

Mark 10:13-31 - The Good Teacher

Pastor Chris Bove

Introduction - Throughout Mark, we've seen that Jesus is the suffering servant, the King Messiah. He is showing His disciples how they should relate to God and to one another. He is starting His final journey into Jerusalem. In this passage, we see a contrast between those to whom the kingdom belongs, and those who do not possess it. Jesus teaches that those who have childlike faith and surrender everything to follow Him will have eternal life. Our faith should be childlike and Christ should be the greatest treasure of our heart. (cf. Matt 19:13-30, Lu 18:15-30)

v13-16 - Childlike Faith - There are different ages of children coming to Jesus to be blessed (Lu 18:15). Blessing children through the laying on of hands was a custom of Rabbis (Gen 48). When the disciples prohibited this, Jesus was indignant, very displeased. He gives a double commandment to let the children come (let them, do not hinder)! (Walvoord and Zuck, pg. 149) God lifts up the neglected. We need to receive the kingdom like a little child. Not on the basis of our own merit or any right, but on complete trust in Him in faith (Eph 2:5, 8; Rom 3:24, 4:16, 5:15; 1Co 15:10). *Eulogeo* - is bless/"speak well of," but Mark emphasizes this by compounding the word as *kateulogeo* - "blessed them fervently" (Earle, pg 42).

v17-22 - Misplaced Treasure: Surrender and Follow - Jesus is starting off on his journey, and a man who runs up to Him is rich (10:22), young (Matt 19:22), and a ruler of the people (Lu 18:18). This man was a ruler, but knelt before the Lord. "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" This wasn't a way for Rabbis to be addressed. Jesus uses his statement to make a claim of divinity. In answering, He mentions six of the last ten commandments, those relating to human relationships. The unmentioned ones (1-4) relate to a right relationship with God. It seems Jesus is intentionally making a point of what's missing in his life, though he seems a devout man.

Jesus looked at him, He loved him, and He said to him two commands: Go and come follow. G. Campbell Morgan frames it as a necessary means of going (Go!) to clear out the hindrances of coming to Christ and then to follow Him (pg 246). *Go: Sell all that you have*. This is not a universal commandment (Luke 19:9; 1 Tim 6:17-19), but riches are deceitful (Deut 7:25, 8:17-18; Mar 4:19). Christians must be free of the love of money (1Ti 3:3, 6:10; Heb 13:5). *Come follow Me* - Jesus told the man to follow after Him as a disciple. But the man was dismayed (same word to describe gloomy, overcast sky) because he had great possessions. He cared more about his earthly possessions than eternal life with Christ. In contrast to children, this man had too great a love of other things.

v23-31 - Salvation: Impossible for Man, but Possible for God - Jesus calls His disciples children, reminding them of the previous lesson. He uses a figure of speech about the impossibility of a camel going through the eye of a sewing needle to explain how difficult it is for someone with misplaced affection to enter the kingdom of God. The shock of the disciples progresses from amazement (v24) to being exceedingly astonished (v26). The fathers of the faith were wealthy (Job, David, Solomon, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Israel leaving Egypt). Jesus says it is indeed impossible for man to be saved, but it is possible for God. There is no amount of "good" we can do to earn our salvation. We don't keep a right relationship with God no matter how hard we try. Instead, God saves us by His grace through faith in Jesus Christ (2Co 8:9; Phl 3:21; Heb 7:25, 10:1-14, 11:6) by applying Jesus' perfect record of obedience to our account. What would be impossible for us to do is done by God. His Holy Spirit dwells inside of us and changes us from the inside out, transforming our affections to drive us not by ourselves, but by Christ. The cost of following Christ is outweighed by the benefits in this life and the one to come. We receive a new family, but will experience persecution (John 16:33).

So, what? Now, what?

- Do we realize we need something more than ourselves to have eternal life? Embrace the good news!
- How can we bless children and receive them? How do we remain multigenerational, serve children, support families, parents, and orphans (Fostering Hope), and protect our children from being taken captive by the world?
- Do I evaluate my human relationships or my relationship with God to determine if I will inherit eternal life?
- In following Christ, what are you "dismayed" to leave behind? What things hinder your relationship with Him? Surrender it all to Him! Seek the support and prayer of other brothers and sisters in Christ to walk after Him.