

The Rich Young Ruler
Mark 10:17-22
September 12, 2013

Introduction

The world is full of seekers. Many seek love, happiness, security, etc. But God? Nobody seeks after God as written in **Romans 3:11**. To make matters worse, there are those who are false seekers or dishonest seekers. They want the glories and securities of heaven, but they want it on their own terms. Such people are superficially religious. They may look religious and appear to be pursuing the kingdom of God, but if the truth be known, their hearts are actually far from God. This is the case with the rich young ruler. He looks like an ideal seeker. We would be delighted in telling him to believe in the Lord Jesus and believe that he has accepted Christ as his Savior. Sometimes we think that if we can get someone like him to pray or commit, then we think that his soul is secure!

Tragically, this ideal seeker is not a seeker at all. The truth is that he is only interested in adding on to what he possessed. He loves himself, not God. He loves earth, not heaven. He loves the material, not the spiritual.

So when he meets Jesus, seeking eternal life, Jesus stops him dead in his tracks. He never asks the young man for such decision. He never gives him a prayer to pray. He never even calls for a commitment to follow Him. We must not think for a moment that Jesus failed. He knows the human heart, and He is the perfect Evangelist. Let us learn how He deals with the rich young ruler.

Mark 10:17-22 *As Jesus started on His way, a man ran up to Him and fell on his knees before Him. "Good Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 18 "Why do you call Me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone. 19 You know the commandments: 'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.'"* **20** *"Teacher," he declared, "all these I have kept since I was a boy."* **21** *Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow Me."* **22** *At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.*

17 *As Jesus started on His way, a man ran up to Him and fell on his knees before Him. "Good Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"*

- Jesus started on His way
 - To where? To Jerusalem (**10:32**)
 - We do not know when He started out
 - On way to Jericho to Jerusalem from Perea (He could be coming from the house mentioned in **10:10**)
- A man ran up to Jesus
 - **Luke 18:18** – ruler
 - **Matthew 19:20** – young
 - He was rich (great wealth in **verse 22**)—rich young ruler
 - Ruler = ruler of the synagogue
 - Not necessarily a scribe or Pharisee
 - He had lots of properties
 - This was an upstanding Jewish young man who was also a ruler of a synagogue—good reputation
- Ran up to Him and fell on his knees before Him
 - This is very unusual (Matthew says “behold”)

- People in Middle East of upper status do not run because it is crude and beneath their dignity
- He kneels before Jesus in a humble manner!
- This is remarkable because the religious establishment in Judea hates Jesus and want Him dead

Note: The rich young ruler has so far excellent qualities as a seeker. He shows humility, urgency, and he comes to Jesus, the right person.

- Good Teacher
 - He recognized Jesus as a man from God
 - Through Jesus' healing or authoritative preaching
- What must I do to inherit eternal life
 - This is an urgent request from the young man (almost panicky)
 - He has a need
 - He has everything and is not sure of his salvation
 - He has a fear that he does not have the relationship with God that leads to eternal life
 - He even comes to the right Person
 - Wow! What an ideal seeker
 - The problem is that this rich young ruler leaves Jesus without salvation
 - What is interesting is how Jesus approaches this rich young ruler
 - In a normal situation, one would tell such person to believe on the Lord Jesus

Acts 2:37-38 *When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" 38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

Acts 16:30-31 *He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" 31 They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household."*

John 6:28-29 *Then they asked Him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?" 29 Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the One He has sent."*

- However Jesus does something unexpected
- He confronts the two issues that the young rich ruler does not have—faith and repentance
- He does this by focusing on the word “good”

18 *"Why do you call Me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone.*

Note: The rich young man called Jesus a good Teacher, but it is his view of “good” that is in error. He is thinking of good works and how he is good. Jesus brings this to light for the young man to see. He is exposing the superficial view of goodness.

- You do not know Me—I'm a total stranger to you
 - Why are you calling Me good as you do for everyone else?
- No one is good except God alone
 - Jesus is defining good

- God alone is good—perfect, holy, and righteous
- OT repeatedly affirms that man is not good (**Ps 5, 10, 14, 36, 53, 140, Is 59**)
 - Paul quotes them in **Romans 3:10-17**
- The reason is that the law was given to reveal God's holiness
 - To show how perfect God is and how completely evil man is
- The purpose of the law is to kill—to increase sin (**Rom 5:20**)
 - To reveal the sinfulness of humanity
 - It produces fear, terror, and guilt

19 *You know the commandments: 'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.'*

- Jesus then confronts the rich young ruler with the commandments
 - You think you are good? How about these laws? Have you kept them?
- All the laws that Jesus quote are from the second half of the Ten Commandments
 - All except one—do not defraud—cheat or take advantage of people
 - The point Jesus makes is how do you deal with your neighbors
 - Jesus does not even get into the first half—how we related to God

20 *"Teacher," he declared, "all these I have kept since I was a boy."*

- He thinks he knows the law!
- He thinks he follows the law wholly—problem is that he did not understand the depth of the law
- Nobody is able to do any of these without sinning because of our sin nature
- He is the product of the legalistic religious view (Think Paul in **Phil 3**)—they were only concerned with the external practices, not their thoughts and motives
- He is a lawbreaker because he is a sinner
 - He violated all of the 2nd half of the Ten Commandments
 - He at worst was a blasphemer

21 *Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow Me."*

- Jesus looked at him and loved him
 - Pity and compassion
 - He knows that the young man did not understand the depths of the law
- One thing you lack
 - You only need one thing—faith in Me and repentance
 - You need justification—you need to be right with God
- Go sell everything you have and give to the poor
 - Get rid of your god—your money
 - The young man was a violator of the 1st Commandment

Exodus 20:3 *You shall have no other gods before Me.*

Deuteronomy 6:5 *Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.*

- Come follow Me
 - Give up everything you have and believe in Me and follow Me
- Treasures in heaven

- You will have eternal life and abundant life in Me

22 *At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.*

- Tragic decision
- He loved money more than God
- He had the right attitude, right longing, and the right person
- He refused to give up his god

Lord's Supper

David

1 Corinthians 11:28-29

28 A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.

29 For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself.

1 Corinthians 11:26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Bread plates served

Norman—In Memory of Savior's Love (249) Verse 1 and 2a

Allen

1 Corinthians 11:25 In the same way, after supper He took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

Allen-Pray

Cup plates served

Norman—In Memory of Savior's Love (249) Verse 2b and 3

Jonathan

1 Corinthians 23-24

23 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night He was betrayed, took bread,

24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

Jonathan—Pray

Norman leads us with Lord's Prayer