

# HOW MUCH MORE

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One of the common ways that God, in His Word, reasons with us is by using an obvious reality to illustrate a less obvious, but greater, reality. We may call it *“the principle of how much more.”*

For instance, in an effort to persuade us of God’s faithful provision of the necessities of life, Jesus said:

*GW Mat 6:27 “Can any of you add a single hour to your life by worrying?*

*28 “And why worry about clothes? Notice how the flowers grow in the field. They never work or spin yarn for clothes. 29 But I say that not even Solomon in all his majesty was dressed like one of these flowers. 30 That’s the way God clothes the grass in the field. Today it’s alive, and tomorrow it’s thrown into an incinerator. So how much more will he clothe you people who have so little faith?”*

Then He did it again:

*Mat 7:9 “You parents—if your children ask for a loaf of bread, do you give them a stone instead?*

*10 Or if they ask for a fish, do you give them a snake? Of course not! 11 So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him.*

In fact, Jesus was emphatic along this line:

*Mat 12:11 And he answered, “If you had a sheep that fell into a well on the Sabbath, wouldn’t you work to pull it out? Of course you would. 12 And how much more valuable is a person than a sheep! Yes, the law permits a person to do good on the Sabbath.”*

*Lk 11:11 “You fathers—if your children ask for a fish, do you give them a snake instead? 12 Or if they ask for an egg, do you give them a scorpion? Of course not! 13 So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.”*

*NKJV Lk 12:22 Then He said to His disciples, “Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on. 23 Life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing. 24 Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds? 25 And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? 26 If you then are not*

*able to do the least, why are you anxious for the rest? <sup>27</sup> Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. <sup>28</sup> If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will He clothe you, O you of little faith?*

This, then, is *the principle of how much more*.

The lesser thing—the thing that is obvious and commonly recognized—argues for the greater thing, which is less commonly recognized, but equally true or real: God, our Heavenly Father, values you! He provides what you need. He gives you good gifts. He gives you His Holy Spirit.

You can trust Him to do so! God will not take advantage of you; He will give you the advantage. He is kind and generous.

Now, let us move from the general to the specific. Using the same method of argument, Paul wants to teach us about Christ's saving power. To do so, he uses two lesser themes—justification and reconciliation—to prove his point.

Let's first define these terms.

*Justification* is a legal judgment that declares an individual free from guilt. The blood that was shed in Jesus' death has paid our debt for sin (the ransom for our souls!). We are not guiltless, but we are justified—that is, we are regarded and treated as though we are guiltless (justified means just-as-if-I'd never sinned). This judgment was made in the moment that you were born again. From that moment (to the present time) God has regarded and treated you as though you were innocent. You have been acquitted.

Justification is about attitude (how you are regarded and treated). Reconciliation is about affection (how God cares for you, loves you).

The death of Jesus accomplished more than our justification in God's sight; it also accomplished our *reconciliation* with God. In other words, Jesus' substitutionary sacrifice, erased the enmity, the animosity, between God and you. You were once an enemy of God; now you are His friend! You and God have been reconciled through Jesus Christ. You can come to Him without fear. You can speak to Him with hope.

These two specific benefits of our relationship with Christ point to something even greater. Hear it from Paul's letter to the Christians in Rome:

NIV Rom 5:9 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! <sup>10</sup> For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved

through his life! <sup>11</sup> Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

You see, while justification and reconciliation are specific benefits, salvation is much more complex. It is referred to in Hebrews (2:3) as “so great a salvation.” Our salvation in Christ reaches beyond time and space; it is eternal salvation!

The Bible says that we “have been saved” (that’s past tense, a done deal). But it also says we “are being saved” (that’s a present activity of the Holy Spirit in your life, overcoming sin in the flesh, here and now). Furthermore, the Bible also says we “shall be saved” (that’s future tense, indicating that there’s even more to come, that we can scarcely imagine).

We are grateful to God that we *have been* forgiven and justified, and have right relationship with our Creator and Savior.

We are also grateful that we *are now* “more than overcomers” today, because Christ’s Spirit lives in us, releasing His supernatural gifts.

We should also be grateful and encouraged by the fact that we *shall be* in Heaven with Christ (not in Hell), in a new body (not the old one, patched up), without sin’s power or presence, dwelling in righteousness and peace, for eternity.

We shall be saved from the wrath that is to come, because Christ lives in us today!

And Paul has argued from the lesser to the greater—if the simple, specific thing is true, how much more the complex, glorious thing is true.

And if the lesser things are glorious (and they are, indeed!), then how much more glorious are the greater things!

Our salvation has only begun! Your forgiveness—wondrous and vital as it is—is just peanuts in comparison to all the rest! The breath of God upon your life, the touch of the Spirit in your body, the gifts of the Spirit in your ministry—these things, as we know them, will all cease (they won’t disappear, but they will be absorbed into a life so far beyond anything we have known that there are no words to describe it).

Don’t settle for past benefits alone.

But also, don’t settle for present, but temporal, benefits either.

Just don’t settle.

Through your faith in Jesus Christ, embrace ALL that God has for you—in this life and the next. For as surely as there is a life in Christ in the here and now, there is also a far greater life in Jesus yet to come, yet to be discovered, and yet to be enjoyed.

It has come. And it is coming still. And it will come even more. From now into eternity!

That's *the principle of how much more*.