

# Get In The Game

## Drills For Disciples: Part 10 Faith, Finances & the Future

Written By  
©Pastor Marty Baker  
November 15, 2015



**T**oday is the big game, the day we challenge you, as players on this local team of God, to step up to the proverbial plate and give generously, sacrificially, and prayerfully to the much needed \$13 million dollar new building. We know this expenditure is needed because of the rapid, steady, and stellar growth of our team over the last seven years, growth providentially inspired by the Lord of our team. What new structures do we need to effectively and comfortably reach the lost and mature the saints?

- A 1,400 seat sanctuary where the living God will be worshipped, the gospel will be presented in cultural clarity, and the Word of God will be expounded so believers can mature in their faith.
- Office space where all of the staff can be centrally located as a team, and where there's room for the additional staff we need to hire.
- Additional adult classrooms for the teaching of the Scriptures.
- A larger foyer to accommodate the 3,000 worshippers who call this their team.
- A re-purposing of several areas in our children's building to provide more room for the 700 children who attend here to learn about God.

- A re-purposing of our current worship facility so our burgeoning youth programs have ample room for fun, play, worship, and instruction in the ways of Christ.

With these new structures we will not only be better suited to train our team, but we'll be positioned to reach more who are hungry for a living, lasting relationship with the Team Owner, Jesus, the Christ (Matthew 16:16, 22:42; Luke 4:41; John 11:27).

When you play sports, sometimes you wind up on a team of all teams (I've been there, done that ... and it's exciting), a team with a penchant for winning pennants. And when you are on one of those teams, you typically wind up facing a big game, a game which is a game-changer, a game which you know you have to win, a game where you have to be on your game ... big time. BCC is one of those winning teams by God's good grace, and today is one of those pivotal points of play. We give Him the praise and glory for what He has, is, and will accomplish here. We also know, as His players, that it is a privilege to be on a team like this, and an even greater privilege to do our financial part to position us for future spiritual wins which will echo down the halls of eternity.

As you anticipate how you will do your financial part supporting this team at this significant time, it is most appropriate for all of us to remember how mature, talented, committed players typically play.

## A Maturing Player Plays With The Future In Mind

What future am I talking about? I'm speaking about the eschatological future, about the player's hope of gaining heaven. Paul, a masterful player in his day, played in this fashion:

<sup>1</sup> Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup> Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth (Colossians 3).

Spoken like a man who knew how to play the spiritual game. Zero in on the first command to "keep seeking the things above." The present tense nature of the first verbal imperative (ζητέω, "to investigate, deliberate, strive for")<sup>1</sup> tells us we should spend more time focusing on what lies ahead in Christ's presence than on what's going on down here. The second verbal command, "set your mind on things above" (φρονέω, "to think, be intent") re-enforces our need to play in this earthly field with a heavenly mindset. There are many reasons why we should play in this fashion (viz., it gives us hope and encouragement); however, we can't over-emphasize the motivational value. As we studied last week, a player with this approach to games does what's necessary to help the team win because he knows he will give account one day for how well he played when he stepped onto the field. Talk about motivation.

By way of review, we said a maturing player plays with the future in mind ...

## Because He Anticipates The Divine Review

<sup>1</sup> William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker, and Walter Bauer. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 428.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 1065.

Jesus' teaching in the *Parable of the Talents* (Matthew 25:15ff), and the *Parable of the Minas* (Luke 19:13) teach this important concept. His words in Luke reflect the same thing mentioned in Matthew (Matthew 10:26), and Mark (Mark 4:22):

“... for nothing is hidden, except to be revealed; nor has anything been secret, but that it should come to light (Luke 8:17)

One day, He reveals what kind of player you were and rewards you accordingly. His closing words in Revelation educate us as well about this crucial concept:

“Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done” (Revelation 22:12).

He will most assuredly evaluate how we used the time, talents, and treasures He entrusted to us to advance His team, not ours.

I present these concepts again to cause you to ask yourself, as I've had to ask myself: Am I ready to give account to God for my life as a team member? Have I played for the eternal or the temporal? Have I invested in the spiritual or the physical? If your spiritual eyesight is trained on the moment you will stand before the living God, you will, more likely, be prepared to stand there with great joy and excitement.

In addition to this first premise, we must add another. The maturing player plays with the future in mind ...

## Because He Anticipates The Divine Reward

Divine reward for powerful, strategic play isn't my idea. It's God's. He promises to lavishly reward us based on our commitment to the spiritual game before us; therefore, to pull back and say, “Well, I'm just going to be content to be in heaven,” or “We're not supposed to focus on our works,” then you are, in fact, challenging God himself. You are saying you know better. Really, you are questioning His direct teaching in both testaments:

“Behold, the Lord God will come with might, with His arm ruling for Him. Behold, His reward is with Him, and His recompense before Him” (Isaiah 40:10).

“<sup>11</sup> Blessed are you when men cast insults at you, and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, on account of Me. <sup>12</sup> Rejoice, and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you” (Matthew 5).

“<sup>28</sup> And Jesus said to them, ‘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 also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. <sup>29</sup> “And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, shall receive many times as much, and shall inherit eternal life (Matthew 19).

Actually, regarding this last exciting and challenging reference, Mark quotes Jesus as saying players who've given up close family relationships to do His bidding will receive a hundredfold in reward when He sees them in heaven (Mark 20:30). That's 10,000 percent interest.<sup>2</sup> And you thought your financial portfolio was doing well at 11%. Think again. The more sure investment is spiritual and eternal.

From this last Matthean reference, we also bump into the divinely inspired notion that rewards will vary. I mean, think about it. For those players who didn't play sacrificially, who didn't do the hard things for the Team Owner, there is no way they'll be rewarded in the fashion Jesus speaks about here. That would be unjust, and since He's just, it stands to reason He'll reward fairly ... and generously ... in light of the degree of our play. This variance in reward is also woven through the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25) and the Parable of the Minas we focused on in our last study. Applied to our financial lives, the premise is still applicable. Some will receive great reward in heaven for how they've sacrificially invested, some will receive a lesser reward, and some will have no reward in this area.

Other concepts about heavenly rewards need to be touched upon as well.

- *Rewards can be lost or forfeited:* "Watch yourselves, that you might not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward" (2 John 1:8). Loss of heaven is not in view because salvation is secure (John 3:16; 5:24; Romans 8:28-39). Contextually, here heavenly reward can be lost if a saint taps into false, heretical teaching.
- *Rewards can be lost based on carnal, godless behavior:* <sup>15</sup> "If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire." <sup>16</sup> Do you not know that you are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" (1 Corinthians 3). This classic, sober Pauline teaching contextually occurs in within the confines of speaking to the saints in Corinth about carnal, fleshly, worldly behavior. A saint who remembers they are God's temple will lively accordingly, resulting in greater reward in heaven.
- *Rewards are directly related to good works and generous giving:* <sup>17</sup> Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. <sup>18</sup> Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, <sup>19</sup> storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed" (1 Timothy 6). Does your life reflect this all-important balance? Are you performing good works which touch lives per the Lord's design for you (John 9:4; 14:12; Ephesians 2:8-10; 1 Timothy 2:10). Are you truly generous with the monies God has entrusted you as His spiritual steward?
- *Rewards impact our heavenly clothing:* What in the world? Read Revelation 19:7-8 and I think you'll see what I mean. It doesn't take a person with a Ph.D. in biblical hermeneutics to interpret these inspired, inerrant words: <sup>7</sup> "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready." <sup>8</sup> "It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints." The Marriage Supper of the Lamb is that special time when the

---

<sup>2</sup> Randy Alcorn, *Money, Possessions and Eternity* (Carol Stream: Tyndale House, 1989), 123.

Church, which is wed to Christ after the Rapture, sits down during the seven year tribulation and enjoys a marriage meal to end all marriage meals. Imagine who will be seated at this lavishly adorned table. Imagine who good the food will be. Imagine how great the conversation will be. Imagine the excitement. Before I get too carried away, let me focus on verse 8. The bride, the Church, wears unique, beautiful clothing, and John tells us this clothing is directly related to our good works, or how well we played the spiritual game. You might need to read that again so you can properly process it. Since we know God will reward us differently based on our level of play, I think we are safe to surmise there will be differences in our clothing as well. By looking at people at the feast, you'll readily be able to tell how well they invested their time, talents, and treasures on earth because their clothing will reflect their strategic sacrifice for ALL ETERNITY. Makes you want to ask yourself, "How will I be dressed in heaven?" There will be no greed, or covetousness, or envy in heaven, so we won't be all uptight about who's wearing what; however, there will be eternal, marked variance. Think about it. Will your clothes be an eternal reminder of how hard you played down here, and will they serve as a great point of glory to the Christ who gave you the clothes in the first place?

When will we get these clothes? Good question. The late Dr. John Walvoord, second president of Dallas Theological Seminary, gives us a solid, exciting biblical answer: "In Ephesians 5:26-27 Christ is said to be carrying on a present work with this church " that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of the water by the word" with a view to the future presentation and glory as stated in verse 27: " that he might present it to himself a glorious church, having no spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." The present work of sanctification of the church must be distinguished from justification. Justification by its nature is an act of God by which a believer is declared righteous, in contrast to sanctification, as in Ephesians 5:26, which is the work of God in the believer to bring his spiritual state up to the level of his position in Christ. The righteousness thus wrought in the life of the believer is pictured here has the fine linen which adorns the wife of the lamb. Though even this righteousness is a product of the grace of God, is distinguished as being related to human works, and experience, rather than to divine Fiat. The fine linen may, in some sense, be a part of the reward given at the judgment seat of Christ to those who have served the Lord, here seen collectively in the wife of the Lamb."<sup>3</sup>

Instructive and amazing, both at the same time. Your play now will impact your clothes there. Since this is a divine truth, I can't help but challenge you to play hard ... especially today.

- *Rewards will be related to our heavenly greeting.* What does this mean? I think Christ's Parable of the Unjust Steward gives us an interesting answer in Luke 16. Let's read it and make some cursory observations:

---

<sup>3</sup> John Walvoord, *The Revelation Of Jesus Christ* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 272.

<sup>1</sup> Now He was also saying to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and this manager was reported to him as squandering his possessions.” <sup>2</sup> “And he called him and said to him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an accounting of your management, for you can no longer be manager.’” <sup>3</sup> “The manager said to himself, ‘What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig; I am ashamed to beg.’” <sup>4</sup> ‘I know what I shall do, so that when I am removed from the management people will welcome me into their homes.’” <sup>5</sup> “And he summoned each one of his master’s debtors, and he began saying to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’” <sup>6</sup> “And he said, ‘A hundred measures of oil.’ And he said to him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.’” <sup>7</sup> “Then he said to another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ And he said, ‘A hundred measures of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty.’” <sup>8</sup> “And his master praised the unrighteous manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the sons of this age are more shrewd in relation to their own kind than the sons of light.” <sup>9</sup> “And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of the wealth of unrighteousness, so that when it fails, they will receive you into the eternal dwellings.” <sup>10</sup> “He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much.” <sup>11</sup> “Therefore if you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous wealth, who will entrust the true riches to you?” <sup>12</sup> “And if you have not been faithful in the use of that which is another’s, who will give you that which is your own?”

This is one of the most unusual of Christ’s parables hands down. It’s fairly easy to understand. Instead of properly investing his wealthy boss’s (God) money in sound investments, a money manager (a saint) squandered them in a variety of ways not mentioned. Based on this lackluster performance, the wealthy man prepared to fire his inept financial steward.

Realizing his employment end was neigh, the money manager became quite creative. He called in all of his master’s debtors and started forgiving part of their debts, while still collecting some money from them ... albeit a trimmed down amount. If your loan officer for your home loan called you in to her office today and said, “Say, you borrowed \$450,000 for your home six years ago, why don’t you just write us a check for \$100,000 and we’ll call it even,” what would you do? You’d whip out the ol’, dusty check book and start writing. You’d also really like this lady, right? How could you not? What did this formerly inept money manager do? He just made a whole bunch of lasting friends by his creative approach to debt reduction with money belonging to his master.

What is most shocking is Jesus praised this man. Why? Because he strategically used wealth in this instance to make sure that when he was without a job, he’d have a whole group of friends who couldn’t wait to greet and help him when he approached them. Interesting. Jesus then went on to say this most enlightening thing: <sup>9</sup> “And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of the wealth of unrighteousness, so that when it fails,

they will receive you into the eternal dwellings.” Ah, did you see what just happened? He went from the terrestrial to the celestial, from the temporal to the eternal, and from the earthly to the heavenly. Why did He do this? To teach us this important concept about good works done in His name and great generosity with the treasures His entrusted to us: *How I invest in His kingdom in the here and now will cause me to run into a whole lot of friends who will be in heaven because of my creative, selfless, thoughtful giving.* Let’s look at this from another angle. What will your greeting party be like in heaven? How many men, women, and children will be there because you were generous in investing your Lord’s resources be they time, talents, and/or treasures? The flipside is true, too. Will you have a small greeting party because you were small in your investment of those same divine resources? All players on the Lord’s team need to stop and really consider this final concept about our eternal reward. Really, who will be in heaven because of you? Who will be in heaven because you gave generously to help this church build facilities to reach countless people for him during and well beyond your lifetime?

As Jesus says in Revelation 22, He is coming suddenly and His eternal reward is with him. In light of His teaching concerning placing your treasure in heaven and not on earth in Matthew 6, I can’t help but ask: What materials will you have sent up for that great revelatory day?

I’ve purchased a town lot in heaven  
 On the city not built with hands.  
 I’m sending material daily  
 To build in that happy land.  
 I’d like a mansion on Main Street,  
 Whose streets are all paved with gold.  
 With a clear view of the pearly gates  
 Whose Christ takes care of the soul.

I want to send good material  
 That will stand the test of time.  
 So I’ll not be disappointed  
 When I reach that home sublime.

Prayer is for the foundation.  
 Faith and love for the walls,  
 Good deeds for the reinforcement.  
 That will stand when the Savior calls.

I would like you for my neighbor  
 In that city so divine  
 Maybe just across the street  
 Or your home close to mine.

Up there we will know no sorrow  
 Tears will never dim the eyes.  
 There we will rest in peace forever

In that happy home on high.

So my friends, start to building  
Your home beyond the sky  
Where we can all be together  
In the sweet by and by.

