

“One Thing You Lack”

In Luke 18:18-23, we read about someone who initiated a conversation with Jesus. He was a young rich ruler. He approached Jesus and asked a question of utmost importance. But, sadly, he did not like the answer given by the Lord.

The conversation between Jesus and the rich young ruler is also recorded in Mark 10:17-20 and Matthew 19:16-22. This is a sad story because the young man wasn't willing to submit to the Lord and gain eternal life.

He came to Jesus seeking to justify himself.

- He was full of pride. He didn't acknowledge a need for forgiveness from God (Matthew 19:16).
- His question was rooted in doing “good work” to earn eternal life. While obedience is undoubtedly necessary to please God (Matthew 7:21), no amount of good works can earn one a place in heaven (Ephesians 2:8; John 3:16).
- Despite his keeping of God's commandments, the rich young ruler still needed to humble Himself before Jesus, acknowledge his sins, and seek His grace (Luke 5:8; 18:13-14).
- No person can be saved apart from God (Mark 10:23-27)!

He was unwilling to give his heart to Jesus.

- This rich young ruler had a lot of good qualities. He was religious. He sought to keep the commandments of God. And yet, there was still a barrier between him and Jesus (Mark 10:21-22).
- Jesus knew this man's heart. He knew that the rich young ruler wasn't willing to give Him the main thing He desired – his heart. He knew that he loved his stuff more than God!
- While Jesus doesn't require that we sell all of our stuff and give it to the poor, He does require that we eliminate anything that prevents us from giving Him preeminence in our lives (Matthew 6:33; 10:37; 16:26). Based on what the Lord did for us at Calvary, this shouldn't be hard for us to do!

He was no different than us.

- We also are lacking. None of us have Christianity mastered. There is room for us to grow and be better for the Lord (2 Peter 3:18). It takes humility to pursue spiritual improvement constantly.
- We also need Jesus. The rich young ruler was not willing to submit to the conditions of Jesus to gain everlasting life. Peter and the apostles made a better decision (John 6:66-69). They knew that there was no other way to heaven apart from following Jesus.
- The world only offers temporary pleasure and satisfaction. Jesus offers spiritual blessings that last forever!

Conclusion:

Do you need to start putting Jesus first in your life?

Shawn Jeffries