

Mark 10: 17 – 27  
Pastor Arndt

<sup>17</sup> As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. “Good teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

<sup>18</sup> “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone. <sup>19</sup> You know the commandments: ‘You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honor your father and mother.’<sup>[d]</sup>”

<sup>20</sup> “Teacher,” he declared, “all these I have kept since I was a boy.”

<sup>21</sup> Jesus looked at him and loved him. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

<sup>22</sup> At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad because he had great wealth.

In Christ Jesus,

Ted Slauson is good at math. One of his jobs was to write math problems for standardized tests. But that wasn’t his passion. Ted was obsessed with the game show, “*The Price is Right*.” He noticed that prizes on the show tended to repeat. Ted studied the prizes and memorized their value. He was part of the audience on “*The Price is Right*” 37 times. Thanks to his help, people won cars, vacations, and countless other prizes.

Ted became immortalized in 2008, when he helped a contestant in the showcase showdown. (*I’m assuming that most of you know how this works. You guess the value of your showcase without going over and you win. If you come within \$250 dollars of the exact retail price you win two showcases.*) From his perch in the audience Ted watched as karaoke machine, a pool table, and a 19-foot camper were rolled onto the stage. He raised his fingers and signaled to the contestant who guessed \$23,734. The price was exactly right.

Ted knows what things are worth. You should listen to Ted!

In our lesson we’re introduced to a man who has great wealth. The problem is, he’s no Ted. He doesn’t understand the value of what God has given him on earth. He’s even more clueless about eternal life. But Jesus loves him and teaches him value.

### **I. The Value of Our Own Righteousness**

The first thing our man is confused about is the value of his own righteousness. He comes to Jesus seeking eternal life. Jesus reminds him of the commandments that guide us in our relationship with our neighbor. As the man listens to the commandments he concludes, “*All of these I have kept since I was a boy*”. He believes that his life is valuable enough to be worthy of eternal life. Like I said... “*He’s no Ted*”.

All of God’s commandments are summarized with the word “love”. God created us to love the Lord our God with all our heart. We were placed here on this earth to love our neighbor more than our self. But our man seems to have forgotten that.

Jesus points out to him that he is surrounded by people that are poor. But here is a man who has riches and wealth. What a glorious honor! Here is an opportunity to use his possessions for the purpose for

which God gave them to him. But instead of being thrilled with the opportunity, the man walks away dejected. His wealth, he believes, is meant only for him. His keeping of the commandments is an empty shell that is devoid of compassion and love. Jesus reminds us that hell will be filled with people that honor God with their lips, but their hearts... are far from me.

## **II. The Value of This Life Compared to the Next**

Our man also has no idea about the value of this life compared to eternal life. Jesus offers him a shrewd business transaction. *"You value and desire eternal life, do you? Well, this is how you can obtain it. Sell your possessions and follow me."*

Earlier, in our children's devotion, we watched the kids as they tried to value common items from our world. As adults, when you listened to the items that they were to value, you knew that it would be difficult for them. Kids don't understand that laundry soap is expensive. Ah, but you are an adult! You know these things!

It should be easy for our man to decide. He is young, but he is an adult. If I gave you the choice between \$1,000 today or \$100 dollars each day for the rest of your life, the choice would be easy. That's essentially the offer that Jesus puts on the table. *"Sell everything, follow me, and you will have riches in heaven!"* Just imagine Ted sitting up in the audience. He's waiving his arms and shouting... *"Take it!"* But our man is no Ted. Sadly... Neither are we.

## **III. We're No Ted**

Each day you walk beneath the canopy of God's glory. The world beneath your feet gives constant testimony to the presence of God. What's more, you've learned about that God from His Word. You see through the childishness of this world that watches the 6 o'clock news and then claims that the world is righteous. You know. But then you also reach out your hand and make your choices.

Today God offers you eternity, yet we acknowledge that it's tough for us to make it through an hour. *(Well at least there isn't communion today... that saves about 15 minutes... Ugh... I forgot about Bible Class... what time do the packers play?)*

Like our man, we listen to Jesus as he pairs our plenty with the needs of the world. What happens to those dollars that we put in the offering plate? Do we collect them and serve ourselves? Or do we follow Jesus and ask from our hearts, *"who is my neighbor, and how may I help him?"*

## **IV. He Looked... and He loved Him**

Jesus acknowledges our failures, so much so that he admits *"It's impossible for us to enter heaven by ourselves. But with God, nothing is impossible."*

Jesus loved our man. In the same way he loves you too. I'd like to think that when the time came for the rich young ruler to draw his last breath on earth, he was brought to his senses by the call of Christ. In Christ we find a true righteousness. Although it exceeds every treasure, God gives us this righteousness as a gift of his grace by faith.

So rich is the treasure of Christ that it continues for eternity. During the showcase of our life, we are led to the grace of Jesus. When faith leads us to value him properly, we win another showcase... nothing less than eternal life in heaven. Lord, lead us to value the treasure of Christ!

-Amen