

Luke 18:18 (MSG)

One day one of the local officials asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to deserve eternal life?"

When you read today's devotional verse, you may think,

"Wow, that's a great question to ask Jesus, and if He were here right now, I would probably ask Jesus the same thing."

Which is some what true, but there are two things in this man's question that we should take a look at, and the first one Jesus addressed right away, which was, **Jesus said, "Why are you calling me good? No one is good—only God."** Luke 18:19 (MSG)

Jesus was God come in the flesh, but He was also man, and Jesus was referring to Himself as a man. And when you read the gospels, Jesus ALWAYS, points back to God, not Himself.

"Ok, so that's one thing, what's the other?" you may be thinking. The answer is in four words in this man's question, or should I say, how he stated his question, those four words are,

"what must I do"

That always seems to be our go to question and what we think about the most, **"what must I do?"** But the real questions is not, **"what must I do"** to get into heaven or even to be pleasing to God. But rather, **"How has God made a way for me to get to heaven and to be saved from my sins?"**

When you look at it the way the man asked **"What must I do"** it means salvation is dependent on our works and us earning our way into heaven, which means it all lies upon us, or is dependent on us, not God. But when we ask the other way, **"How has God"** it's now all on God, and how He has made a way for us to get to heaven.

But also as you read Jesus' first response, that answered the man's question of **"Good Teacher, what must I do to deserve eternal life?"** right there when Jesus said that, **"No one is good—only God"** So if only God is good, then there is nothing you can do to earn your way into heaven.

But I have to wonder if when Jesus responded, if the man just stood there with a glazed look on his face, so Jesus continues on by asking this man a question.

† **Luke 18:20** *You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother.'* "

The man must have ignored Jesus first response which is that only God is good because he comes back with.

† **Luke 18:21** *And he said, "All these things I have kept from my youth."*

Really, you are standing before perfection and you can say I have never done any of these things, not even pondering that only God is good, and you are not? So in perfect, Jesus loving fashion, He responded to the man with.

† **Luke 18:22** *So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."*

So after Jesus spoke those words, reality hit this man like a ton of bricks, as the scripture says that.

† **Luke 18:23 (MSG)** *This was the last thing the official expected to hear. He was very rich and became terribly sad. He was holding on tight to a lot of things and not about to let them go.*

Did you catch that first part? *"This was the last thing the official expected to hear."* He was shocked, he probably thought, well Jesus told me what to do, and I told Jesus I was doing what He said, therefore, I am good, I have earned my way into heaven. I use the term "Earned" because it says that *"He was very rich"* and his life has always been how he could earn or buy his way off in any circumstance. But rather he, *"became terribly sad"* Why? Because *"He was holding on tight to a lot of things and not about to let them go."*

What amount of money are you giving, or what good work do you think you are doing, or how much time in prayer and reading your bible, or how many times do you go to church, thinking, you have "earned" God's favor and you think you have earned your way into heaven?

† **Ephesians 2:8-9** *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.*

† **Galatians 4:9 (NLT2)** *So now that you know God (or should I say, now that God knows you), why do you want to go back again and become slaves once more to the weak and useless spiritual principles of this world?*