

Jesus' words were sometimes confusing. Did Jesus say we have to be poor and have no possessions to receive eternal life?

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**A Discussion with a Rich Man – Matt. 19 NIV** - <sup>16</sup> Just then a man came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?"

<sup>17</sup> "Why do you ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, keep the commandments." <sup>18</sup> "Which ones?" he inquired.

Jesus replied, "'You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, <sup>19</sup> honor your father and mother,' and 'love your neighbor as yourself.'" <sup>20</sup> "All these I have kept," the young man said. "What do I still lack?"

<sup>21</sup> Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

<sup>22</sup> When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth. <sup>23</sup> Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly I tell you, it is hard for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. <sup>24</sup> Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."

<sup>25</sup> When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished and asked, "Who then can be saved?" <sup>26</sup> Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

<sup>27</sup> Peter answered him, "We have left everything to follow you! What then will there be for us?" <sup>28</sup> Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. <sup>29</sup> And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life. <sup>30</sup> But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first."

**Say what??** Story also in Mark 10; Luke 11. Focus on Matt's version.

He asks what "good thing" he can do to enter heaven. Nope.

- We **don't earn** our way into **heaven** by doing good things.
  - o This is like seeking "extra credit" – Doing "good things" beyond what the law demands . . . bigger mansion?
  - o Heaven – eternal life – is a gift of grace. Believe in Jesus Christ.
  - [Ephesians 2:8-9](#) - "For it is by grace you have been saved through faith, and this not from yourselves; it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast."

Jesus says – "keep the commandments." **Which ones?** He answers by naming the 5 "**do**" commandments. The **other 5** are about **the heart**.

- 10 commandments – listed in **Exodus 20:3-17**
- 1 - Have no other gods before me
- 2 – Not make idols, bow down to them or worship them;
- 3 – Take the name of the Lord in vain (misuse the name of the Lord)
- 4 - Remember the Sabbath & keep it holy
- 5 - [Honor your father and your mother](#)
- 6 - [Do not murder.](#)                      7 – [Do not commit adultery.](#)
- 8 – [Do not steal.](#)                      9 – [Do not give false testimony.](#)
- 10 – Do not covet
- -- **Leviticus 19:** has - <sup>18</sup> "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against a fellow Israelite, but love your neighbor as yourself."
  - o Ask a "DO" Question . . . Get a "DO" answer!

But, Man says, "What do I still lack"? He has **uncertainty**... something's missing.

We will **never have assurance** of heaven by **being good enough** for salvation.

- [We can have certainty](#) . . . and it's not "doing" the law or "good things."
- **Jesus** said - [John 3:16](#) – "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that everyone who believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."
- **Apostle Paul** – [Rom. 10:9](#) – "if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."

- The Jailer asked Paul & Silas “what must I do to be saved?” – **Acts 16:31** - They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved”
  - When Jesus was **on the cross** . . . conversation with 2 thieves:
  - **Luke 23:40-43** – “But the other criminal protested, “Don’t you fear God even when you have been sentenced to die? 41 We deserve to die for our crimes, but this man hasn’t done anything wrong.” 42 Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.” 43 And Jesus replied, **“I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise.”**
- **Assurance – Jesus gave it to the Thief. You can have assurance as well.**
  - Repent, believe in Jesus Christ, confess his faith.
    - Altho the thief repented & believed, he didn’t have the chance to mend his ways, restore what he had stolen, or get baptized.
  - **Never too late.** Eternal life is available, even if can’t live a “new life”
    - **John 1:12** – “Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God”

Jesus says, “if you want to be perfect, go and sell all your possessions & give the \$ to the poor. Then come, follow me.”

- **What?** Be **poor** to follow Jesus? We all pray to be **blessed**.

**First**, Jesus **knows the heart**. He knew this man, & He knows our hearts.

- This is the **only account** in the entire Bible in which someone is asked to sell all their possessions; it is **not a guide for everyone** in all circumstances.
  - **Zacchaeus**. Tax collector/repented. Give ½ wealth; 4x retribution.
  - **Luke 10 – religious expert** wanted to test Jesus, asked: “Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?” <sup>26</sup> Jesus replied, “What does the law of Moses say? How do you read it?” <sup>27</sup> The man answered, “You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind.’ And, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.” <sup>28</sup> **“Right!”** Jesus told him. **“Do this and you will live!”**
    - **Obeying the law...** or giving away possessions ... does not enable us to **earn our way** into heaven.
- This man observed all the law (outward appearances), even willing to do more (extra works) - but his **heart was divided**.

- His \$ was **competing** with God. **He did more... to earn more.**
  - “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.”- **Mt. 6:24**
- Jesus wants **undivided loyalty**. To **serve God out of love, not duty**.
- Jesus asked His Disciples to follow Him... to leave the old life behind.
  - Discipleship is the surrender of *self* . . . living a new life.
    - Disciples left jobs... family... **They loved Jesus more.**
  - Lot’s wife example . . . she clung to what she had. It cost her.
    - This rich man clung to his wealth. He rejected Jesus. . . sad.

Vs 23 - “**very hard for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of Heaven**” – Why?

- **Same reason** it’s hard for the strong – the intellectual - the politically connected: rely on their own resources, confidence in themselves.
- **Pride** keeps them from trusting God’s provision. **Doubt** holds them back.

**Second,** Jesus told man, “if you want to be perfect...” **Can we be Perfect?**

- **Matt. 5:47-48** – “And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even Gentiles do the same?”
- **48** - Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”
- **Perfection** is the way we **love**.
  - God is interested in how we love Him, and love each other.
  - Giving his \$ to the poor was showing love for God, & others.
- This man believed he was obedient to the commandments, but he was missing the most important part – love your neighbor.
  - Pharisees asked, Why eat w/tax collectors & sinners? **Mt. 9.**
  - Not healthy/sick. **Go/learn:** “**I desire mercy, not sacrifice.**”
- God would rather see us as Good Samaritan than following 613 rules.
  - **The most important thing:** Love God, Love each other.

Vs. 29 – “And everyone who has given up houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or property, for my sake, will receive a hundred times as much in return and will inherit eternal life.”