

HOME GROUP QUESTIONS FROM SERMON 27th August 2023

Sermon – Matthew 19 v16-30 – Personal/Group Study and Reflection
“Our True Heart Affections”

Matthew 19 v16-30 (English Standard Version)

16 And behold, a man came up to him, saying, “Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?” 17 And he said to him, “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments.” 18 He said to him, “Which ones?” And Jesus said, “You shall not murder, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, 19 Honor your father and mother, and, You shall love your neighbour as yourself.” 20 The young man said to him, “All these I have kept. What do I still lack?” 21 Jesus said to him, “If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.” 22 When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

23 And Jesus said to his disciples, “Truly, I say to you, only with difficulty will a rich person enter the kingdom of heaven. 24 Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.” 25 When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished, saying, “Who then can be saved?” 26 But Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.” 27 Then Peter said in reply, “See, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?” 28 Jesus said to them, “Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life. 30 But many who are first will be last, and the last first.

These questions relate to the sermon delivered at all the morning services on Sunday 27th August 2023 (available on the church website). **Feel free to pick and choose questions as appropriate for your group – they are there to facilitate good discussion / reflection.**

(1) Opening reflection / discussion.

(a) When you think of ‘good’ people and ‘good’ deeds, what characteristics / actions do you think of?

(2) Goodness. The man asks Jesus what good deed he must do to have eternal life (v16) and Jesus responds by pointing him to the source of goodness, God (v17).

(a) How does looking at the true source of goodness, God, impact your view of what is good compared with how the world around us views goodness? In other words, is there a difference when looking at goodness from a Christian perspective?

(3) Eternal life. The man thinks eternal life can be earned by doing good deeds and keeping God’s commandments.

(a) How does Jesus try to get the man to understand this is not the case?

(b) To what extent do you ever lapse into thinking that you must strive to please God to have eternal life even though you know we are saved by grace? What causes this?

(4) **Living Jesus' way.** The man believed he kept God's Commandments, but Jesus revealed this was not the case (v18-21).

(a) In what way was the man not keeping both the letter and the spirit of God's Commandments despite what he claimed? *Think of the 10 Commandments not listed here as well as those listed.*

(b) To what extent do you ever find yourself keeping the letter rather than the spirit of how Jesus calls us to live? Which areas do you find difficult? What cause this and how might you change?

(5) **Our hearts.** The man was controlled by his possessions. They controlled his heart to the extent that he couldn't bear to give them away, follow Jesus and have eternal life (v21-22)?

(a) Many things can control our heart. What things / attitudes / people do you cling to, and which control your heart affections and hold you back from following God whole-heartedly?

(6) **Dependency on God.** Jesus makes it clear how hard it is to change ourselves, especially if we are wealthy. We will be reluctant to surrender things to follow him. We can only do it with God's help (v23-26).

(a) To what extent do you rely on self-dependency rather than turn to God for help?

(b) Are there areas of your life which you have tried to change? What helped or hampered this?

(c) Are there any areas where you've said up till now: "I just can't change – that's just who I am". What might you do differently in the future?

(7) **Reward.** The disciples panicked that they had given up everything to follow Jesus and would get nothing in return. Jesus reassures them and us that if we follow him whole-heartedly then we will be rewarded with hundredfold blessing and eternal life (v27-30).

(a) What do you understand by 'hundredfold blessing'?

(b) To what extent does it encourage you to follow Jesus wholeheartedly?

(8) **Closing reflection.**

(a) To what extent are you exhibiting some of the attitudes and characteristics of the man in the story?

(b) What might Jesus be asking you to surrender to follow him whole-heartedly?