

Matthew 19:13-30 - The King's People!

Scriptures:

13 Then little children were brought to Him

Notes:

It seems that these parents were waiting for Jesus to finish dealing with the Pharisees.

These parents are bringing their children to Jesus because they believe He has the power and authority to bless their children. They believed Jesus could impart something to their children that might benefit them for the rest of their lives.

that He might put His hands on them and

Believing parents still impart blessings to their children when they bring them to Jesus, either through their godly lives, or in prayer. If you have children never stop bringing them to Jesus. He can still bless them even they don't want Him to.

pray, but the disciples rebuked them.

G2008 – “to
reprove v. — to
admonish or warn
forcefully (as
expressing strong
disapproval).”

‘the disciples rebuked them’ – There have been times in my life when I have been around famous people – maybe a dozen times. I have even met a few of them. What I noticed about many of them is that they were often swarmed by admirers. Some liked the attention, others looked like they wanted to be left alone.

It is possible the disciples are just trying to protect Jesus from being overwhelmed. Jesus didn't need their protection.

Scriptures:

14 But Jesus said, "Let the little children come

Notes:

to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is

the kingdom of heaven."

Scriptures:

15 And He laid His hands on them and

Notes:

Mark's gospel says, 'and blessed them'.

to bless (favor) v. — to invoke (or enact) divine favor, often implying a positive disposition or kind actions toward the recipient. [Logos]

departed from there.

16 Now behold, one came and said to

Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I

G18 – morally
good.

G1320 -

G18 -

do that I may have eternal life?"

Notes:

This account is also recorded in Mark and Luke's gospels. By comparing all three we learn that the 'one' is a rich young ruler who came running to Jesus and knelt down.

'Teacher' – He wants to know what he can do so that he inherits eternal life. The path to eternal life is not by what you do in this life. You can never do enough good things to inherit eternal life. Eternal life is attained by putting our trust in Him whom eternal life was made possible – Christ Jesus.

By referring to Jesus as good and then asking Him what 'good' he can do to inherit eternal life. This man is admitting that he doesn't know the way to eternal life and believes that being like Jesus will earn him entrance into eternal life in heaven.

Why would this rich young ruler come to Jesus and ask Him this question. From the outside he has everything going for him. According to the way his culture thought he was on the fast track to heaven. It seems something was causing him to question what his culture and his heart was telling him. Before Jesus came, he probably gave little thought to his eternity. But Jesus did and said things that caused him to examine his beliefs.

With all his wealth, position, and power he had no peace or confidence in his eternal future. This is often the case with people who put their hopes in someone or something other than Christ. At some point, they realize or at least suspect there is something missing and that thing that is missing is very important.

This is why we teach the way we do. God's Word empowered and enlivened by the Spirit of God has the power to reach into people's hearts and challenge them to examine what they believe.

'What good thing shall I do...' The rich young ruler believed the way to heaven was by doing good. This is still a common belief by many. They think if their good outweighs their bad that God will let them into heaven. Or they think that if they avoid the really big sins, that God will give them a special dispensation.

Jesus will challenge this wrong thinking.

17 So He said to him, "Why do you call Me

Notes:

This is the response every Jewish rabbi would give.

good? No one is good but One, that is, God.

But if you want to enter into life, keep the

G1525 -

G5083 – to
observe, obey.

commandments."

Scriptures:

18 He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus

Notes:

Jesus only lists the fifth through ninth commandments. We did He leave out the other five? The first four commandments are God-centered and the last six are man-centered. Of the last six, Jesus leaves out, "You shall not covet."

said, "'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not

commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You

shall not bear false witness,'

Scriptures:

19 'Honor your father and your mother,'

Notes:

In addition to five of the commandments, Jesus quotes ([Leviticus 19:18](#)). In a couple of chapters Jesus will refer to this one as one the greatest commandments when asked a similar question.

and, 'You shall love your neighbor as

yourself.'"

20 The young man said to Him, "All these

things I have kept from my youth. What

do I still lack?"

G5302 -

Notes:

After the man asks this question, Marks gospel says, "Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him..." There is no reason to believe that this man wasn't sincere in his desire to be right with God. He approached Jesus in the way that was right for the way he had learned to be right with God.

Scriptures:

John 12:8 - For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always.

1 John 3:16-17 -

By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 17 But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? 18 My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.

21 Jesus said to him, "If you want to be

perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the

G5046 – "perfect
adj. — being
complete of its
kind and without
defect or
blemish."

poor, and you will have treasure in heaven;

G2344 – wealth.

and come, follow Me."

G190 -

Notes:

This is a test for this rich young ruler. It is not a doctrine that believers must sell all their possessions and give to the poor. Zacchaeus gave away half of his wealth and Jesus praised him for it.

This is a test of the rich young ruler's love of God and others. It was a test to see if he trusted God. Jesus said there would always be poor people in the world (John 12:8). And then Jesus inspired John to write about rich people and their behavior toward poor believers (1 John 3:16-18).

The rich young ruler seems sincere in his question, but Jesus knows what is in his heart. The man's sincerity is based on a wrong ideas and priorities. Jesus is challenging him to examine his heart and priorities. Is he willing to give up everything to follow Jesus? Is he willing to follow and obey Jesus no matter where it leads him? Does the promise of heaven fill his heart with more joy and pleasure than the fleeting pleasures of worldly possessions? Does the desire to follow Christ exceed the desire for things? Was he willing to dethrone the things of this world like wealth and possessions, or fame and reputation, to place in his rightful on the throne of his heart? These are questions that every believer should answer on a regular basis.

It has been said, "If Christ is not Lord of all, He is not Lord at all!"

Scriptures:

John 14:6 - Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

22 But when the young man heard that saying,

he went away sorrowful, for he had great

in Christ Jesus. Without Christ no one can be saved (John 14:6).

possessions.

Notes:

He was sad because he was leaving with his question unanswered. He wanted to know how to get to heaven and keep his wealth.

The problem was not this man's great possessions – it was his attitude toward those possessions. They stood between him and God. In that culture it was believed that great possessions were a sign of righteousness before God. Nowhere in the Bible is that taught. Righteousness is a function of faith that manifests in obedience to God and His revealed Word.

It is possible to have great possessions and walk in faith and obedience to God. This man held his possessions too tightly. God must come first, even if that means giving up all our possessions.

One of the lessons of this account is that a desire to go to heaven does not mean someone is saved. This young man knew about God and heaven and yet went away without salvation. What He lacked was trust

Scriptures:

23 Then Jesus said to His disciples,

Notes:

Riches, wealth, and possessions tend to draw someone away from God. The more you have, the more you must do to manage, protect, and utilize what you have. The less someone has, the more free they are to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit immediately.

"Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a

G1423 -

rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.

Scriptures:

24 And again I say to you, it is easier for a

Notes:

The debate over this verse is whether to take it literally or not. If literally, it would be impossible for a camel (the largest animal in Israel) to go through the eye of a needle (the smallest manmade opening). Some suggest this is referring to a small gate into the city of Jerusalem that a camel could go through, but it would have to kneel and to be completely unloaded and then crawl on its belly through. That would be difficult but not impossible. If this is the correct interpretation, then it is suggesting that for a rich man to enter heaven he would have to kneel before Jesus, completely offload the things of this world, at least in his heart, and then humbly walk with Jesus.

camel to go through the eye of a needle than

for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

Scriptures:

25 When His disciples heard ¹²it, they were

Notes:

They had grown up believing that rich people were blessed by God and therefore were guaranteed a place in heaven. In their minds, if rich people cannot be saved, then no one else can.

greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be

G1605 – to be
utterly amazed.

¹² saved?"

Scriptures:

26 But Jesus looked at ¹²them and said to them, ¹²

Notes:

It is impossible for a man or woman to save themselves. Salvation is a work of God by grace through faith in the finished work of Christ Jesus.

"With men this is impossible, but with God all

G102 -

things are possible."

27 Then Peter answered and said to Him,

“See, we have left all and followed You.

Therefore what shall we have?”

Notes:

Is it worth it to be a Christian?

We must keep in mind that the disciples were not yet indwelt with the Holy Spirit. Peter's question is a very natural one.

As we look back onto these scenes through the lens of spirit-filled faith we are shocked and offended by Peter's question. I would give all that I have to have been there with Jesus listening to His teaching, watching His miracles, and experiencing His love.

Jesus' response is both encouraging and mysterious.

28 So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to

Notes:

'twelves tribes of Israel' – The world seems to be lining up against Israel. Jesus looks into a distant future and says they will still be around. The whole world can try to destroy Israel but cannot kill what God intends to keep alive.

you, that in the regeneration, when the

G3824 – rebirth, new age, renewal.
"regeneration n. — the act that results in something (which already exists) coming into being afresh, or starting over; especially used of the soul or the earth being completely refashioned."

Son of Man sits on the throne of His

glory, you who have followed Me will also sit

on twelve thrones, judging the

G2919 -

twelve tribes of Israel.

29 And everyone who has left houses or

brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife

or children or lands, for ^{My} name's sake, shall

receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.

Notes:

This is not a today promise – it points to the time of the regeneration when Jesus is seated on His throne.

This is one of the many Scriptures in the Bible that tell us that God will reward those who serve Him. It is always a mistake to try to define what those rewards might be. God, in His sovereignty, will reward His servants as He wills. This verse tells us that the reward will far exceed the sacrifice. No matter how small our sacrifice might be, God will be faithful to reward those who choose to serve Him.

"No person can work for God and go unrewarded. The tiny seed of sacrifice germinates to produce a great harvest." (Powell, 1986) page 353

Scriptures:
Ephesians 2:10 - For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

³⁰ But many *who* are first will be last, and the

G4413 -

G2078 - ἔσχατος
(eschatos)

Notes:
ἔσχατος (eschatos) – We get the word eschatology from this Greek word.

‘first’ – This is using some human form of measurement – wealth, status, experience, reputation, fame, etc. It is unfortunate that this verse is not in chapter 20. It seems to fit better there.

This is an encouragement to be faithful to serve God no matter how significant you might imagine yourself to be in the world’s eyes. Some Christ-followers appear very significant in the world’s eyes, and yet when they get to heaven will not be rewarded as much as others who appeared less significant because of faithfulness to God’s call and gifting.

In heaven we will be rewarded for our works, but those works will be evaluated by our faithfulness. Whatever work God gives you – be faithful. Even if that service to God seems small and insignificant. In God’s kingdom there is no such as insignificant service to God. Everything that He leads His people to do is significant and important.

As men and women of God, we should not be looking to be important in the kingdom of God. Be faithful in whatever God sets before you.

And just as there are in insignificant acts of service to God, there are no useless Christ-followers. Everyone in His kingdom has a place and a purpose ([Ephesians 2:10](#)).

Find your place and purpose and be faithful to it. If you are not sure where your place is or what your purpose is, then just find something to do. Troy’s son Eli asked to do serve around the church. He regularly comes and cleans up the trash in the parking lot. Chris asked me if there was anything he could help with. Now, every Sunday, he sets up for the weekly Bible studies. Look around and try to find something to do. Or ask me or one of the elders and keep asking until you find something. Get on the Prayer Team – be an usher or greeter. Help clean. Teach in the Children’s Ministry. Find something and then be faithful to it until God leads you to something else.

last first.

When we get to heaven, there are going to be some who have faithfully cared for the babies and taught the children who will receive a greater reward than many pastors preaching from pulpits. Jesus said in verse 14, “Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” It is a good work to help children come to and learn about Jesus.

God is not looking for people to do great works of service for Him but to do works of faithful service. Not because those works will get you into heaven. They won’t – only faith is Christ Jesus can do that. Not even for the rewards you will get for doing them. God is looking for His people to serve Him because they are thankful for everything He has done and because they love Him. Brothers and sisters – let’s be faithful servants of Our great God who loves us.

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