

Morning Sermon September 7, 2014

Luke 18:18-30

“Not Good Enough”

I. *The rich young ruler was right to call Jesus “Good” but wrong about why he called Jesus “Good” –*

<sup>18</sup> Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" <sup>19</sup> So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God.

1. *Fact is, Jesus is God and Jesus is “good” and Jesus is a “good teacher” –*

A. *Paul recognized Christ’s “goodness” and His Divine Nature –*  
<sup>5</sup> **of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen. (Romans 9:5 NKJ)**

B. *Doubting Thomas realized accurately Who Jesus was and is –*  
<sup>24</sup> Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup> The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." <sup>26</sup> And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!" <sup>27</sup> Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand *here*, and put *it* into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing." <sup>28</sup> And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" <sup>29</sup> Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." (John 20:24-29 NKJ)

C. *Now, the rich young ruler is right to recognize Jesus’ goodness, but not necessarily for the right REASON; Jesus’ question implies the rich young ruler was missing the fact JESUS is GOD!*

II. *What he was MISSING, even MORE, was the great gulf of difference between Jesus and Himself –*

"Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" <sup>19</sup> So Jesus said to him,  
... "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. <sup>20</sup>  
"You know the commandments: Do not commit adultery," Do not

murder," Do not steal," Do not bear false witness," Honor your father and your mother." <sup>21</sup> And he said, "All these things I have kept from my youth." <sup>22</sup> So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

<sup>23</sup> But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich.

1. *The fact that the rich young ruler THOUGHT he had been keeping the commandments perfectly ...*
2. *The fact he seems to think himself not far from obtaining eternal life, through his own powers, is betrayed by the fact he asks -*

**“what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”**

*He seems to think Heaven to be just one small step away for a young man so practically perfect as he seems to think he, himself is / was -*

III. *The sad realization of farness from God –*

<sup>22</sup> So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." <sup>23</sup> But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich. <sup>24</sup> And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!

1. *Jesus made this man see himself with the answer and instructions HE gave, in response to the young man’s question –*  
A. *He made the young man see, he had a love for riches, for earthly things, that was greater than any love he thought he had for God!*

*And the fact is, you cannot serve God and mammon –*

<sup>13</sup> **"No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." (Luke 16:13 NKJ)**

- B. *He should have realized Jesus was much more than His equal in self-sacrifice, Jesus had RICHES in HEAVEN, glories beyond all this rich young ruler could dream of, yet He humbled Himself, took on flesh and lowly position on earth and was obedient, even to death, death on a cross –*

<sup>58</sup> And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." (Luke 9:58 NKJ)

<sup>5</sup> Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,  
<sup>6</sup> who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, <sup>7</sup> but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. (Philippians 2:5-8 NKJ)

*IV. The sad realization might not be a bad realization, if we also make a GLAD realization, what is impossible with men, is POSSIBLE with GOD! –*

<sup>24</sup> And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!  
<sup>25</sup> "For 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> And those who heard it said, "Who then can be saved?" <sup>27</sup> But He said, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God." (Luke 18:24-28)

- 1. In one way it is a dreadful thing that eternal life is impossible for men, the rich young ruler was right to be sorrowful!*
- 2. Yet, in another way, this realization, of flesh not inheriting, not attaining eternal life or even seeing God's Kingdom is absolutely NEEDED for us to see the truth –*
- 3. The truth is, while we cannot reach up to God, He has reached down for us –*

<sup>27</sup> But He said, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God." Luke 18:27

*V. What God can do in us and with us -*

<sup>28</sup> Then Peter said, "See, we have left all and followed You." <sup>29</sup> So He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or parents or brothers or wife or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, <sup>30</sup> "who shall not receive many times more in this present time, and in the age to come eternal life." (Luke 18:28-30 NKJ)

- 1. Peter and the other apostles (other than Judas) did leave all and follow Jesus!*

- 2. Others have done the same, Paul was in many ways like the rich young ruler but Christ changed Him and made Him see, how much more He had "in Christ" –*

<sup>NKJ</sup> Philippians 3:1 Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you is not tedious, but for you it is safe.

<sup>2</sup> Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation!

<sup>3</sup> For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, <sup>4</sup> though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: <sup>5</sup> circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup> concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

<sup>7</sup> But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.

<sup>8</sup> Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ

<sup>9</sup> and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; <sup>10</sup> that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, <sup>11</sup> if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. <sup>12</sup> Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. (Philippians 3:1-12 NKJ)

- 3. See, what God can do! He can awaken us to SEE a better Kingdom we cannot see without His Spirit's help –*

<sup>3</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3 NKJ)

<sup>5</sup> Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. (John 3:5 NKJ)

<sup>7</sup> "Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

<sup>8</sup> "The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit." (John 3:7-8 NKJ)

*We are not rich enough, nor good enough to attain Heaven through our own fleshly strength. Yet God is good enough, and He is able to give us a vision of Heavenly things we will not resist!*

*Arnold A. Brevick*