

The Journey to Eternity
Week 6 | Feb. 16, 2014

What's the Danger in Wealth?
Mark 10:17-31



Jesus had been teaching about receiving the kingdom of God as a little child. While His words were fresh in the disciples' minds, something happens that illustrates Jesus' point. This well-known passage is often given the title, "The Rich Young Ruler."

Read Mark 10:17-22.

Read the parallel accounts of this event in Matthew 19:16ff and Luke 18:18ff. (Note: ff means "and the verses following")

[Q] What do you know about this man from his words, his manner, and his actions? (What kind of character does he have? What kind of attitude does he have toward God?)

From *The ESV Study Bible*, Mark 10:18:

Why do you call me good? To ask this question, Jesus assumes the perspective of the rich young man. No one is completely good except God alone; therefore it is not proper for the young man to address Jesus as "Good Teacher" until he is ready to acknowledge that Jesus is God.

Extra:

Look up the phrase "eternal life" in a concordance or study Bible, or go to BibleGateway.com and do a *Keyword Search* for "eternal life." Look for: (1) other uses by the same author; (2) uses by other New Testament authors.

[Q] Which verses add to the meaning of the phrase and help your understanding of the concept?

[Q] If a friend or co-worker asked you how to get eternal life, what would you say?

[Q] Compare the wealthy young man to Zacchaeus, the tax collector, in Luke 19:2-10. Why do you think Jesus does not command Zacchaeus to sell all he has? Are you surprised?

[Q] Compare the young man to another religious leader, in John 3:1-3. What is the surprising thing Jesus tells Nicodemus he needs to do?

Apply: Identifying “idols”

Read quote:

- “Idolatry” is when we allow anything other than God to become the center of our heart’s true happiness, contentment, meaning, identity, purpose, or security. It’s when we allow something else to become an idol or a “surrogate god” in our life, ruling our thoughts, emotions and behaviors.
- Idolatry is always the reason we ever do anything wrong. Why do we ever lie or fail to love or keep promises or live unselfishly? ... The specific answer is always that there is something besides Jesus Christ that you feel you must have to be happy, something that is more important to your heart than God... The secret to change is always to identify the idols of the heart.

- Pastor Tim Keller

Jesus identifies the rich young ruler’s idol as his great wealth. An idol could be something you already have or something you set all your hope on having; something that outweighs your love of Christ. It could be a person, relationship or position/job, reputation, possessions, control, significance, comfort, etc... It could be an area of your life in which you struggle with self control.

[Q] What area of your life would Jesus like to talk to you about? Share if appropriate.

[Q] Can you fill in one of the blanks below? Share if appropriate.

When I achieve _____ I’ll be truly happy.

If I ever lost _____ I couldn’t be happy.

[Q] What do you need to do? (From the weekend message: **AIR: Admit the struggle, Identify the lie that you’re believing, Replace the lie with the truth**)

Read Mark 10:23-31.

[Q] Why are the disciples so amazed at Jesus’ words? (Mark 10:24 and 26) Why do they think it would be easier for a rich man (or a highly moral man) to be saved?

[Q] Rich or poor, what does Jesus say is our one hope for salvation in Mark 10:27?

For further reading: An excerpt from *Counterfeit Gods* by Tim Keller:
www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2009/octoberweb-only/142-21.0.html?paging=off

Pray for those who need the hope of Christ:
