

May 19th, 2019
Treasuring Christ
Mark 10:17-31

BIBLE IN A YEAR READING PLAN

May 12 2 Chron. 6-8	May 16 2 Chron. 21-24
May 13 2 Chron. 9-12	May 17 2 Chron. 25-27
May 14 2 Chron. 13-17	May 18 2 Chron. 28-31
May 15 2 Chron. 18-20	May 19 2 Chron. 32-34

Lesson Introduction: *In our lesson this week, we come to a passage that tells us much about our misunderstanding concerning how salvation is received. This section of the text is what has become commonly known as the story of The Rich Young Ruler. As we study these verses, we will consider how there is too often a presumption of innocence in the heart of humans before God. From there we will see how God requires complete surrender to Christ for salvation. We will close by considering how God makes the impossible possible.*

FOUNDATIONAL TRUTHS OF THE PASSAGE:

- **God alone is good (V. 17-18)**
- **To receive salvation is to surrender completely to the lordship of Christ (V. 19-22)**
- **It is impossible to be saved apart from the miraculous work of God through Christ (V. 23-31)**

Mark 10:17-31 English Standard Version

17 And as he was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 18 And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. 19 You know the commandments: 'Do not murder, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and mother.'" 20 And he said to him, "Teacher, all these I have kept from my youth." 21 And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." 22 Disheartened by the saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

23 And Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How difficult it will be for those who have wealth to

enter the kingdom of God!" 24 And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said to them again, "Children, how difficult it is to enter the kingdom of God! 25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God." 26 And they were exceedingly astonished, and said to him, "Then who can be saved?" 27 Jesus looked at them and said, "With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God." 28 Peter began to say to him, "See, we have left everything and followed you." 29 Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, 30 who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life. 31 But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

Discussion Section 1: Only God is Good (V.17-18)

-Was the man wrong for calling Jesus "good"?

-Why did Jesus respond to the man by stating that, "**only God is good**"?

-What was Jesus teaching the man from the very beginning of their conversation?

Note: *Our passage this week begins with what seems like a genuinely good guy seeking real answers from Jesus about how to attain salvation. This man shows great reverence in the presence of Jesus, bowing to Him, and calling Him, "good teacher." On the surface, there is not much to pick apart about the way this man is seeking salvation. Yet, from the very beginning of this interaction, Jesus seems to be slightly confrontational. It may seem strange to us that Jesus, God in flesh (John 1:1, 14), was most certainly good, and He knew very well that He was, yet He questioned the man on this topic. Was Jesus simply trying to confuse this man seeking answers, or was He questioning him with the intent of teaching him something about the human condition? What we will see, is that the latter is true.*

*When Jesus questions the man for calling Him good, it was not due the fact that He believed Himself not to be good, but rather, it was to get to the heart of what the young man **really** believed about Him. Jesus was questioning the man's understanding of **why** Jesus was*

good. Clearly, this man was not coming to Jesus with the understanding that He was the Messiah, God in flesh, rather, he simply believed Jesus to be a praiseworthy rabbi. When Jesus questioned the man about calling Him good, He showed him that there was a flaw in his thinking already. He is essentially saying, “there is no rabbi that is good, and you’re not good either, only I (God) am good.” The man’s assumption of goodness about someone he only knew to be a human rabbi showed that he assumed there was some goodness in people (himself included) that could lead to salvation. Hearing the error in the man’s thought process, Jesus takes Him to the foundational reality that **“only God is good.”** If we come to God with any thought of our own goodness in mind, we will fail to understand the true gospel, and will rely on self-righteousness for our salvation. Jesus is teaching us here that we have no goodness in us by which we can be saved.

Discussion Section 2: Sell All That You Have (V. 19-22)

- Why does Jesus begin to answer the man’s question by pointing him to the law?
- What is significant about the commandments Jesus listed?
- Why does Jesus tell them man to sell all His possessions? How was this a loving thing to tell the man?

Note: After telling the man that no one is good except God, Jesus then begins to answer the man’s question about how to inherit eternal life by pointing him to the law! He points to the moral commands from the 10 Commandments. Amazingly, the man says that He has kept all those commandments. At that point, the rich young ruler must have been feeling pretty good about himself. Of course, we know that, while on the surface this man may have been pure, no one is without breaking all the commandments in our hearts (**Matthew 5:21-48**). But even if he had kept all these moral commands, there was still something missing, and Jesus was about to expose what it was.

Verse 21 tells us that Jesus loved this young man, and thus, He tells him to sell all of possessions and follow Him. What we see here is Jesus loving this man enough to expose to him what was keeping him from eternal life. What was exposed was the fact that this man loved his possessions more than he did God. Jesus intentionally left

out the first 4 commands found in the 10 Commandments when He first spoke with the man about how to inherit eternal life. Those first 4 commands deal with our love and devotion to God. The man thought he was covered because he had lived a good moral life, but Jesus’ challenge to sell all he owned revealed clearly what his god was. Jesus was teaching the young man that anything less than treasuring Christ above all else, and submitting completely to His lordship, will not be sufficient for salvation. Money was his god; thus, he had broken the first and greatest commandment (**Exodus 20:1, Deuteronomy 6:5**). As we consider this reality, may we be challenged to consider where our ultimate allegiances lie. We may think we have lived the moral life required for salvation, but Jesus makes it clear that eternal life is found only in valuing Him as our supreme treasure.

Discussion Section 3: All Things Are Possible with God (V. 23-31)

- Why does Jesus specify the degree of difficulty a wealthy man will have entering the kingdom of Heaven?
- Why were the disciples **“exceedingly astonished”** by Jesus’ statement?
- What do Jesus’ statements in verse 29-31 tell us about the lifestyle associated with true saving faith?

Note: Jesus uses the outrageous imagery of a camel passing through the eye of a needle to denote, not the difficulty, but the impossibility of a rich man entering Heaven! His disciples were shocked by this, as they would have seen wealth as God’s favor upon a person. For them, if a rich person could not enter Heaven, who could!? Jesus then makes the statement, pertaining to all people, **“With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God.”** This is the crux of the matter. The rich young ruler wanted to know what he must **do** to inherit eternal life. What Jesus affirms here at the end of this passage, is that the man was asking the wrong question, for there was nothing **he** could do. Trying to work our way into the kingdom of God is as futile an effort as trying to force a camel through the eye of a needle. The way to God is not through **doing** but **believing**. Believing that, although we cannot do the impossible, God is more than capable through His Son Jesus Christ.