

## Rich Young Ruler

Mark 10:17-31

6/06/04

### Intro

As Jesus is setting out on a journey, a young man ran up to Him with a question of great importance – **“What shall I do to inherit eternal life?”**

The conversation between them reveals some wisdom that applies to each of us because it shows us the cost of discipleship – the cost of following Jesus.

*These verses give us insights into the importance of determining our spiritual priorities in life.*

### I. **It's Not Enough to Have It All**

#### A. He was rich, young, and a ruler

- This man was living the life many people dream of – to be rich, young, and have power.
- But it didn't satisfy the desire of his soul.
- Only in God is the soul satisfied.

#### **Psalm 63: 1-4 - my soul thirsts for You...**

- He knew he lacked eternal life.
- Something inside his heart sought for it.

#### B. He even had outward righteousness

- By all appearances he was a man who even seemed to satisfy the requirements of the Law.
- Many thought that outward righteousness would be enough.

**Illus – But this is like trying to clean up a foul mouth by brushing your teeth...**

- The problem was in his heart and Jesus knew it.
- Outward righteousness is often for the purpose of gaining approval of men rather than the approval of God.

**John 12:43, “For they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God.”**

#### C. But God sees the heart

- We may be able to look good to others, but God sees the heart.

**1 Samuel 16:7, “for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”**

- Jesus knew that this man had something in his life that was more important to him than God.

**Illus** – it was as if the man was saying, *I seek something greater than all these things*. But Jesus showed him that he was seeking something that in his heart was *less than all these things*.

**Psalm 44:20-21, “If we had forgotten the name of our God or extended our hands to a strange god, would not God find this out? For He knows the secrets of the heart.”**

## II. **Make Jesus Your First Love**

A. He loved his money more than he loved God

- For the rich, young ruler, it was money.

**Illus – Jack Benny used to have a skit...Your money or your life – well? “I’m thinking, I’m thinking,” he replied.**

- He knows what we love that is greater than our love for God.

**Illus – to the church in Ephesus Jesus sent word...**

**Revelation 2:4-5, “But I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first;”**

B. Leave the world behind and follow Jesus

- There is an old song we used to sing in the church that captured this thought beautifully..

**I have decided to follow Jesus...**

“The world behind me, the cross before me.  
The world behind me, the cross before me.  
No turning back, no turning back.”

**Illus – When Matthew was called,** he got up, left behind his tax-collection table and followed Jesus.

**Matthew 6:24, “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”**

C. You will have treasure in heaven

- This promise was made twice – once to the rich, young ruler, and once to the disciples

- Jesus said the same thing on another occasion;

**Matthew 6:19-21, “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”**

- To the disciples he promised a hundred-fold increase in this also, what did He mean?

**Vs 10:29-30**

- **The disciples literally left everything.**
- **And will find all these available to them as they travel from place to place.**

### III. All Things are Possible with God

#### A. It is impossible for the wealthy

- Some say that Jesus was saying it was possible, but difficult. The disciples thought He meant impossible and they are right.
- **Why is it impossible? Those who think of themselves as wealthy...**
  - It destroys teachability.
  - It creates a false sense of power and authority so that they cannot receive; they believe they know everything and should be the teacher.
  - It makes them insensitive to the needs of others. They see others as less than them and as their servants.
  - It can enslave those who are attached to it.

**Mark 4:19, “but the worries of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.”**

#### B. Blessed are the poor in spirit

- It’s not until we realize that we are spiritually bankrupt that we can enter a relationship with Jesus Christ.

**Revelation 3:17-19, Because you say, " I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable**

**and poor and blind and naked, I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see.**

**Mark 2:17, And hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick; I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners."**

### Conclusion

**The question is simple, “What makes you alive?”  
May we be made alive by the things of the Spirit and not the things of this world.**

**\* “The world is poor because her fortune is buried in heaven, but all her treasure maps are of the earth...”**

**The Finale, by Calvin Miller**