

## First Here, or Last?

Mark 10:31

Charlie Brackett

Jesus taught His disciples that anyone who leaves his house and family for His sake and the gospel's would receive many houses and family members in this life - and after death, eternal life. One who follows the Lord Jesus is never without a family, a spiritual family which is willing to share its houses and material prosperity with those in need.

Then Jesus concluded His discourse with these words in verse 31: "But many who are first will be last, and the last first." Generally, we think of those who are first in this life as those who have achieved, those who have acquired and attained. "The have's" we might say, as opposed to the "have not's." We naturally admire and respect those who have nice things often without a thought that the things acquired may have been obtained by sinful means. We admire and, sometimes envy, someone with a large, supportive family. But what of the one who has lost all that he has, even his family, because of his faith in Jesus Christ? The one who is destitute in this life because of Christ? Alone and without, is he admired? Envied? Hardly!

But Jesus promises the scales will be balanced. "...many who are first will be last, and the last first." Attainment and position in this life do not count in the kingdom of God. Those who are first here, have their reward here. They enjoy the position they are in here. They glory in the respect and honor received here. But the one who is denied that here because of his service to the Savior, will have his reward later. Paul said plainly and simply in Romans 8:18, "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us."

The decision is ours - yours and mine. Will I be first in this life or the life to come. I can't have it both ways. Those who are first now, shall be last, and those who are last in this life shall be first in the eternal life to come. Lord, give me the courage to endure persecution for my faith that I might share in your glory later.