

A. There are few questions more important than this one: “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

B. Because of the fame of Jesus, many sought Him out for healing or deliverance from demonic oppression. In today’s text, we have a rich young ruler who approached Jesus with great concern over his eternal condition after death.

Who then can be saved?	I. THE RICH RULER’S PROBLEMS II. GOD’S REWARD FOR OUR KINGDOM SACRIFICES
---------------------------	---

I. THE RICH YOUNG RULER’S PROBLEMS → vv18-19

A. From the eyes of mankind, this rich ruler did not look like he had any problems.

1. He was religious and studied the Scriptures. His question concerning eternal life came from **Dan 12:1-3** where God promised that **“everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued. Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt. Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.”**

a. Because he was devout, some have supposed that he was a ruler in a synagogue

b. From what he told Jesus, he was an outwardly moral man as far as the second table of the law of God went.

2. We find out from **v23** that he was **“extremely rich.”**

3. In a parallel account in **Mat 19:20**, he was described as a **“young man.”**

B. The first problem was by the way he addressed Jesus by calling him **“Good Teacher.”**

1. We get the impression that Jesus was not pleased this this. It is likely because it was misplaced flattery.

a. He asked this question of Jesus thinking that Jesus was a mere man. In that case the title of **“Good”** here would have been wrong.

b. Many have been perplexed at the what Jesus said next. →**v19**

1) Jesus was asking this question in accordance with this ruler’s understanding of things.

2) If the ruler truly knew that Jesus was the eternal Son of God who took on flesh, it would have been more that fitting for him to describe Jesus as “good, wonderful, eternally blessed, and almighty.”

2. Jesus used this man’s notion of human goodness to give him a follow-up statement. →**v20**

a. If the ruler heard and truly received the preaching of Jesus at the Sermon on the Mount, he would have confessed that he was a sinner who did not keep these nor the other commandments of God.

b. Instead, the rich ruler justified himself in the sight of God by saying in **v21**, **“All these things I have kept from my youth.”**

1) Even though he may have been upright in his outward obedience to these commands, as God, Jesus knew His heart and his special problem was with the tenth commandment— covetousness.

2) To expose this man’s obsession with his wealth, look at what Jesus said next. →**vv22-23**

a) As we will find out later in **Lu 19**, Jesus did not ask this of a rich tax collector named Zaccheus. One reason was because he was not consumed with the sin of covetousness.

b) The rich ruler could not heed the voice of Jesus because he loved his money more than God.

c) The Apostle Paul shared a very similar situation to this rich ruler. → **Rom 7:7-10**

i. Dr. Joseph Pipa once said that the rich young ruler could have been the Apostle Paul.

ii. Paul did overcome his sin of covetousness to give up all to follow Jesus.

iii. According to **Mark 10:21**, Jesus loved the rich young ruler. If he bore the love of Christ, He was elect. **Ps 5:5** says of God, **“You hate all who do iniquity.”**

C. Jesus pointed out that rich men and women can and do enter the kingdom of God yet with great difficulty. →**vv24-27**

1. Zaccheus was one example in **Lu 19**.

2. In modern history, many wealthy Christians have supported churches, seminaries, domestic mission works, foreign mission works, and publishing houses such as the Banner of Truth.

II. GOD'S REWARD FOR OUR KINGDOM SACRIFICES →vv28-30

A. In **v28**, the word *"homes"* in the NASB95 is in italics because it is supplied by the translators even though it does not occur in the Greek text. It is more literally, **"...we have left our own and followed you."**

1. The NKJV is closer to the what is being communicated here: **"See, we have left all and followed You."**
2. In **v29**, Jesus acknowledged that many Christians left more than homes. Some had to leave a **"left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God."**
 - a. Especially in divided homes in the early church, the Christian faith divided families as Jesus said it would earlier in this gospel account. →**Lu 12:51-53**
 - b. Such division was prominent when a Jew converted to Christianity.
 - c. Today, this division is prominent and even life-threatening when a Muslim converts to Christianity.

B. According to **v30**, Jesus promised that those who have sacrificed for the Kingdom will be rewarded.

1. They will **"receive many times as much at this time."**
 - a. Christians who sacrifice for the kingdom of God in this life will receive many blessings.
 - b. For those who had to leave blood relations to follow Christ, remember that we receive the blessing of Christian brothers and sisters with whom we share a spiritual bond.
 - 1) Very often the shared bond in our baptism is a closer bond than that of blood relations.
 - 2) The NT model is of a church that has a familial, tender care one for another.
2. Those who have sacrificed for the kingdom will **"receive... in the age to come, eternal life" (v30).**
 - a. God gives us an eternal inheritance in heaven and later in the new heavens and new earth.
 - b. When facing the troubles of this life, Jesus said in **Jn 14:1-2**, **"Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you."**
 - 1) Paul quoting Isaiah in **1 Cor 2:9** wrote, **"Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him" (NKJV).**
 - 2) **Rom 8:18** says **"the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us."**
 - c. The Christian brothers and sister we acquire in this life will continue with us into our eternal inheritance.

C. Consider the Apostles' question in **v26**, **"Who then can be saved?"** We should ask, "How then can I be saved?" If we love the lost, we should also ask, "How then can my family and friends be saved?" How can we know for sure that we can inherit eternal life?

Review, further application, and conclusion: