

HAVE YOU EVER LEFT HOME AND HAD THE NAGGING FEELING THAT YOU'VE FORGOTTEN SOMETHING? YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT WAS,,, BUT,,, YOU JUST HAD THIS NAGGING FEELING. A MAN SAID THAT EVERY TIME,,, HIS FAMILY DROVE OFF FOR THIER VACATION,,, HIS MOM WOULD SAY:

HONEY,,, WE'VE GOT TO GO BACK HOME,,, I THINK I LEFT THE COFFEE POT TURNED ON AND I DON'T WANT THE HOUSE TO BURN DOWN! SO DAD WOULD TURN AROUND AND GO BACK AND CHECK. GUESS WHAT,,, THE COFFEE POT WOULD ALWAYS BE TURNED OFF! THIS CONTINUED FOR SEVERAL VACATIONS. UNTIL FINALLY,,, ON ONE TRIP,,, WHEN SHE TOLD HER HUSBAND TO TURN AROUND AND GO CHECK,,, HE DIDN'T SAY A WORD! HE SIMPLY PULLED OVER TO THE SIDE OF THE ROAD,,, GOT OUT OF THE CAR,,, OPENED THE TRUNK AND HANDED HIS WIFE,,, THE COFFEE POT,,, SAYING: **IT'S OFF!**

TODAYS PASSAGE,,, INTRODUCES US TO A YOUNG MAN WITH A NAGGING FEELING,,, THAT HE NEEDED TO SEARCH FOR SOMETHING.

THE RICH YOUNG RULER,,, THAT WE'LL TALK ABOUT TODAY,,, IS ONE OF THOSE UNIQUE CHARACTERS FROM THE BIBLE,,, WHO ARE LOOKING FOR SOMETHING MORE,,, PEOPLE WHO HAVE EVERYTHING AND YET,,, SEEM TO HAVE NOTHING,,, EXCEPT A NAGGING FEELING TO SEARCH FOR SOMETHING MORE IN LIFE!

HE WAS RICH,,, BUT SO UNWILLING,,, TO PART WITH HIS EARTHLY WEALTH,,, THAT HE SOLD HIS SOUL,,, TO KEEP HIS MONEY!

HE WAS SO NEAR THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

HE ASKED THE RIGHT QUESTIONS,,, HE UNDERSTOOD THE LAW,,, AND HE UNDERSTOOD JESUS,,, BUT,,, IN THE END,,, THE LOVE OF MONEY,,, KEPT HIM FROM THE KINGDOM,,, BUT GAVE HIM REASON FOR LIVING!

TODAY,,, WE HEAR ABOUT A RESPECTABLE YOUNG MAN,,, WHO CAME TO JESUS,,, SEARCHING FOR SPIRITUAL THINGS.

ST. MARK CALLS HIM A RULER,,, AND MANY BIBLE SCHOLARS BELIEVED HIM TO BE A LEADER IN THE SYNAGOGUE.

HE COMES TO JESUS,,, ENTHUSIASTIC,,, TO RECEIVE SPIRITUAL INSTRUCTION AND GUIDANCE.

THIS OUTSTANDING MEMBER,,, OF A RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY,,, RUNS TO JESUS,,, AND KNEELS BEFORE JESUS,,, WANTING TO KNOW THE WAY TO SALVATION AND SAYS TO HIM: *GOOD TEACHER,, WHAT MUST I DO,, TO INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE?*

LOOKING AT OUR LORD'S RESPONSE,,, IT'S A LITTLE SURPRISING,,, TO SEE HOW JESUS WAS ABOUT TO TREAT THIS YOUNG MAN.

FIRST: HE REBUKES HIM,,, **THEN**,,, HE TALKS ABOUT THE 10 COMMANDMENTS,,, **AND NEXT**,,, HE DEMANDS A PERSONAL SACRIFICE FROM HIM,,, **AND FINALLY**,,, JESUS ALLOWS HIM TO JUST WALK AWAY!

THE YOUNG MAN LOOKED AT JESUS AND SAID;
TEACHER,,, ALL OF THESE,,, I HAVE OBSERVED,,, FROM MY YOUTH.

NOW,,, YOU'D THINK THAT JESUS,,, WOULD HAVE ASKED HIM;

WILL YOU ACCEPT ME,,, AS YOUR LORD,,, AS MESSIAH?

BUT JESUS DIDN'T! INSTEAD,,, HE LOOKED LOVINGLY AT HIM AND SAID:

YOU ARE LACKING IN ONE THING! GO SELL WHAT YOU HAVE AND GIVE TO THE POOR AND YOU WILL HAVE TREASURES IN HEAVEN; THEN COME,,, FOLLOW ME!

IN HIS STATEMENTS,,, JESUS BRINGS UP THE LAW OF MOSES,,, (THE 10 COMMANDMENTS) BECAUSE,,, NO ONE,,, CAN SEE THEIR SINFUL CONDITION,,, UNTIL EXPOSED,,, COMPARED TO THE LAW AND GOD'S RIGHTEOUS EXPECTATIONS.

THE LAW OF MOSES,,, REVEALS OUR INABILITY TO PLEASE GOD,,, AND THAT REVELATION,,, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,,, LEADS US,,, TO SEEK HIS GRACE AND FORGIVENESS.

WITHOUT THE KNOWLEDGE *THAT WE CANNOT KEEP GOD'S LAW*,,, THE CROSS OF JESUS MAY DRAW SIMPATHY,,, BUT NOT REPENTENCE,,, HUMILITY AND SAVING FAITH,,, FROM US!

THIS YOUNG MAN- FAILED TO SEE THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE LAW; HE DIDN'T SEE HIMSELF,,, AS ONE WHO BROKE THE LAW!

DIRECTLY AFTER JESUS STATEMENTS,,, THE YOUNG MAN'S FACE FELL & HE WENT AWAY SAD,,, BECAUSE HE HAD MANY POSSESSIONS!

HE HAD TWO DEEP PROBLEMS,,, WHICH JESUS BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

FIRST: HE WAS UNAWARE OF HIS SPIRITUAL CONDITION. HE HAD ALREADY ENVISIONED HIMSELF A LIKELY CANDIDATE FOR HEAVEN. OUTWARDLY,,, HE WAS MORAL AND UPRIGHT,,, WHEN HE SAID;

TEACHER,,, ALL OF THESE,,, I HAVE OBSERVED,,, FROM MY YOUTH.

THE YOUNG MAN FIGURED,,, THAT HE DONE WHAT GOD REQUIRED,,, AND BECAUSE OF THAT,,, HE WAS "**GOOD ENOUGH**" TO **GET INTO HEAVEN!**

THEN ST. MARK SAID,,, THAT JESUS LOVED HIM ENOUGH TO CONFRONT HIM AGAIN,,, WITH HIS PROBLEM,,, IN AN ATTEMPT TO REACH HIS HEART AND SPIRIT.

JESUS SAID TO HIM;

YOU ARE LACKING IN ONE THING. GO,,, SELL WHAT YOU HAVE AND GIVE TO THE POOR AND YOU WILL HAVE TREASURES IN HEAVEN. THEN,,, COME,,, FOLLOW ME!

JESUS SAW THROUGH THIS YOUNG MAN'S FAÇADE,,, AND INTO HIS HEART. WHAT HE SAW WAS IDOLATRY!

THIS YOUNG RULER THOUGHT,,, *THAT HE WAS GOOD ENOUGH,,, ALL ON HIS OWN*. BUT AFTER MEETING JESUS,,, HE REALIZED THAT HE WAS ACTUALLY AN IDOLATOR.

THE YOUNG RULER SAW THAT THERE WAS;
“*SOMETHING BETWEEN HIS HEART,,, AND GOD*”!
IT WAS HIS LOVE OF WEALTH!

BUT MONEY,,, OR WEALTH,,, BROTHERS & SISTERS,,, ISN'T THE PROBLEM HERE!

MONEY,,, ISN'T EVEN THE REAL ROOT OF ALL EVIL,,, AS WE'VE HEARD,,, MANY TIMES!

IT'S THE LOVE OF MONEY,,, THAT'S THE PROBLEM!

JESUS WASN'T PROPOSING,,, A NEW KIND OF COMMANDMENT,,, HE WAS SIMPLY TESTING THE YOUNG MAN'S PRIORITIES.

WHAT JESUS REQUIRED FROM HIM,,, AND FROM US,,, WAS WHAT THIS MAN LACKED,,,

A FULL SURRENDER TO GOD!

THIS YOUNG MAN HAD “OUTTER PIETY” WITHOUT TRUE,,, “INTERIOR DEVOTION”!

HE TRIED TO KEEP TO THE “*LETTER OF THE LAW*” BUT,,, THE “*SPIRIT OF THE LAW*”,,, HADN'T REACHED HIS HEART!

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,,, FOR SOME,,, “*OUTWARDLY MORAL PEOPLE*”,,, THE MOTIVE OF THEIR VIRTUE,,, *IS TO EARN THE RESPECT OF SOCIETY*,,, IT'S A SELF EXAGGERATING MOTIVATION,,, RATHER THAN A TRUE SPIRITUAL MOTIVATION.

THE TEST OF LOYALTY,,, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,,, IS DIFFERENT FOR DIFFERENT PEOPLE. PERHAPS,,, IF WE WERE ON THAT ROAD WITH JESUS THAT DAY,,, HE WOULD HAVE GIVEN US,,, A DIFFERENT TEST.

THIS APPARENT DEVOUT,,, RELIGIOUS MAN,,, WAS SHOCKED TO LEARN,,, THAT HE WAS ACTUALLY AN IDOLATOR!

MANY FORMS OF IDOLATRY EXIST IN OUR WORLD TODAY. OUR SOCIETY SEEMS TO MAKE IDOLS OUT OF JUST ABOUT ANYTHING! AND WE'RE REALLY GOOD AT IT,, AREN'T WE?

WE CAN MAKE IDOLS OUT OF OUR CARS,,, JOBS,,, CLOTHES OR LACK OF THEM,,, SPORTS,,, HOBBIES,,, AND EVEN PIZZA. YOU NAME IT,, IT CAN BE AN IDOL!

THEN JESUS WENT FURTHER. HE ASKED HIS DISCIPLES SOME QUESTIONS;

REGARDING HOW HARD IT WOULD BE,, FOR THOSE WITH WEALTH,, TO ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

THEN JESUS REINFORCED HIS COUNCIL,,, WITH ONE OF THE MORE COLORFUL EXPRESSIONS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. HE CLAIMED THAT IT WOULD BE;

EASIER FOR A CAMEL TO ENTER THE EYE OF A NEEDLE,, THAN FOR THE RICH TO ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

DID JESUS REALLY EXPECT THIS WEALTHY YOUNG MAN TO FOLLOW THROUGH? WELL,,, WE DON'T REALLY KNOW,,, BUT WHAT WE DO KNOW IS THAT,,, JESUS ENCOURAGED HIM TO WALK IN A NEW DIRECTION,,, BUT INSTEAD,,, HIS FACE FELL,,, AND HE WALKED AWAY!

THE POINT IS; HE WASN'T WILLING TO SACRIFICE HIS WEALTH!

WE MAY NEVER BE CALLED TO "LITERALLY" SELL OUR POSSESSIONS,,, BUT GOD DOES REQUIRE THAT WE ACKNOWLEDGE THAT OUR WEALTH,,, IS NOT OUR OWN! EVERYTHING THAT WE HAVE BELONGS TO GOD!

AS FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST,,, BROTHERS & SISTERS,,, WE NEED TO BE WILLING TO SACRIFICE WHAT WE ARE ,, FOR WHAT WE COULD BECOME,,, AS DISCIPLES OF JESUS,,, AND SURRENDER OUR LIVES TO HIM,,, TO FOLLOW GOD'S CALL IN OUR LIVES.

SCRIPTURE TELLS US THAT; *THE DISCIPLES WERE EXCEEDENGLY ASTONISHED BY JESUS' STATEMENTS* AND THEY SAID; ***THEN WHO CAN BE SAVED.***

JESUS LOOKED AT THEM AND SAID;

FOR HUMAN BEINGS,, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE,, BUT FOR GOD,, ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE!

WITH THAT,, PETER BEGAN TO SAY TO JESUS;
WE HAVE GIVEN UP EVERYTHING AND FOLLOWED YOU!

HEARING THIS,, JESUS SAID;

AMEN,, I SAY TO YOU,, THERE IS NO ONE,, WHO HAS GIVEN UP HOUSE,, OR BROTHERS,, OR SISTERS,, OR MOTHER,, OR FATHER,, OR CHILDREN,, OR LANDS,, FOR MY SAKE AND FOR THE SAKE OF THE GOSPEL,, WHO WILL NOT RECEIVE A HUNDRED TIMES MORE,, NOW,, IN THIS PRESENT AGE,, HOUSES,, AND BROTHERS,, AND SISTERS,, AND MOTHERS,, AND CHILDREN,, AND LANDS WITH PERSECUTIONS AND ETERNAL LIFE,, IN THE AGE TO COME.

WHAT JESUS WAS SAYING,, IS THAT IF YOU WANT TO BE HIS FOLLOWER,, YOU HAVE TO PUT ASIDE,, YOUR SELFISH AMBITIONS,, SURRENDER YOUR LIFE TO HIM,, SHOULD YOUR CROSS AND FOLLOW HIM.

IF YOU TRY TO KEEP YOUR LIFE TO YOURSELF,, YOU WILL LOSE IT!

THE ONLY WAY,, THAT YOU CAN GIVE UP EVERYTHING THAT YOU HAVE,,

IS WHEN YOU REALIZE,, THAT EVERYTHING YOU HAVE,, DOESN'T BEGIN TO COMPARE,, TO EVERYTHING THAT GOD WANTS TO GIVE TO YOU!

***THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT
+++ AMEN+++***

(1,437) WDS,, 6 PGS