

Lessons From the Rich Young Ruler

As we look and study this lesson it is found in Matthew 19:16-22, Mark 10:17-22, and Luke 18:18-23. This is a lesson about a young man who seemed in his mind that everything was going in the right direction for him. He had wealth, youth, and power. What else would a person want today, right? But during this he sought out Jesus because of His fame and teaching he wanted to see what he could do more in his life. He trusted in the Lord that he could indeed help. Let us look at some of these lessons together:

Good People Can and Will Be Lost

This idea is difficult to understand. There are many people that are good and honest and charitable that fit into these criteria. Considering the rich young ruler, he sought the Lord out for interest in spiritual things. He had the right mentality to a certain degree. Asked Jesus calling Him "Good Teacher" of what he needed to do to have eternal life? We can see he wanted to go to heaven! He had a concern for his soul! In the accounts recorded for us we see him as a good moral man, raised well understanding commands that needed to be kept all the way back to his youth. Indeed, we can conclude this was a fine young man. Yet as we look, he was lost. He needed more in his life. He needed to get rid of these distractions from his riches and come to follow the Lord. But he went away sorrowfully because he did love those riches more. Jesus went on to teach about the difficulty of riches on the soul (**Matthew 19:23-24**).

We could also consider another example in the scripture of Cornelius (**Acts 10:1-6**). He is remembered as being a good, charitable, moral man. These things came before the Lord, and he was remembered but he needed more than that. He received instruction on what he needed to do, and he went and did those things (**Acts 10:32-48**). He received the gospel through Peter and acted upon this answering God's will.

Some Are Not Willing to Change

For this young man to have eternal life he was going to have to make changes in his life. Jesus taught him that was considerate of others but, needed to take the next step. He was showing some selfish traits. All he had to do was listen to the Lord and make those changes. Paul later instructs us this change in **Ephesians 4:17-24**. We need to make a transformation for the old ways into a new man in Christ created in true righteousness and holiness.

Some Are Not Willing to Give Up a Hindrance for their Salvation

This man's love of money stood between him and heaven. The question is which one meant more to him? Looking at his life, the answer is obvious, but he chose the riches above Christ. It is because of this he went away sorrowful (**Luke 18:23**). Let us ask ourselves a question: What hindrance in our life is causing us to either not obey or continue to be faithful as we should? Money? Possessions? Events? Family? Friends? Food? Our focus needs to be directed on seeking God and His kingdom first (**Matthew 6:33**)!

Choosing to do Nothing is a Choice for Disobedience

There is no indication that the young ruler here made a conscious effort to commit sin. What we are getting at is he did not say "I'd rather commit sin and go to hell for it as to giving up my riches". What we do see is that he did nothing when Jesus gave the commands on what he needed to do to have life! This is sin! When we neglect the commands of God that is disobedience (**James 4:17**). That in principle was a decision continuing in sin and heading for a place of torment.

God Requires More than some General Service

There are those who feel all is well if they are "generally" doing what is right. Many do not seem to worry about how careful their walk is (**Ephesians 5:15**) We are to be careful how we walk be cautious that we are not walking down a sinful path. We are to not walk as fools (**Matthew 7:26-27**). Instead, we are to listen to God. We are to obey Him! How many times have heard someone express a thought like this "if that was all I ever did wrong; I wouldn't worry about it"?

Big sins or little sins are sin to God! We cannot view sin as something common, nor can we serve God in a general way. We are to worship Him in Spirit and in truth (**John 4:35**). God has chosen us to be special to Him (**1 Peter 2:9**) and we serve Him and obey Him. The ruler here did some commands, but the Lord asked Him to take that extra step and he was unwilling to do it!

Conclusion:

This man in our text seemed to know the Law of Moses. He kept these commands, but he needed more and was unwilling to take that step. The one thing he lacked was enough to render him unfit for the kingdom of heaven. As we look, he went away sorrowful and separated from God.

That does not have to be the case for us today! There is hope in our life through Jesus Christ the Son of God. If we believe and obey, we can have the hope of eternal life. We can look at the lessons learned from the rich young ruler to see the need to listen to the Lord, to understand it is more than just being a good person, to see the need to make changes in our life. That is to believe, repent, confess our belief, and be baptized for the remission of our sins. The hope of eternal life is ours if we will remain faithful and obedient to God till death. What are you waiting for now?

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