

Mark 10:17

Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"

If you asked Jesus this same question today; *"what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"* Based upon what we hear in teachings and what other Christians say, what would we expect Jesus to say?

Maybe to inherit eternal life you must:

- ✓ Go to church every Sunday and a midweek bible study
- ✓ Tithe at least ten percent of your income
- ✓ Read your bible everyday
- ✓ Pray everyday
- ✓ Be nice to your neighbors
- ✓ Don't watch "R" rated movies and don't listen to that sinful music
- ✓ Get involved in a ministry
- ✓ Serve at church

Just a few examples of what we tend to think will give us eternal life. Now some of you may be thinking, that you know that the only way to inherit eternal life is by giving your life to Jesus and repenting of your sins. Which is 100% true, but let's read Jesus' answer to this man.

† **Mark 10:19** *You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Do not defraud,' 'Honor your father and your mother.'*

Now, these are Jesus' words to the question *"what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"* When you read that, it may seem like that it is possible to earn eternal life through works, based upon Jesus' answer. But that's not the case, because if you read the man's response, he was probably all excited when he responded to Jesus by saying. *"Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth."* **Mark 10:20b** Can't you just see the smile on this man's face as he says that to Jesus.

I love what it says next: *"Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me."* **Mark 10:21**

Did you see it? *"Jesus, looking at him, loved him"*, now I only know of only one other time in the bible that it said that Jesus loved someone, and it was in **John 11:5** where it says that, *"Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus."* But other than that, I don't read it anywhere else. So to me, that says a lot about this man and the conversation that he had with Jesus. I would

tend to think that the man was truly being honest with his question and his answer. He, like all of us want eternal life. And probably out of all the religious leaders that he talked to, this may have been their answer as he may have asked them the same question.

So the religious leader may have told him to keep the law, which included *'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Do not defraud,' 'Honor your father and your mother.'* So if the religious leaders told him, and Jesus told him the same thing, (because I believe Jesus knew what he was told by the religious leaders what to do), why wouldn't he be smiling ear to ear, thinking he had it all together.

But once again, the question is, was Jesus saying that we can earn our way into heaven? I think Jesus answers that question with his response to the man which was, ***"One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me."***

So, how does that answer the question? By the man's response to what Jesus said, which was that ***"he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions."*** **Mark 10:22** Jesus knew that this man could not keep the law, because if he did, he would have done what Jesus said.

Remember back in **Matthew 22:37-39**, Jesus was asked what the greatest commandment was, and ***"Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'***

By this man's response, he broke both of these commandments, because he was not willing to ***"love the LORD your God with all your heart"*** because he could not ***"take up the cross, and follow Me (Jesus)"***. And he did not ***"love your neighbor as yourself"***, because he was not willing ***"sell whatever you have and give to the poor"***.

I also noticed that Jesus did not say to the man that if you do what He said that he would have eternal life, but Jesus told him that ***"you will have treasure in heaven."*** We tend to subconsciously do things to help keep our salvation. But these words tell us that we can't do that, and that the things we do, do not affect our eternal life in heaven, but it does affect our rewards in heaven.

So for us, when we share Jesus, it's not a matter of telling people that what they are doing is wrong, and how they need to follow God's laws, but simply reminding them that no one can keep God's law, except for Jesus, therefore they need Jesus to go to heaven. No rules, no do's and don'ts, simply, ***"that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."***
John 3:15