



The Treasure of Jesus

(Mark 10:17-23)

Bottom Line: To live for Christ means He takes priority over everything else and becomes our supreme treasure.

Would you consider yourself blessed with regard to your finances? Why or why not?

How would you describe your relationship with money and possessions? Do you find these things ever create a barrier between you and God, or is this something you don't struggle with often?

The average American living today is among the wealthiest people who have ever walked the earth. As a nation, we are exceedingly blessed. While many people around the world struggle for basic needs and die of preventable diseases, we live in comfort and ease. While there is nothing inherently wrong with earning a decent living, we must always make sure our decent living doesn't become an idol for us. We must examine our own hearts and let Jesus, not possessions, shape our identity.

Read Mark 10:17-20.

Why did the man in these verses approach Jesus? What was he hoping to gain from his interaction with Jesus?

What makes the man's question such a popular one to ask? What would your answer be if someone asked you this question? How can we be sure our answers point seekers to a relationship instead of routine or rules?

The question that was so pressing on this young man's heart was, "How can I be sure I'm going to heaven?" Many people around us every day are asking the same question and finding answers in all the wrong places. Jesus' response to the young man helps us to identify the insufficient places where many people we know (and maybe even some of us) are searching for eternal life.

What did Jesus do to test the young man's heart? What do you notice about the commands Jesus listed in verse 19?

How did the man answer Jesus? What does the statement in verse 20 reveal about the man's heart?

The Ten Commandments are split into two parts. The first half deals with our relationship with God, while the second half deals with our relationship with other people. Jesus only asked this man about the second half. In response to Jesus, the man believed he had obeyed all of these commands since the time he was accountable before the law. To put it another way, he thought he had been "good enough."



What are some problems with the man's response?

Read Mark 10:21-23.

Why is it significant that Jesus looked at the man and loved him? How does Jesus do the same thing with each of us?

Read John 17:3. What is the real answer to the question the man asked in verse 17? When did you first realize the answer to the man's question for yourself?

This account is the only one in the Gospels where someone seeks Jesus and leaves without being filled. What implications does this have about the dangers of an identity based on wealth?

Clearly Jesus loved people, but this is the only one of two instances in the Gospels where Jesus is explicitly stated as loving someone. For Jesus, love came before the young man obeyed the command. Jesus saw this man's heart and knew the chains his wealth and rule following had built around his heart. Wealth is so dangerous for our souls because it keeps us from feeling our need for Jesus. The majority of our physical needs are taken care of, so it's hard to not feel in control of our own lives. However, the man's possessions possessed him, which is the inherent danger of wealth.

Read verse 23 again. What is the warning here for us?

Though it is possible for Christians to be physically poor, and many Christians do live in poverty, a Christian is never spiritually poor. We have wealth beyond anything this world can provide through our relationship with Jesus Christ. We must be diligent to keep riches from taking over our heart's affections. We give to what we love. If our supreme love is for Jesus, our relationship with our possessions will take a backseat to our identity in Christ.

APPLICATION

Is there any area in your heart where your relationship with finances or possessions is choking out your relationship with God? How can we protect ourselves from building a financial kingdom here instead of working to build God's eternal kingdom?

The cost of following Jesus was too great for the rich young ruler. Do you know anyone in a similar situation today? How could you point them away from their riches to a relationship with Jesus? What would a conversation like that look like?