

a reality check

matthew 19:16-22

Coming to God on our Terms vs Coming to God on His terms

1. People can seemingly come to the right source

v 16a Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher..."

• He recognized Jesus as **Good** (ἀγαθός agathos - excellent, distinguished, upright, and honorable) **Teacher** (διδάσκαλος didaskolos - master). He gave this title to Jesus realizing He was a teacher of divine truth.

2. People can seemingly have the right motivation

16b..."what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?"

- Who was He? He was a young man (v 20), he was rich (v 22), and he was labeled in Luke 18:18 as a **ruler** (ἄρχων archon commander, chief).
- He had everything going for him and yet he still sought after the answer of a burning, age-old question: **What good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?**
- But even though His motives seemed to be pure, the way he phrases his question says otherwise.

3. People can seemingly have the right answers

- After Jesus gives him some clear insight on his condition in v18-19, this man gives his answer: **All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?**
- Jesus gives him instruction on the law and the man replies with a self-righteous response. He doesn't understand the purpose of God's law.
- **lack** (ὑστερέω hustereo - fail to reach the goal; be inferior in rank). The man who had it all still wasn't measuring up.

4. Truth will most definitely expose our flaws

- Jesus throws his question right back in his face in **verse 17a: So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."**
- Jesus builds upon this in 17b by saying: **But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.**
- After the man responds **which ones**, Jesus answers with a sampling in **v 18-19: "You shall not murder; 'You shall not commit adultery; 'You shall not steal; 'You shall not bear false witness; 'Honor your father and your mother; and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself."**
- The purpose for Jesus bringing the law into the conversation is to reveal the man's flaws. That's what God's law does. It gives us a standard. It is there to show us how we fall short.
- Jesus then delivers the final blow this man's inauthenticity. He says in **v 21 "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."**
- Jesus goes straight for the jugular. He knows exactly where this man is **still lacking**. He says if you want to be **perfect** (τέλειος - teleios - brought to its end), then give up what gives you your identity.
- So what was the man's response? **But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.**
- He ran away. He was dejected, **sorrowful** (λυπέω lupeo - offended). His life had been exposed by the one who gives life.