

<sup>18</sup> A certain ruler asked him, “Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

<sup>19</sup> “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone. <sup>20</sup> You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not give false testimony, honor your father and mother.’ “

<sup>21</sup> “All these I have kept since I was a boy,” he said.

<sup>22</sup> When Jesus heard this, he said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

<sup>23</sup> When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was a man of great wealth. <sup>24</sup> Jesus looked at him and said, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! <sup>25</sup> Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”

<sup>26</sup> Those who heard this asked, “Who then can be saved?”

<sup>27</sup> Jesus replied, “What is impossible with men is possible with God.”

<sup>28</sup> Peter said to him, “We have left all we had to follow you!”

<sup>29</sup> “I tell you the truth,” Jesus said to them, “no one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God <sup>30</sup> will fail to receive many times as much in this age and, in the age to come, eternal life.”

#### Jesus Again Predicts His Death

<sup>31</sup> Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them, “We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. <sup>32</sup> He will be handed over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him, spit on him, flog him and kill him. <sup>33</sup> On the third day he will rise again.”

<sup>34</sup> The disciples did not understand any of this. Its meaning was hidden from them, and they did not know what he was talking about.

#### A Blind Beggar Receives His Sight

<sup>35</sup> As Jesus approached Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging. <sup>36</sup> When he heard the crowd going by, he asked what was happening.

<sup>37</sup> They told him, “Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.”

<sup>38</sup> He called out, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”

<sup>39</sup> Those who led the way rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”

<sup>40</sup> Jesus stopped and ordered the man to be brought to him. When he came near, Jesus asked him, <sup>41</sup> “What do you want me to do for you?”

“Lord, I want to see,” he replied.

<sup>42</sup> Jesus said to him, “Receive your sight; your faith has healed you.”

<sup>43</sup> Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus, praising God. When all the people saw it, they also praised God.

## Luke 18:18-43

1. From Verse 18:18 and Mark 10:17 and Matthew 19:22, what do we know about this ruler who confronts Jesus?
2. Why does Jesus answer, “no one is good—except God alone?” Is he denying his own divinity? Isn’t Jesus actually God?
3. Jesus recited some of the commandments (v 20), the ruler said he kept them (v 21) and Jesus replied that he still lacked one thing (v 22). What did he lack?
4. Why did Jesus tell the ruler to sell all he had when he did not require this of other disciples?
5. What would giving up his money mean to the ruler? What would it mean to you?
6. What specific sacrifice do you think Jesus would ask of you if you asked him, “What must I do to inherit eternal life?”
7. Does this story bother you? Cause you to worry? Make you little bit anxious?
8. (Verses 31-34) How does it make you feel to know that Jesus was willing to suffer a great deal for you? (For YOU personally?) How should you respond to his willingness to suffer for you?
9. (Verses 35-43) What can we learn from the blind man in this account? Where did we last hear about persistence?
10. In what settings do you experience group or peer pressure? How should you respond to this pressure? In what situations should we not be concerned about the criticism of others?
11. What role did the blind man’s faith play in his healing? In what way do we all need healing from the Lord?
12. Why do you think that God heals some people and not others?
13. How should you respond to the Lord’s healing touch in your life or in the life of another believer?

1. Mark supplies a bit of the context: “As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him” (Mark 10:17a).

Matthew says he is young, meaning between 24 and 40.

The Greek word translated “ruler” is one who has administrative authority, ‘leader, official.’ “ It is used of various Jewish leaders, including those in charge of a synagogue and members of the Sanhedrin.

And so we have an earnest young man, very wealthy -- and probably because of his wealth and earnestness about spiritual matters, a person entrusted with governance in the synagogue, a ruler, a respected person in the community.

Jesus is about to leave the town. It is the man’s last chance to ask his question, to meet Jesus face-to-face. And so he runs up to him in his fine robes, immaculately groomed, he and falls on his knees before him. It is a picture of urgency and earnestness and humility.

The question tells us several things about the young man:

1. He must be feeling inadequate in his spiritual preparation somehow or he probably wouldn’t ask the question.
2. He sides with the Pharisees rather than the Sadducees because the Sadducees didn’t believe in life after death, and this question clearly implies that he does.
3. He believes that eternal life is something that one earns or merits by what he does.

The young man’s question betrays both his superficial understanding of inheriting eternal life, and his superficial understanding of a person’s ability to do good deeds that are pure, unmixed by ulterior motives.

2. In this sincere young man’s superficial way, he addresses Jesus as “good teacher,” a somewhat improper way to address a Rabbi.

The young man won’t be able to understand anything else Jesus tells him unless he grasps that our relative standards of goodness are much, much different than God’s absolute goodness and God’s standards of righteousness.

Jesus’ divinity isn’t the issue. Jesus is calling the young man to reflect on his words. Jesus is trying to teach him.

5. Money, however, isn't the only thing that Jesus asks the young man to give up:

\* Possessions, what money will buy, the accouterments of wealth. A new car, a nice house, a membership in the country club, and fashionable clothing.

\* Status and influence that wealth affords. People make way for the wealthy, hoping that some of that wealth might rub off on them. At the very least, people kowtow to the wealthy to keep from becoming their enemies.

\* Power. Wealth is power. It buys influence. It buys others who will now let the wealthy have their own way.

\* Community leadership. The man isn't very likely to continue as a respected ruler without his wealth. If he gives up his wealth he will be misunderstood and resented by the other influential people in his community. No, he won't be a ruler for long.

\* Family. The young man probably comes from a wealthy family. But if he disposes of a huge chunk of the family wealth, will his siblings understand and accept it? Will his wife and family? His father or mother if they are still living?