

Remnant Life Church
July 29, 2018
Heaven: For Me - How Do I Know?
Mark 10:17-27

- Heaven is a destination for every Christian
 - It is, in every sense of the word, going home
 - **Heb 13:14** - *For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come.*
 - How can I be certain I will go there when I leave this life?

READ – **Mark 10:17-27** (account also found in **Luke 18**)

- This is as fully touching, as well as a tragic story, as you will read in the Scripture
 - Jesus is always the focus of any account we read but it is the “rich, young, man” who captures our attention
 - Here was a man who had everything most people want out of life, but did not have the one thing that mattered most
 - Like so many today, even in the church, he wanted it all, a bargain – the best of both worlds
 - This desire is a tremendous danger to the church of the 21st century
 - **Rev 3** – the church at Laodicea

Rev 3:15-20 – *I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth. You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.’ But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see. Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent. Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.*

- This young man appeared successful to everyone who knew him – just like the church at Laodicea
- Yet even he knew something was missing (**Mark 10:17** - *...what must I do...?*)
 - The problem was he thought it was just one more achievement
 - But salvation is never about achieving or earning God’s acceptance – that is something we cannot do
 - **Eph 2:8-9** - *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast.*
 - Salvation is never achieved, earned, or bought – it is received; given freely by our loving, merciful, and forgiving God
 - This is the reason there are many in the church today who, from all outward appearances would be called a Christian, but like the rich, young man, are seeking to make the purchase through their actions

- Note how the man came to Jesus – he ran to Him (earnest and sincere) and fell at His feet (reverence and respect)
 - Again, all outward appearances show him to be ready
 - But Jesus was going to expose the heart of the man
- But first, Jesus answers the man’s question with a question
 - (vv 17b-18) *“Good teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone.*
 - Catch what Jesus is doing
 - He is not denying His deity and that He is God, He is affirming it
 - Jesus is forcing the man to consider what he truly thinks and believes
 - Calling Jesus good was calling Him God, but this is not what the man believed in his heart (as strange as taking communion without believing in Jesus)
 - Jesus then sets the man up to receive the hard truth
 - In baseball or softball when the pitcher grooves an easy pitch right down the middle of the plate it’s called a cookie
 - Jesus lobs a cookie to the man and he swings at it as hard as he can
 - (vv 19-20) - *You know the commandments: ‘You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honor your father and mother.’” “Teacher,” he declared, “all these I have kept since I was a boy.”*
 - In other words, all that this young man had done was the external
 - His morality and “goodness” only served to conceal the truth of what Jesus was revealing - the presence of a materialistic idol
 - But how does Jesus respond?
 - *Jesus looked at him and loved him (Mark 10:21)*
 - Everything about Jesus is love
 - Why did Jesus make such a radical demand of the young man? (He had never told anyone else to do this)
 - It was because Jesus knew the condition of the man’s heart
 - An idol of materialism had been put in place where God should be
 - This means the young man’s life was one of breaking the very first of God’s commandments (*You shall have no other gods before me – Ex 20:3*)
 - Do we take this then to mean that Jesus was demanding asceticism (the practice of strict self-denial as a personal discipline) in order to be saved?
 - No – many wealthy, godly men in the Scripture (Abraham, David, Solomon, Boaz, Joseph, Job)

- **Eccl.3:13** - ...every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labor - it is the gift of God.
 - This is not about material possessions it is about the heart

- Jesus then lowers the loving hammer – ...*sell everything you have and give it to the poor... Then come, follow me.*” (**Mark 10:21**)
 - The moment of truth has now come – the moment of decision for this young man
 - Katerina and I going to SC – Billy Graham Library
 - “The Hour of Decision” – 1950 – 12 of 471 crusades – in Portland, OR
 - 2 men insistent on creating a radio program; 25K by midnight; 24K at the crusade; the rest at his hotel
 - The beginning of the BGEA; the very first efforts in media
 - Untold thousands have come to know God through that radio broadcast by giving their lives to Jesus
 - But for this young man it was not to be that decision
 - **Mark 10:22** - *At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.*
 - The word for “sad” in the original language is *stoog-nahd-zo* – also means the coming of dark storm clouds
 - His countenance changed at the realization that he was unwilling to do what Jesus asked

- Are you willing to do what Jesus asks of you today?
 - What would you be willing to lay down, walk away from, or give up?
 - What if it is not a thing at all but instead your pride, your reputation, your need to be right, or to be vindicated?
 - What if it is your very life?
 - Not necessarily your physical life but your spiritual life
 - The question this morning is a simple one...

- Have you given your life to Jesus Christ?
 - Not have you been good your whole life or do the things Christians should do...
 - Have you confessed that you are a sinner, asked Jesus to forgive you, and asked Him to come into your life, so that you can live for Him?

This morning I want to invite you to receive Jesus Christ as your personal savior.

Earlier I spoke of Billy Graham and the Hour of Decision radio broadcast that began in 1950

- This morning I want to lead you in the prayer of salvation that was used in every Billy Graham Crusade

- That fact does not make these words any more powerful nor would it make them less if they were prayed in a church in the back-woods of the Tennessee hills
- They are powerful because of what they mean when prayed by a sincere and contrite heart that is willing to give up living their own life on a temporary earth for an eternal one with Jesus in heaven

Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner, and I ask for Your forgiveness. I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. I turn from my sins and invite You to come into my heart and life. I want to trust and follow You as my Lord and Savior. In Your Name I pray.

Amen