

The Rich, Young Ruler

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Wealth, As a Sign of God's Blessing

- ▶ Abram:
 - Gen. 13:2 – Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver and in gold.
- ▶ Isaac:
 - Gen. 24:35 – "The LORD has greatly blessed my master, so that he has become rich; and He has given him flocks and herds, and silver and gold, and servants and maids, and camels and donkeys.
 - Gen. 26:13 – and the man became rich, and continued to grow richer until he became very wealthy;
- ▶ Jacob:
 - Gen. 30:43 – So the man became exceedingly prosperous, and had large flocks and female and male servants and camels and donkeys.

I. An Apparent Seeker (17b)

The Final Journey to Jerusalem



I. An Apparent Seeker (17b)

- ▶ **A. Who He Is**
 - Mark simply refers to him in the original language as "one" or "a certain one."
 - Matthew tells us that he was "a young man" (19:20).
 - Luke calls him "a ... ruler" (18:18)
 - Matthew and Mark tell us that he owned much property, (i.e. land or real estate).
 - Luke says that he was "extremely rich" (18:23).
- ▶ **B. What He Does**
 - He runs up to Jesus.
 - He knelt before Jesus.

I. An Apparent Seeker (17b)

- ▶ **C. What He Asks**
 - Cf. Matt. 19:16 – And someone came to Him and said, "Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?"
 - Dan. 12:2 – "Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt.
 - Synonymous Expressions
 - 17 – inheriting eternal life
 - 23 – entering the kingdom of God
 - 26 – being spiritually saved or rescued

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His Spiritual Assets

- ▶ 1) A commitment to the true God
- ▶ 2) A earnest desire to get Jesus' answer on life's most important question.
- ▶ 3) A troubled conscience
- ▶ 4) An emotional response to Jesus
- ▶ 5) A deep respect for Jesus as a moral teacher.
- ▶ 6) A genuine interest in Jesus' teaching
- ▶ 7) A longing for eternal life
- ▶ 8) A thorough knowledge of God's Law.
- ▶ 9) An external conformity to God's Word.
- ▶ 10) A spiritual heritage in his family
- ▶ 11) An intensity and sincerity about spiritual things.
- ▶ 12) A consistent display of self-discipline

II. Jesus' Shocking Answer (18-19)

- ▶ Cf. John 2:24-25 – But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men, and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man.
- ▶ **A. Jesus corrects his flawed view of man and his sinfulness.**

II. Jesus' Shocking Answer (18-19)

- ▶ What Jesus is not saying...
 - 1) He is not good.
 - Jesus' own testimony...
 - John 8:46 – "Which one of you convicts Me of sin? If I speak truth, why do you not believe Me?"
 - John's testimony ...
 - 1 John 3:5 – You know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin.
 - Peter's testimony...
 - 1 Pet. 2:22 – WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH;
 - Paul's testimony...
 - 2 Cor. 5:21 – He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.
 - 2) He is not God.
 - Cf. Mark 1:1; 2:10 – forgiveness is prerogative of deity; 8:29 – the Messiah, and Matt. adds "the Son of the living God."
 - Cf. John 8:58-59

No One Is Good Except God Alone!

- ▶ Jesus really makes two separate assertions in that one brief sentence...
 - 1) No human being is good!
 - Matt. 19:16-17a – putting together the three accounts, apparently the man said, "Good teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"
 - The Elements of Original Sin
 - 1) Imputed Guilt
 - 2) Inherited Pollution/Corruption
 - a) Total depravity
 - b) Total inability

No One Is Good Except God Alone!

- ▶ Unregenerate man cannot do anything spiritually good.
 - John 8:34 – Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.
 - John 8:44 – "You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies.
 - John 15:4-5 – "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither *can* you unless you abide in Me.⁵ "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.
 - Rom. 3:12b – THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE."

No One Is Good Except God Alone!

- ▶ Jesus really makes two separate assertions in that one brief sentence...
 - 1) No human being is good!
 - 2) God alone is good!
 - Only God achieves the standard of moral goodness.

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II. Jesus' Shocking Answer (18-19)

- ▶ **A. Jesus corrects his flawed view of man and his sinfulness.**
- ▶ **B. Jesus corrects his flawed view of salvation.**
 - Matt. 19:17b-19
 - Jesus lists 5 of the last 6 of the Ten Commandments—essentially the second table of the law.
 - The only one missing: "You shall not covet."
 - Mark includes what many commentators believe may be a reference to the 10th: "do not defraud."
 - Summarizes: Matt. 19:19 – and YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."

Why Does Jesus Give This Answer?

- ▶ Only two options...
 - 1) Because a person truly can gain eternal life by keeping the commandments.
 - 2) Because a person can never do this in a way that meets the divine standard and so it drives him to God as his only hope.
- ▶ The OT does seem to say that keeping the law will provide eternal life.
 - Deut. 30:15ff
 - Ezek. 33:15 – *if a wicked man restores a pledge, pays back what he has taken by robbery, walks by the statutes which ensure life without committing iniquity, he shall surely live; he shall not die.*

The Purpose of the Law

- ▶ The purpose of the moral law for unregenerate men and women is to:
 - 1. Awaken their consciences
 - Rom. 3:20 – "through the law comes the knowledge of sin."
 - Rom. 7:7 – "w/o the law I did not know what sin was."
 - 2. Drive them to Christ
 - Gal. 3:22 – "Scripture has shut up all men under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to all those who believe."
 - Gal. 3:24 – "law has become our tutor to bring us to Christ."

The Purpose of the Law

- ▶ The purpose of the moral law for unregenerate men and women is to:
 - 1. Awaken their consciences
 - 2. Drive them to Christ
 - 3. Leave them without excuse and under God's curse.
 - Rom. 3:19 – clearly defines God's purpose for the revelation of His law, both written in Scripture and conscience: "that every mouth may be stopped and all the world may become accountable before God"

The Purpose of the Law

- ▶ Every unbeliever is still under the law.
- ▶ He can...
 - 1) Keep it perfectly and earn eternal life (impossible).
 - 2) Fail to keep it perfectly and be judged and punished for every violation eternally.
 - 3) Turn in faith and repentance to Christ, admitting his own inability and clinging solely to Christ's righteousness.