

Sermon Notes

Practical Lessons for Understanding the Word of God



Is Something Missing in Your Life?

KEY PASSAGE: Mark 10:17-27 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE: John 3:16; Romans 10:13 | Ephesians 2:8-10 | 1 Timothy 6:10-11
Titus 3:5 | Hebrews 9:27 | 1 John 2:15

SUMMARY

If you could change anything in your life, what would it be?

Feelings of dissatisfaction or emptiness are usually what motivate us to desire a change. Perhaps we think better health, increased income, a different job, or a new relationship is the answer. Or maybe we can't quite figure out what's causing these feelings, but we know that something is missing in our lives. Changing our circumstances is a short-lived solution because the empty place in our souls can only be filled by God.

SERMON POINTS

Mark 10:17-27 tells a story about a man who knew something was missing in his life. He ran to Jesus, knelt down before Him, and asked, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" (v. 17).

You can have it all yet still feel like something is missing.

The young man in this story had everything the world values—wealth, youth, possessions, position, and authority. There's nothing wrong with having any of these, but ultimately they cannot fully satisfy. God made us for Himself—to have a relationship with Him through His Son. This means He is the only one who can fill the empty places in our lives. Accumulating more material goods and achieving greater success will never make us complete. We should be grateful for whatever the Lord gives us, but our love is to be directed toward Him, not toward the things of this earthly life (1 John 2:15).

Our love for material possessions can cause us to miss the most important thing in life.

Although money is good and useful in the right hands, it can never buy what we need most. To spend the days, months, and years of our lives in a quest for riches, possessions, and prominence will only leave us disappointed because one day we will have to lay it all down. There is more to life than this temporary earthly existence.

Our most important possession is eternal life. That's why the rich young ruler came to Jesus. He had all the earthly possessions and achievements he wanted, but He knew He needed one more thing—eternal life. The fact that he ran to Jesus shows his sense of desperation. Running in public was something men of dignity never did in those days.

Unlike this rich young man, multitudes of people today live in big houses in nice neighborhoods with an abundance of material goods, never realizing their need for eternal life. Others feel the emptiness, but attempt to fill it with the pleasures and pursuits of this world. And some people are running away from the Lord rather than to Him, denying their need for a Savior. They forget that death comes to all men and after that is the judgment (Heb. 9:27).

The gift of eternal life is not the result of our good works.

Although the young ruler knew he needed eternal life, he made the faulty assumption that he had to do something to earn it. After coming to Jesus, he asked, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" (Mark 10:17). Christ responded by reminding him of the commandments: "DO NOT MURDER, DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY, DO NOT STEAL, DO NOT BEAR FALSE

WITNESS, DO NOT DEFRAUD, HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER” (v. 19). The man claimed that he had kept all these since his youth. However, Jesus didn’t mention all the commandments. He omitted the first four, which speak about loving and worshipping God alone, and the last one, which forbids coveting.

Because Jesus could see into his heart, He knew the young man’s problem was his love of money. After declaring his obedience to the commandments, the man probably thought Jesus would tell him his good behavior would earn him eternal life. This is the same belief the majority of the world holds today. They think if they don’t steal, lie, or cheat, and are a fairly good person, then they will one day go to heaven. But the Bible clearly states that we are not saved by good works but by grace through faith in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:8-9).

Instead of commending the young man for his good behavior, Jesus pointed out the one thing he still lacked, “Go and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me” (Mark 10:21). Christ wasn’t saying that giving away all earthly possessions is a requirement for eternal life. Rather, He was trying to help the young man see his sin of greed and recognize that his material wealth was standing between him and salvation. Christ was asking him to relinquish his idol, surrender his life, and follow Him. The young man’s problem wasn’t that he owned much, but that he was owned by much.

The only way he would be able to follow Jesus was to lay down the riches which held him in their grip. Sadly, although he found the answer to eternal life, he turned it down. He gave up eternal life, which can never be lost, in order to hold onto that which he would never be able to keep. Although he ran to Jesus in hope, he walked away grieved, being deceived by his wealth.

Jesus loves us even when we make wrong choices.

Christ’s interaction with the young man was motivated by His love for him (v. 21). Jesus saw

his problem, gave him the solution, and invited the man to follow Him. After he walked away, Jesus told His disciples, “How hard it will be for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God!” (v. 23).

The rich young man rejected Christ’s offer of salvation for three reasons:

- **Unbelief.** He couldn’t accept what Jesus said or entrust his future into His hands.
- **Self-righteousness.** He trusted in his own goodness as the means for God’s acceptance.
- **Love of the world.** He would not let go of his wealth and possessions in order to follow Christ.

Jesus acknowledges that it is very difficult for the wealthy to enter heaven.

He compared it to a camel going through the eye of a needle (v. 25). Riches give a false sense of security that hinders people from seeing their need for a Savior. But with God all things are possible (v. 27), and Christ’s shed blood provides the way for everyone who trusts in Him to be saved and receive eternal life.

RESPONSE

- Do you feel like something is missing in your life? If so, what do you think is causing this sense of emptiness?
- If you ran to Jesus with this need, what would He tell you to do? Are you willing to let go of whatever He says to relinquish?
- Is there anything that is causing you to resist following Christ fully? What kinds of things tend to own you rather than you owning them?

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