

Our Family  
Mark 10:28-30  
Charlie Brackett

Jesus taught on the dangers of riches to discipleship. When Peter heard it he said, "See, we have left all and followed You." Jesus answered, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time - houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions - and in the age to come, eternal life." There are several useful lessons to be drawn from Jesus' comments. **First**, the Lord expects us to leave good things - house, brothers, sisters, father, mother, even a spouse or children - when they are obstacles to serving Him.

**Second**, putting Jesus before all else means putting the gospel first. The gospel is the good news of the kingdom of God, His message of salvation. Jesus cannot be first and His message ignored. It must be first in our lives in that we follow it. And the task of spreading it must be first in our use of time and resources.

**Third**, sacrifices of property and family are compensated for in this life by God. He makes us a part of His family, a spiritual family with many spiritual brothers and sisters. The older sisters will be as mothers to you. The children of spiritual brothers and sisters become as your own children or grandchildren. Let me illustrate with a couple of personal incidents. The first happened in early 1992, just before my wife Maria and I moved to Czechoslovakia. We were to be gone for two years, a long time to be separated from our children and grandchildren. Soon after our plans were made public, a sister in Christ called to say, "My husband and I are taking out adoption papers on Darren." Darren is our son, unmarried at the time and living in Lexington, KY. Of course, she was kidding, but her concern was real, and they were there for him in our absence. Such grows out of that spiritual bond of being together in the Lord's family. Maria and I missed Darren and our daughters, both older than he, but the thought of leaving our little grandchildren caused us more than a little heartache. However, God provided. Just before leaving we met a young couple who announced to us they also were planning a move to Czechoslovakia soon after ours. They have three children, and the young mother said to us, "Our children will miss their grandparents over there. Would it be alright if we used you two as adopted grandparents?" Many such stories can be told of those who are in the family of God. In that family, one will never go without love. One will never lack food or shelter, or love.

**Fourth**, sacrificing for Jesus brings persecution and suffering. It has to. When you put God first, you become an oddity to the world, and that always brings persecution of some kind.

**Finally**, Jesus promises eternal life to those who put Him first. When you stop and consider it, Jesus makes us an attractive offer to follow Him. *Any* sacrifice is more than compensated.