He didn't know when. He just didn't take it seriously. And he let things slide. He was an idle servant. He did not use the capacity of the money he had. And he forfeited the reward.

The nobleman, thereupon, directed the mina to be taken from the slothful servant and given to the diligent servant: "He said to the bystanders, 'Take the mina away from him and give it to the one who has the ten minas.' And they said to him, 'Master, he has ten minas already.' 'I tell you that to everyone who has, more shall be given, but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away.'" Can you figure it out? Verse 26 is the zinger: "I tell you that to everyone who has, more shall be given." There we have the basic doctrinal principle that you cannot out-give God. You will not out-give God. If you give to Him, He will usually replenish with the same and more now. But if he does not replenish it now, he will infinitely multiply it out in eternity. And you had better take rewards seriously.

One of our young men who went off to college said that he was discussing this with another college student at school. In this particular denomination, group, the concept of rewards is unmentioned, as it usually is. And I don't know how often I've heard this. I've heard this same thing. This other student responded, "Well, I thought when we get out there, we're all going to be equal, and we're all going to be the same in heaven. There's no competition and no difference." Oh, yeah? Just go back and read the passage in 1 Corinthians that tells about those who will stand before Christ for this accountability, and some will suffer loss, and some will suffer reward. Even I can figure out what the word "loss" means. It means having less. It means being shorted. It means bad. And even I can figure out what "reward" means. It means getting more. It means better. It means good. You can't play with Scripture unless you want to wipe out the meaning of words. And don't kid yourself: the words are what they mean. They say what they mean.

So, here we have this principle that those who demonstrate that they're faithful, God says, "OK, I'm going to give you more. You will use My money in the right way." Some will say, "Oh, I can give to the Lord. I've got many bills to pay. I've got to get caught up. I've gotten myself in overhead with my credit cards." And it's easy to do that. Hardly a week goes by that I don't get a letter that says, "Dr. Danish, you're one of the outstanding men in our world with such a high credit rating. You are so high, the moon is not as high as you are," and they just laud to high heaven: And we have this wonderful credit card." I wish I had taken all those because I think it would impress you if I could reach in here and have one of those plastic things with all of your cards on one long thin, and I could whip that out there, and hold that down, and this thing would come tumbling down. Your eyes would look upon me with great esteem. But if those credit cards are used, there comes a payday someday.

God has said, "I will not let you out-give Me. I will bless you now. I bless you infinitely more in eternity." But you can come along and says, "I have all these credit cards I have to pay, and I'm in over my head." God says, "Fine. Then I'm going to shortchange your salary. I'm going to give you less. I'm going to take that cute little car that you drive around in that you're so proud of, and I'm going to bang up the fenders. I'm going to take away from you what you have." And that is the principle of this doctrine. I would take it seriously. You do not get away with short changing God.

This servant demonstrated that he was not worthy of being given authority in that Millennial Kingdom in any way. He was an indolent servant. He had nothing. He was not living in anticipation of the king's return. So, he did not concern himself with the king's business. What a tragedy it was for this man to have lost forever a golden opportunity of gaining the reward of a throne and jurisdiction in the Millennial Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

The maximum servant had the happiest place in the kingdom. He had the greatest opportunities, and he used them. Because of that, God gave him even more opportunities, because he could not out-give God. While it is embarrassing to be seen as a non-productive believer, and to lose rewards, it is also a loss of further opportunity. God will strip down what you can do.

This servant knew better, but he faced it too late when he had to face the judgment seat of the master upon his return. For the Christian, the loss from a wasted life potential will be enormous. There will be no throne and no authority to reign with Christ in the kingdom. You are still saved, and still born again. The Corinthians passage says that it is by the skin of your teeth. You're going to heaven, but the loss you will suffer will be inordinate.

Now, Zacchaeus (tying it back, because the parable ties back to the Zacchaeus incident) would have to decide if he wanted to pay the price of giving away his great wealth with all the security that that had, or whether he was going to renege on this commitment that he made publicly to invest half of his wealth in God's work in exchange for eternal riches. He would have to make the decision, as indeed do all of us.

The point of this parable is that self-centered living is very foolish. There's nothing so pathetic like seeing a Christian whose eyes are on himself. Keeping the days of your life for yourself is to throw it away forever. That's the doctrine to learn. As we have had well-demonstrated, time and again, when you do get on the job seriously for God, and you are investing yourself; your talents; and, your treasures for God, Satan is not going to ignore you. Those who are walking as the apple of God's eye are the people that Satan hates the worst. He will bring you down. He will hit you hard. He will incapacitate you. And what do you do?

What you do is get your eyes off yourself, and on the Lord, and you say, "Now grace can demonstrate its great power and capacity in carrying me through and putting me back on top. Nothing happens outside of the sovereign hand of God, but those bad things that happen have the capacity and have the opportunity to bring great glory to our Lord. The king denied his faithful servant rewards and opportunities which had been squandered.

Please turn over to 2 Timothy 2:11-13. This passage deals with receiving a kingdom. This is called a faithful or a trustworthy. It is a trustworthy statement. Something of great dramatic importance is about to be enunciated here by God the Holy Spirit – a serious doctrinal principle: "If we died with Him, we shall also live with Him." Christians are in permanent union with Jesus Christ, so they are permanently saved, and they will live forever with Him. They will be resurrected if they die; or, they will go alive into His presence at the rapture. So, if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him.

"If we died with Him," of course, first of all, means dying with Him on the cross. The benefits of that death have been attributed to us when we trusted in Christ as Savior. We will therefore also live with Him: "If we endure, we shall also reign with him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us." "If we endure" does not mean if I keep behaving myself so that I don't lose my salvation. We know that salvation is not a tenuous thing. It's all the work of God, and therefore it is a gift that cannot be contaminated. "If we endure" has to do with walking in temporal fellowship. And you walk in temporal fellowship when you execute your mission – all of these things that qualify you for a throne. If we endure (go about our Master's business), we shall reign with Him. You'll get a throne. If you deny Him as the slothful servant did, then Christ will deny you the throne. The faithless Christian does not lose the saving care of Christ, because Christ cannot deny His own salvation.

However, the Christians who do not endure in the service of God will not reign with him in the Millennial Kingdom. There will be no reward of a throne. Christians whose lives, in effect, deny all that they are in Christ, will be denied rewards by Him in the kingdom. That is not a denial of salvation. You will still be part of the royal family of God. But like the abdication of King Edward VII, when he decided to marry the American divorcée Wallis Simpson, the Church of England said, "That is against the laws of God and of the church, and you cannot be head of the Church of England and do that." Therefore, he lost his throne, but he did not lose his royalty. He never lost his place in the royal family. Do you see the connection? We are always royal members of the family of God, but those who have a throne are those who have earned it. A Christian who lives like a worldling, and pursues the goal of the world, denies Christ. He is negative to all the doctrinal truth he has heard. So, Christ will deny him.

However, notice verse 13: "If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself." No matter how faithless we come, you will not lose yourself, because Christ cannot deny Himself. Salvation is something that He produced as a gift to you.

In place of the Millennial Kingdom, the denying servant will be denied a place of honor, and all the privileges and rewards. The unproductive servant will, in effect, not be allowed to reign with Christ.

So, we're talking about being heirs of the kingdom who are producers. The faithless servant of the noblemen in Luke 19 was not an heir of the kingdom of God, though he was in the kingdom. Inheriting the kingdom of God is not the same thing as salvation, and getting into it. A person may enter a house. A person may live in that house. A person may have a right to be in that house without being owner, and the benefits of ownership being his. You can be in a house that belongs to someone else, and you can have the benefits of being in that house, but you're not the owner. That's the difference between being in the kingdom of God and being the owner of a throne.

**Inheritance**

The word "inheritance," that we read in Scripture that God has for his saints is, in the Old Testament, a word that refers to property. In Numbers 3:7-9, you have the description of how property is passed down in a family as the inheritance of the family. The inheritance is the property, and that's what is passed down. One could even live in the land of Israel, and not be a possessor of property, so he did not have an inheritance.

Numbers 18:20-24 tell that the Levites, who served in the temple, had no inheritance. They owned not an inch of the land of Palestine. Their inheritance was God, but they did not have what the Bible gave everybody else in the Old Testament – an inheritance, which was a piece of property. So, one can live in the kingdom of God, but not have an inheritance or possession in it.

One of the things that you have to have to possess a throne is a glorified body. 1 Corinthians 15:50: "I say this, brethren: that flesh and blood shall cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable." A person who does not have the glorified body of Jesus Christ (that means minus the sin nature), which all resurrected and all born-again believers who grow up in the rapture have, cannot qualify for a throne. So, the only people in the kingdom who will have thrones are those who have glorified bodies. You are all qualified. Mortals, minus glorified bodies, can live in the millennium, and indeed they will, and some will even follow Satan at the end of it, but they will not have a throne, and they will not have an inheritance. Mortal bodies can live in the Millennial Kingdom, but only immortal bodies can possess a throne of blessing. Not all those believers who are glorified, as we have seen, will inherit the throne.

So, the heirs of the kingdom are its owners, not merely its residents as citizens. They must have immortal bodies – bodies minus the old sin nature. And we Christians are potential heirs of God. Romans 8:17 puts it this way: "And if children, heirs also of God, and fellow-heirs with Christ."

John 6:40 tells us that all Christians will inherit resurrection. We are all heirs of God, and part of what we inherit is resurrection.

**Jesus is God's Primary Heir**

Romans 8:29-30 tell us that all Christians will become sinless like Jesus Christ: "For whom He foreknew new, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son," to be exactly like Jesus Christ: "Jesus Christ, as the firstborn among many, brethren, has received and will receive more than the others." That was the way it was in the Old Testament. If you were a firstborn, you had a greater inheritance. You got twice what the other kids got. And Christ, who is our brother in the family of God, receives twice. Romans 8:29 and Hebrews 1:2 tells us that. In the Old Testament, the principle is enunciated in Deuteronomy 21:15-17. Jesus is God's primary heir. That's what these verses tell us.

However, while the kingdom belongs to Him as the son of David, the believers who are in Christ, are potential to be fellow-heirs with him. Romans 8:17: "And if children, heirs also, heirs of God, and fellow-heirs with Christ." But this heirship is the result of meritorious production.

2 Timothy 2:12: "If we endure, we shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, we will not." So, merit determines whether you have a throne, and that honorable position. The productive servant in Luke 19, received more in the Lord's kingdom than the unproductive one.

Please note Revelation 2:26-27, which also stresses this principle of receiving on the basis of your production: "He who overcomes and who keeps My deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations. There it is. It is authority over the nations: "And he shall rule them with a rod of iron as a vessel of the potters are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority from My Father."

That's interesting. Jesus says, "When I give you the throne, you will be reigning with the same kind of no-nonsense authority that I'm going to reign. My reign is described as a rod of iron, and so will yours be. You'll be fully qualified to make judgments. You will be sinless. You'll have the mind of God, and your decisions will be right. Those are people that qualify for a throne.

Revelation 3:21: "He who overcomes I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne." Jesus Christ is now in heaven on His throne. We will share His strong, which is the Davidic throne here on this earth.

Revelation 20:4, then, proclaims such faithful believers in Jesus Christ, including these tribulation martyrs; the apostles; and, the church saints, will be rewarded with a portion of royal authority in the kingdom of Christ. Revelation 20:6 says, "Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection. That doesn't mean that you're just included in the first resurrection, which is the resurrection of believers only. But you have a part. A portion is the idea there. You have a co-heirship throne. Some have this; inheritance; and, some do not.

Let's summarize it with the character of joint heirs. Reigning with Jesus Christ in the Millennial Kingdom is dependent on faithful service to Him during one's lifetime. Christians who are obedient to the Holy Spirit and to the Word of God have the potential of this royal role. They have certain characteristics. Matthew 5:3 says that they are poor in spirit. Matthew 5:5 says that they're meek in their attitude. Matthew 5:5 says that they're righteous in their conduct. Christians of this character are not prominent in the world today, but they earned the right to reign in the millennium. Christians of the highest quality and character, who maintain righteous conduct, are nothing in this world today.

The other day, we saw an individual take over the whole television screen in an act of perhaps serious violation of the law. But all the world was in attention and admiration and interest as this drama unfolded. But who cares whether some Christian does right? Get some Christian who does wrong, and see how quickly the world is interested in that, because Christian-bashing is the way Satan operates in his world. We are to be righteous in conduct. And Christians who are nothing now are, of all things, going to run the government. Christians will not be stealing postage stamps from the government. Christians are not going to be doing all those things that so disgust Just Americans with people in high places of authority. Integrity will have been proven on them, and that's what qualifies them for that service.

This kind of role of authority is not a grace gift to every Christian. Salvation is a grace gift, but this authority is not. This is something that you earn in the kingdom. The heirs in the kingdom are going to have to live by God's moral standard, and they're going to have to be people who esteem the things of eternity above their bank accounts and the things that they have in this world.

Listen carefully. Colossians 3:1-2 put it this way: "If, then, you have been raised up with Christ (which you have – you are potentially already resurrected because you are in Christ), keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, and not on the things that are on the earth."

The little 12-year-old boy Jesus, on that occasion in Jerusalem, was dealing with the rabbis in the temple, because this kid had already learned so much doctrine that he amazed them. Jesus could say to his parents, when they lost track of Him, "Did you not understand that I have to be about My Father's business?" That's what we're talking about here. My eyes are set on the things above. Such royal authority is for the heirs of the kingdom who live by God's standard.

One of the sad pictures of the results of somebody who ignores his potential to have a throne in the kingdom is Esau. Hebrews 12:16 says, "And there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal." Such a person will not be in the kingdom as a ruler on a throne.

Verse 17 says, "And you know that even afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it with tears." It was then too late for Esau, and the tears did not change anything. He had parted with an eternal honor for a temporary physical gratification.

The apostle Paul warns us very explicitly against forfeiting our heirship (our reigning honors) in the Millennial Kingdom of God through immoral living. Let me read a few to you.

1 Corinthians 6:9 is another passage about which people read and say, "Oh, that's talking about those terrible unbelievers." Well, let's take a look. "Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom?" We're talking about a throne – royal authority in the kingdom. "Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the capitalists, nor drunkards, nor revilers; nor swindlers shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you, but you were washed (but you were sanctified and you were justified) in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of God."

He is talking to Christians, and the Corinthian Christians were noted for their sinful lifestyle. And even after they were born-again, one of the most terrible things, in the previous of this very book (chapter 5) talks about a condition of incest within the local church, and nobody does anything about it, because these people were believers who didn't have any problem living these terrible sins that we have just read to you. Can you believe that a Christian would be doing these things? And the whole point is that he says that if you do live like this (which your sin nature can), you will not inherit the kingdom of God. That doesn't mean salvation. He's talking to Christians. You will not inherit a position of reigning authority.

Look at Galatians 5:19: "Now the deeds of the sin nature are evident, which are: immorality; impurity; sensuality; idolatry; sorcery; enmity; strife; jealousy; outbursts of anger; disputes; dissensions; factions; envying; drunkenness; carousing; and, things like these, of which I forewarned you, just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Got it? These terrible things can be done by Christians. But if you live like this, don't expect to be given a throne to make decisions over the lives of people who are in the kingdom under your authority.

One more, as we close: Ephesians 5:1. This is a blockbuster: "Therefore, be imitators of God as beloved children. And walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, and offered Himself up for us as a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. But, Christian, do not let immorality or any impurity or greed even be named among you as is proper among saints. There must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks." This is conduct to Christians. If this is your conduct, you have proven yourself unworthy of a throne. Make no mistake. This is conduct of Christians, and he's warning them that they must not, as believers, live like this.

Verse 5 says, "For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person, or covetous man who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." He's not talking about not having salvation. That's not an inheritance. This is something you've earned, and that is a place in the kingdom of God – a place of authority. And people who live like this will not have a throne of authority: "Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things, the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience." When the unbelievers do this, they get thrown into the lake of fire: "Therefore, do not be partakers with them." And some of you are doing these things: "For you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light. For the fruit of the light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth, trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them. For it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret."

The talk programs; the Oprah programs; the Geraldo programs; and, all the rest of those cesspools are a shameful, disgraceful thing because of the things that they talk about. What has become unthinkable; what people didn't discuss; and, what people found that they recoil from, these programs have now made normative in the experience of people. People have heard about these vile, degrading things, and they no longer have an outrage over them. That's what they have done for the American public, which has lost its doctrinal principles, that say that this is a disgraceful thing to even listen to a program like that. Plus, there is the principle of the apostle Paul that says, "Learn about good, but never learn about evil."

Verse 13: "But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light. For everything that becomes visible is light. For this reason, it says, 'Awake sleeper; arise from the dead; and, Christ will shine on you.'" You people who are walking in temporal fellowship, Paul says, "Get out of your dead condition." That's being in a spiritually dead condition. Confess these terrible things. Cease and desist. Get back in fellowship.

"Therefore, be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise. Making the most of your time because the days are evil. So, then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is." The will of the Lord is for you to prove yourself worthy, and have a throne of authority in His kingdom. And part of that worthiness is not living according to the sin nature dictates, which any Christian can do, and which the apostle Paul says, "It will cost you your throne."

Dr. John E. Danish, 1993

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