

The Critical Question

What do I still lack?

Matthew 19:16-24

16 Just then a man came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?" 17 "Why do you ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, keep the commandments." 18 "Which ones?" he inquired. Jesus replied, "'You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, 19 honor your father and mother,' and 'love your neighbor as yourself.' [" 20 "All these I have kept," the young man said. "What do I still lack?"

21 Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." 22 When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth. 23 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly I tell you, it is hard for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. 24 Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."

Matthew 19:16-24

What is it you want more than
anything else?

What good thing must I do to get
eternal life?

What do I still lack?

“If you want to enter life, keep
the commandments.”

Vs 21

This wealthy young man is coming to
Jesus still very much wanting to be -
even assuming that he is in control.

Jesus does not distinguish between life here and now and what the young man was thinking of as “eternal” life - as if it were a different life.

Our life *is* eternal.

The Journey we begin with Jesus now does not end with a period when we die.

Physical death is only a comma because it is a transition into a fuller and greater reality.

“If you want to enter the life of God, just do what he tells you.”

Vs 17 (The Message)

Jesus is telling this wealthy young ruler the eternal kind of life he is seeking is lived by following God's commands.

Can you imagine how different
our relationships would be if we
truly determined to live according
to the commands of God?

The man responds to Jesus saying he has done everything he knows how to live a good life but something is still missing.

Have you felt that way?

What do I still *lack*?

Lack: to fall short, be deficient, suffer need
or to be in want of.

Jesus responded, “If you want to be complete... (mature; whole)

Jesus' response is ironic because He doesn't tell him what he lacks.

He tells Him what needs to be lacking.

This is likely true for the vast majority of us.

It is important to understand Jesus is not trying to punish the man for being wealthy or to make him miserable.

He is telling him how to be free to follow Jesus, which is exactly what his soul was longing for.

“But when the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.”

(NIV) Vs 22

“That was the last thing the young man expected to hear. And so, crestfallen, he waked away. He was holding on tight to a lot of things, and he couldn't' bear to let go.”

The Message Paraphrase: Vs 22

The problem was not with what Jesus
told him to do.

The problem was that the young man
did not believe Jesus way was better.

Honestly, do you?

Weekly Spiritual Exercise:

Spend 30 minutes by yourself with no distractions.

Just try to become aware that *God Himself is with you.*

When you are finished write down one thing you thought and one emotion you felt.