

Mark 10:17-22. the Rich Young Ruler.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

The sermon explores the encounter between Jesus and the Rich Young Ruler, emphasizing the challenges of self-righteousness and the necessity of total commitment to Christ for salvation.

Scripture: Matthew 6:24, Matthew 19:21, Mark 10:17, Luke 14:33, Philippians 3:7

Topics: "True Discipleship", "Repentance"

Description

Favell Lee Mortimer delves into the story of the young ruler who approached Jesus seeking eternal life. Despite his respectful demeanor and amiable disposition, the young man struggled with surrendering all to follow Christ, revealing his self-righteousness and lack of true repentance. Jesus, knowing the young man's heart, challenged him to sell all his possessions, exposing his love for wealth over a genuine desire for salvation. This encounter serves as a poignant reminder that true discipleship requires complete surrender and a willingness to prioritize Christ above all else, even earthly treasures.

Transcript

It is impossible not to feel interested in this young inquirer. The respect he paid to the Lord was rare in a man of rank and property. "He kneeled to him, and said, Good master." It is pleasing to see a young person anxious to learn the way of salvation. This youth came running to inquire what he should do to inherit eternal life. Though multitudes applied to the Savior for the cure of their diseases, few inquired how they should obtain salvation for their souls. This young man's course of life appears to have been correct, and his disposition amiable. We are already disposed to love him, when we read, "The Lord beholding him, loved him." Though no doubt Jesus loved all his disciples, and though we know that he loves even sinners, yet this expression is scarcely used on any other occasion. There was a disciple of whom it is said that Jesus loved him, and there was a family at Bethany concerning whom the same is recorded. But they were his devoted followers, while this youth was not even a believer. Yet as the Lord was man, as well as God, he may have loved those qualities that attract our regard, and are called "amiable." Nothing is more amiable in youth than a teachable disposition, a respectful demeanor, frankness of manner, and earnestness of spirit. All these the youth possessed. Even when he received a command that he would not obey, he still behaved in an amiable manner, and showed no angry resentment, but only deep sorrow. No doubt the Savior was touched by his grief; but he spoke not a word of consolation. He, who comforted all who were cast down, saying, "Weep not," permitted this mourner to go away un comforted. And why? Because there was no comfort for his sorrow. He grieved because the gate was too strait, and the way too narrow, that leads to eternal life. There can be no consolation for this grief, either in time or in eternity.

This young ruler did not know he was a sinner, and he did not feel his need of a Savior. Neither did he look upon Jesus as a Savior, but only as a teacher. When the Lord said, "Why do you call me good? there is none good but God," the young man ought to have replied, "You are the Son of God." But he believed not in Jesus. He wished to find out a way by which he might save himself. Therefore the Lord showed him his own heart by giving him a commandment that he would not choose to obey. He said to him, "Sell all that you have, and give to the poor." This commandment was given as a test whereby to try the youth, to see whether he would do all the Lord required. Once God tried Abraham, by commanding him to offer up his only son Isaac. Abraham stood the test, and proved that he loved the Lord above all. The young man did not stand the test. He might have stood an easier test; he might have been willing to part with half his possessions; he might have been willing to part with all, had his possessions not been so great--but to part with all his great possessions was more than he could bear to do. Some may feel inclined to wonder why the Lord imposed so hard a condition upon a young inquirer. They may say, "Is it not written that he does not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed?" This is true. When an afflicted father said with tears, "Help my unbelief," the Lord did not discourage him, for he was as smoking flax. When a sinful woman washed his feet with tears, he did not repulse her--for she was as a bruised reed. But this young man was not as smoking flax, or as a bruised reed. He had no love for Christ--no sorrow for sin--no desire for pardon. The most open transgressor, who is conscious that he deserves to be condemned, is nearer salvation than such a self-righteous character as this young ruler was.

It may be that some of us, like this youth, desire to go to heaven. We think we are sincere. God may cause some event to happen that shall try our hearts, and prove whether we are ready to give up all beside, rather than relinquish our hope in Christ. What the trial may be cannot be foretold. It will be suited to our particular state. Orpah, as well as Ruth, professed great attachment to Naomi, her mother-in-law; but only Ruth clung to her, and to her God, in the midst of poverty and desolation. Many say to Christ, "Lord, Lord," who would not follow him to prison or to death. Those who have not felt their need of his blood to cleanse their sinful souls, may think that silver or gold, or friends, or fame, is more precious than Christ.

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