

A Rich Young Man

by Bertha Smith

The sermon explores the story of a rich young man who, despite his uprightness, chose material wealth over eternal life offered by Jesus.

Duration: 57:35

Scripture: Exodus 20:12-13, Exodus 20:15-16, Matthew 6:33, Mark 10:17-22, Luke 19:1-10

Topics: "Riches"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of facing one's sins and seeking deliverance from them. He instructs the congregation, including the young ones, to make a list of all the wrongdoings they are habitually engaged in. The preacher highlights the sin of rebellion against parents, stating that it is punishable by death according to the Bible. He then references a story from the 19th chapter of Luke, where a young man named Hartwell seeks forgiveness and redemption from Jesus. The preacher concludes by highlighting the generosity and repentance displayed by Hartwell in giving to the poor and making amends for his wrongdoings.

Transcript

There was a young man in Galilee who had been brought up plush. He had inherited great wealth. How do we know that he'd inherited it? The Bible tells us that he was exceedingly rich, and it was impossible in the Holy Land at that time for anyone to get rich while he was still young if he were an honest man.

It took honest people generations and generations to accumulate wealth. And this was an honest young man who had lived for the very best in life, so we know that he'd inherited all of that property. Even though he was rich, he gave himself to the very best in life.

He became a Bible teacher. Now, he'd studied the Old Testament from the time he was a boy under the Roman government, which had been in power from 60 or 75, 60 or 70 years at that time. The Jews had built little preaching chapels all over the land.

The Roman government gave the Jews perfect religious liberty. And even though they were no longer a nation of their own, after they sinned and sinned and sinned till the Lord had to reject them as a nation, his fire that dwelt in that temple, in that Holy of Holies, went up. Ezekiel, in chapters 9, 10, and 11, 9, 10, and 11 of Ezekiel, saw that fire go up.

And God left his people, and he had to forsake them because of their sins. They worshiped out of us and worshiped out of us and worshiped out of us. And one king would lead them back to the Lord, and the next king, his son, would lead them into idolatry.

And the Lord's purpose for Israel was in making them a nation to send the Savior into the world. And he couldn't send the Savior among idolaters. And he raised up nation after nation to punish them, and still they didn't learn.

In a little while, they'd go back to idolatry again. And finally, the Lord saw the only way he could send the Savior was to destroy them as a nation. And he stirred up the heart.

He calls Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, his tool, an instrument that he could use to chasten the children of Israel. And when he came and took that city, it took 18 months. Those Jews fought so tenaciously to hold their city.

It took 18 months for Nebuchadnezzar to take that city with all of his war equipment of the times and all of his trained army. But he took it. But before he took it, as I just said, Ezekiel, God's prophet, saw that fire go up, and God forsook his people.

And he never dwelt among them again. They were no longer a nation under God with God's presence. They were individuals, citizens of a Gentile nation.

And after the Lord raised up the Medes and Persians, you remember, to conquer the Babylonians, and one of the kings, who was a Mede, permitted the children of Israel, all who wanted to, to go back to where their fathers had had a kingdom of their own, and the most glorious kingdom any earth had ever known, in wealth and riches. Not in size, but in wealth and riches and honor. The Chinese have stories that make us know that perhaps during the time of Solomon, they sent representatives from their government to the Holy Land, to Solomon's government.

Well, when the Lord raised up the Greeks to conquer the Persians, you remember, because he wanted the Bible written in that beautiful Greek language, and he wanted his children of Israel to come back into their center of the world, and so he permitted the Greeks, with their culture, to conquer the Persians. And they know the Greeks were wonderful soldiers, but poor policemen, and the Greeks had taken all of northern Africa and western Asia and southern Europe, but they were just a conglomeration of states and countries. There was no order.

Bandits rising up all the time, everywhere. And then the Lord raised up those wonderful soldiers and wonderful lawgivers, the Romans, and they conquered the Greeks and brought order. And the way they brought order was to put their standing armies all over western Asia, northern Africa, and southern Europe, and they built bridges over streams, and they put boats on the Mediterranean Sea, and they had an expression, All roads lead to Rome, and all roads also lead to the Holy Land.

And that good Roman government, at that time, permitted those Jews to have their own religious government and have a group of 70 men, which they called the Sanhedrin, to punish anybody who broke Moses' laws. But they didn't have the power of life and death. When they killed anybody, they had to bribe the local Roman officials.

They could only beat a person 39 stripes for breaking Moses' law. But it was under the Romans, when they had religious liberty, that the Jews built little churches, we'd call them churches, little temples, little

chapels, I guess we'd call them, all over the Holy Land. Even a little town as small as Nazareth had its synagogue.

And that's where the priests, the Levites, were assigned to teach the Old Testament. And the people went every Sabbath day, their Saturday. Their Sabbath began Friday evening at sundown and closed Saturday evening at sundown.

And every Sabbath, the citizens went and worshipped in those little temples called synagogues. And that was the school for the Jewish boys, little girls didn't go to school. And they went to school and their textbook was the Old Testament, taught by those priests.

And they would have several teachers sometimes. And the ruler of the synagogue was the person who was in charge. And now I've told a good deal to come to that young man to describe this young man's position.

He was the ruler of a synagogue in Galilee, which meant that at his young age, he was a Bible teacher. And over the other Bible teachers, he assigned their teaching, what they were to teach. Now that was the highest position that anyone in the Holy Land could have.

And that was an exceedingly upright young man. But that young man had a problem. And it was a very genuine problem.

He didn't know how to receive eternal life. He knew from the Old Testament there was a heaven and a hell. And people had to go to one of those places when they left this world.

And he wanted to go to heaven and he didn't know how to get there. Now, people by that time all over the land had heard about Jesus. And they'd heard of his wonder, all of his wonders of raising the dead.

And they'd heard of his healing the sick and casting out demons. And they'd heard of all of his marvelous teaching. And this young man had heard of his teaching, but evidently he'd never seen it.

But when he heard that Jesus was coming, he was passing by. He was not going to miss an opportunity to see Jesus. So he went running and showed a very humble attitude.

Fell down on his knees. Now, he was a Jew and they thought they were the people. They were God's people.

And full of pride and self-esteem. But he humbled himself and fell down on his knees and said, Master, now that meant teacher. Master, a teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? Well, Jesus said, you know the commandments.

You see, Jesus hadn't come and died. Jesus hadn't died yet. All the Bible they had was the Old Testament that the message of Savior was coming.

One would come. Jesus said, you know the law. You know God's law.

You know his commands. He said, I've kept all of these from my youth. And Jesus looked at that young man.

Oh, Jesus asked him something first. Jesus said to him, why are you calling me good? Why are you calling me master? Good master. Good, first place.

He shouldn't have called Jesus teacher, master. Jesus was trying to lead him on to show him that he was the Lord. And he said, why are you calling me good, master? There's nothing good but God.

If I'm good, I'm God coming to flesh. And that was what Jesus was trying to get him to see. If I'm good, I'm God.

Why don't you worship me as Lord, as your Lord? But the young man didn't get it. And then Jesus said, you, you know the commandments. And again he addressed Jesus as master, teacher.

I've kept these from my youth up. And Jesus looked at that young man. And I think he was thinking, what a specimen of young manhood.

What a marvelous young man. I haven't found such an honest, upright, godly young man. And he wanted him for one of his disciples.

He knew that one that he, Judas that he'd chosen wouldn't do. And he chose Judas to give Judas an opportunity so he would be without excuse. If Jesus hadn't have let Judas follow him around three years, everybody would have said, well, Judas didn't know that it was what he was doing.

But he had the perfect opportunity to learn, to know Jesus. And he did what he did from the wickedness of his own heart. And Jesus was going to get one to take his place.

So he said, and Jesus just left him. And when Jesus had asked him about the commandments, Jesus, you remember the commandments are divided into two groups. One group is our duty toward God, and the other group is our duty toward man.

Now, Jesus didn't mention the commands showing that young man's duty toward God. That's more difficult to understand. He mentioned his duty toward man.

And all the Jews had been taught how to treat their fellow man. And Jesus quoted some of the commands showing his duty toward man. And he said, you shall not kill, you shall not steal, you shall not bear false witness, not commit adultery, and honor your father and mother.

And that young man said, all these I have observed from my youth. And then Jesus said, you go sell all you have and give to the poor. You're just like one thing, just like one thing.

Sell all you have and give to the poor and come and take up the cross and follow me. Now, what did Jesus mean by taking up the cross? Now, sometimes we will try to comfort a person who has a very difficult problem that they can't solve and a difficult situation that they can't escape. And Christians will say to them, this is your cross.

You must bear this as a cross. Now, the Bible never uses cross-bearing in that sense. Cross was always death.

Cross was always death. A person bore a cross to the place where they were going to be nailed on it. And after they were condemned to death, and the Romans, by the way, instituted this just a few years before Jesus came.

Anyone who rebelled against the Roman government, this is the way they put down rebels against the Roman government. Anyone who rebelled against the Roman government was to then be nailed to a cross. And it was the most cruel death imaginable.

They nailed them to that cross, and they just hung there for days in agony, wanting to die and couldn't. Now, remember when Jesus was crucified the third day. When he was crucified, when the day came to an end, and the Sabbath was going to come, not the third day.

It didn't have anything to do with it. Pardon me. Jesus had died because our sins had cursed the life out of him.

He couldn't breathe anymore. Scientists will tell us that he actually died with a broken heart. And those thieves were not yet dead, and the soldiers broke their limbs so they'd die, and they could take them down off of the cross to please the Jews before sundown, which would be their Sabbath beginning.

And that death on the cross was so cruel that a few years after Jesus died, even the Romans stopped using it. And part of the punishment after man was to live to death was to take that cross and go all through the city. You young people know that I lived 42 years in China.

And old Dr. Hartwell was one of the first, he was the first missionary to North China. He went from my state, South Carolina. Very highly cultured, highly educated, wonderful, wonderful gentleman.

And he settled in Tung Chau where Miss Lottie Moon, he and a young man, he'd had a term in South China, in Canton. And at that time, we had no missionary in North China, there was not any missionary in North China, north of Shanghai. And Dr. Hartwell, after five years in Canton, moved up to Shanghai.

Two missionaries had come out to Shanghai. And so one young man and his wife had just arrived, long enough to have had two years of language. Mr. Hartwell went up there and studied about a year until he could speak Mandarin.

Canton spoke a different language. And they have their own Cantonese. The written language is the same.

But Mandarin is spoken over nine-tenths of China. And Mr. Hartwell and that young man left their wives. And Mr. Hartwell had children.

I don't know whether the other man had any or not. And they went up to North China. And they thought they'd stop at the first port, which was Tufu.

And you travel on those English steamers. They have no cabins and you just sit on the deck and no checking baggage arrangements. And you can't travel by yourself and get off and go find out where you can go before you take the baggage off.

So you have to have two and somebody to stay on the boat and watch your baggage while you go ashore and find a place to stay. So that young man told Mr. Hartwell to stay on board and watch the baggage. And he'd go ashore and find an inn where they could go.

And then after they'd find an inn, they'd get Kulis to come and take two or three men, take a truck of trump and take it to the inn. Well, that man didn't come back. And the Chinese came aboard and said that a foreigner, we have to be the foreigners over there, had been killed in Tifu.

Well, Mr. Hartwell didn't get off. He went on around to the next port, which was Tung Cha. And that's where Miss Lottie Moon later went out to join Mr. and Miss Hartwell and another couple who'd gone out.

Well, Mr. Hartwell was down in Tifu at one time. Perhaps he was buying some land for a mission building or a mission school or something, and was at the official headquarters, perhaps to get it registered with the government. And, lo, a man had been condemned to death.

I'm telling you young people this just to show you what it meant to bear a cross through the city. He'd been condemned to death. And his son, and there he was, all ready to be put to death.

And the son had had to go to Manchuria, like so many in North China, to make a living. And, of course, his family notified him that his father had been condemned to death. And, lo, that young man came home just as fast as he could come and got to Tifu, and he just came running.

And Mr. Hartwell was sitting outside at the entrance when this young man came running, and just calling, wait a minute, wait a minute, wait a minute. And that father was standing there with a red cloth with a hole in the top over his clothes, and his name was written here in great big letters, his name and condemned to death, and what he was dying for, and it was written on the back. And they had to take a cymbal, and knock two pieces of brass and knock them together.

And they had to go through, all through that town, up one street and down another, announcing to everybody, now this is what comes to you when you break the law of your land. And, lo, that young man got there just in time before his father had started after. And he went and fell down on his face before the head official and begged him to let him take his father's place in death.

And they let him. And that young man put on his father's name and that father's condemnation, he took it in himself, and went all through that city, and then was carried outside the city where he had to dig his own ditch to fall in before he was beheaded. Well, the same way during the Romans' time, they had their prisoners against Rome go all through the city after they were condemned, and if their offense against the government was rebelling against the government, they had to die on a cross, and they had to bear that cross.

And it was huge and heavy. They had to have a pole tall enough to hold up the heaviest man and be tall enough from the ground that people couldn't each touch their feet. And then enough of it buried in the ground to hold steady.

And then the cross piece to nail his hands to. And, you know, Jesus couldn't bear his cross. He fell under it.

He never used his God power for himself. He used his God power for other people, but he went through his man. He went through his man.

And he fell under his cross. Well, Jesus said to that young man, that rich young ruler, now you take up the cross, and that meant to die on it. You take up the cross and come and follow me.

Well, now this young man's problem had been solved. He knew now how to receive eternal life. Well, did he jump up and down and clap his hands and say, praise the Lord, my problem is now solved, and go sell all that he had and come follow Jesus? Now, Jesus didn't mean for him to take up a wooden cross right then.

He meant for that young man to follow him to death and die however he may have had to die. And we have a record of, history gives us a record of some of the twelve apostles who were nailed to a wooden cross. Well, that young man made the most stupid mistake anybody could ever imagine.

That young man got up and went away after his problem had been solved. And he went away sorrowful. He went away with head bound.

That young man really wanted eternal life. He wanted eternal life, but he didn't want it at that price. He wanted in this life what he had, and then he wanted eternal life too.

When Jesus was going to come and die on a cross for him, he wasn't willing to die on a cross himself. And he went away. Oh, went away where to, friends? Where did he go away to? Why, that young man went away to hell.

He went away to hell. As far as we know, he's never mentioned again. His name is not even given, you know.

The Bible never gives the names of people who are going on to hell. I don't know that it never does, but a lot of times. Why give anybody's name when they're going to be ended in a little while? What a stupid mistake.

How stupid, how stupid. And you know, he's been in hell for nearly 2,000 years and doesn't have any less time to stay there. Jesus went on down the road about 100 miles, and he came to a town called Jericho.

And, Lord, there was a ruler down there who also wanted to see Jesus. Quite a different kind of ruler. Now, he was the ruler over tax collectors, and he was a Jew collecting taxes to be paid into the Roman government from the Jews.

And the Jews hated with all their soul anybody that would work for the Romans, and certainly anyone who would be a tax collector. Rome divided the whole country, the whole nation, into tax districts. Each tax district was called a publicus.

And then they appointed a man to be the head tax collector of that district, and he was called a publican. And then he hired men to help him and pay them wages to work under him. But he had all he could, and every publicus was assessed a certain amount of money by Rome for tax according to the wealth of that publicus.

And, of course, they took a census, as Rome was good at doing, and they knew how many people were there and what the wealth of that publicus was. And so all that head man had to do was to hand over to Rome the amount that they assessed to that publicus. And the head man could get rich because if a Jew were wicked enough to scoop down and drag his family into disgrace, to collect taxes from the Jews to pay to Rome, he just wanted money, and he'd have been such a scoundrel, he'd have just demanded all he wanted to.

And he could go around, and the men that he'd had hired knew how much to multiply. And they were told by the head man, and if a man should pay \$10 tax or \$5 tax, pay me \$20. Pay me, hand over \$20.

And no doubt they had a few soldiers with their daggers going along with them. And the citizens couldn't do a thing but hand over. And they hated a man anyway who would work for the Jews, and even their own

people would become a publican and a head man at that, a ruler of the other tax collectors in the district, just to get rich.

They just hated that man with all their souls. And they would have crossed the street to keep from meeting him, and certainly they wouldn't have spoken to him if they'd met him. He was hated by everybody.

Now that man had just stooped just as low as anybody could stoop in the eyes of the Jews. But he wanted to see Jesus, and he heard Jesus was coming. Now Jesus was going to Jerusalem and all the people with him to observe the Passover.

And the whole family went, and the children went along too, carried their families, and it was about three days' journey to walk 100 miles from Galilee. Now the men had to go three times a year to worship and offer sacrifices for their families. And the women and children went because they wanted to.

It was a gala time. And they saw all their friends, and then after they had offered the sin offering for sacrifice, the goat, the father did that, and then they offered a sheep, a lamb, and they could eat the lamb. And so it was a very happy time, and they were all going down to Jerusalem.

And they got down to Jericho, and that scoundrel of a tax collector, named Zacchaeus, now his name is given, as wicked as he is, as he was, he wanted to see Jesus. He had heard all about it. Well, he knew that these people, well, he couldn't see over them.

He happened to be a little man, and here were all these tall people when he came running out to see Jesus. Jesus was passing by. And, oh, Zacchaeus went running down the road and climbed up into a sycamore tree.

All he had expected was just to get one little glimpse of Jesus, just to see what that great wonder worker looked like. And, oh, Jesus knew all about it. He knew he was a scoundrel, dragging his family down to being a tax collector and head of the district if anybody wants to see Jesus, he wants to give them a chance.

And when Jesus got down to this man under that tree, he looked up, and he even knew this man's name and said, Zacchaeus, imagine how Zacchaeus was startled that that great wonder worker knew his name. He said, make haste and come down. Today I must abide at your house.

That meant spend the night. I'm going to your house to spend the night. Now, Jesus knew he was rich, and he knew he had servants, and he probably didn't have food.

Food wouldn't keep. They didn't have any refrigeration or iceboxes, but they kept a fatted calf ready to kill. They had servants to kill it.

And you did all your visiting before you ate. You do that in the Orient. A lot of the Oriental etiquette is for a purpose.

And when you go to a home to eat, you go an hour or two before and do your visiting before you eat. And when you eat, you get up from the table and go to make for the door and get out of the way. Now, I found the reason for that in China was that the head of the house who had servants, nobody would invite you to homes they didn't have.

And they can't invite you except at Chinese New Year time or midwinter anyway when the food will freeze that they buy. Therefore, keep. And they just take you to a restaurant ordinarily when they want to have you for a guest.

But they can take you to the home. And when they want the guest out of the way, and the family will live a week on that food that's left after the guests leave and they don't want the servants to tear it up and eat all the best. She'll give them something, but later the house wants to look after that food.

And they'll heat it over every day. It's already cooked and they'll heat it up and heat it up and heat it up so it'll keep. And so they don't want any guests there to get to eat it.

Well, just imagine now when Jesus and his disciples went there. They spent the night. But sure they'd been walking all day.

They must have killed a fatted calf and had a dinner and that would have taken them some time. And no doubt a good many neighbors came in as they do and they'd come into the courtyard where you couldn't offend your neighbors and they'd be all outside looking in and just listening. But they were not supposed to be there.

They were not supposed to be even seen or a part of the group and you just had to let them stay and say nothing. And so Jesus would have had a long time to talk with Zacchaeus that night before the dinner would have gotten ready. It had been a late dinner.

They had to kill a calf and then cook it. They had to kill it. Well, anyway, Jesus went.

And all of these people were just astounded. Oh, he's going to be guessed as a man that's a sinner. A man that's a sinner.

They didn't know they were sinners too. Well, they were not sinners like Zacchaeus. And no, before they went to bed that night, Zacchaeus had something to say.

And he stood. He wanted everybody there to hear him. And he said, I'm giving half of my goods... No.

Yes, I'm giving half of my goods to the poor. That's what he said first. And if I've oppressed anybody... Now, that's an oriental way of admitting you have when they say, if I have.

If I have. That's a polite way of letting themselves out easily. And if I've oppressed anybody, I'll pay them back four dollars to one.

Now, he was going to give... Why didn't he pay back before he divided? He'd have had more money left. No. He divided first and gave 50% that he had to the poor.

And then he paid back, paid up all of his conscience money out of his own 50, out of his own half. Now, wasn't that magnanimous? And he called Jesus, Lord, written with a capital letter. And you remember what Jesus said to him? Remember what Jesus said to him? Let's read this.

It's in the 19th chapter of Luke. And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. And behold... Now, behold means just listen to this.

Something's unusual is coming when Jesus said, behold. Like he was saying, now just listen to this. Just listen to this.

Now, the Jews didn't... thought all the publicans were just doomed to hell forever. And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus, who he was, and could not for the press because he was little of stature.

And he ran before and climbed up into a sycamore tree not to see him, for he was to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and saw him and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must abide at thy house. And he made haste and came down and received him joyfully.

And when they saw it, that's all the people that were going down, patriotic people, they all murmured, saying it was gone to be guessed that the man was a sinner. And Zacchaeus stood and said unto the Lord, behold, Lord... Zacchaeus was telling something unusual, too. Just listen to this.

Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have taken anything from anyone by a false accusation, I restore him fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation, come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.

This day is salvation, come to you, Zacchaeus. What a scoundrel! What a scoundrel! Let's look at his sins. What were the sins of Zacchaeus? What did he love? What did he love? Read that.

Oh, he loved money, and that was all he did love, but dragged his family down to be a publican. Well, did he love others? He did not love other people. Oh, he was oppressing other people all the time.

He never would have been a publican otherwise, except it was a good chance to take money from other people that he shouldn't have to get rich himself. Well, whom did he love? He surely loved only himself. Well, if a man who only loved money and didn't love other people, only loved himself, could he love God? He did not love God.

Of course he didn't love God. What did he deserve? What did he deserve? Why, he didn't deserve anything but hell. Well, how could Jesus give a scoundrel like that eternal life? Answer, let's get your answers.

What's that? What do you mean by grace? What did the woman say over here? Oh, grace is unmerited faith. Well, you see now, God is holy. God is holy, and all sin comes from the devil.

And how could he be holy and excuse the sin that came from the devil in Zacchaeus? Anybody else any answers? No? He repented. He turned from sin. Well, certainly he did.

Parted with half of his wealth. That surely showed he'd changed his mind without money. Well, now, God's holy law always has been and always will be the soul that sinneth should die.

The wages of sin is death. And Zacchaeus said, Oh, I'm sorry. Could Jesus say, Well, that's all right.

That's all right. Now, God's holy nature must punish sin, and the punishment is death. Does anybody else have something to say? Oh, Jesus hadn't died.

Oh, Jesus was on the way to Jerusalem to die for the sins of Zacchaeus. On the way going up to Jerusalem to be nailed to the cross. And he was going to take in his own body all the sins of Zacchaeus.

His love for money. His lack of love for human beings. His love for himself.

And for his not loving other people. All of that was going to be heaped upon Jesus. And Jesus was going to die.

He was going to die for the sins of Zacchaeus. How much did it cost Holy God for the sins of Zacchaeus to be forgiven so he could go to heaven? But you know, Zacchaeus is up there. And when you and I have been up there a few thousand years and get through praising the Lord and seeing all the preachers and Sunday school teachers and people who have prayed for us and taught us the word and all of our friends.

Why, someday we'll be looking around to see who else is there. And here'll come a little man hopping around the corner praising the Lord. He won't have to tell us.

We'll just know that's Zacchaeus. And Zacchaeus has been up there for two thousand years and has no less time to stay. But now let's take another look over here at this man who's been in hell so long.

Did this man have any sins? Did he have any sins? Most upright man in this community. Somebody said yes. What was his sin? What was the sin of this young man? Somebody else? What did that person say? What was his sin? What did this man love? What did he love? He loved his money.

He loved his money. He was not going to part with his money. All right.

Did he love others? Did he love the poor? He did not love others. Whom did he love? Huh? He loved himself. He only loved himself.

Well, now, if this man only now he was a Bible teacher, if he only loved money and didn't love others and only loved himself, could he love God? He did not love God. Now, what was the difference in the most upright, most honored, beloved man in all the community in this lowdown scoundrel that the Jews wouldn't they were going to spit on him every time they'd seen him? What was the difference in him? Huh? No, I mean what was the difference in him by nature? Huh? This man's sin was all in his heart, covered up. Where was this man's sin? This man already had what he loved.

He already had money. He already had it. He already had it.

This one didn't have it and he was going to have it. If he had it, he never would have drugged his family down to have been a publican. A Jew never would have stooped to that.

Now, Jesus himself clasped publicans with harlots. And you remember he said to those Jewish leaders of the Sanhedrin he was speaking of denouncing and telling them about their sins. He said, even publicans and harlots will go into the kingdom before you do.

Jesus clasped publicans with harlots and harlots were to be stoned to death. Not permitted to live, they were to be stoned to death. And here this man, but this man didn't have money and he was going to have it and he acted out.

He gave expression to the sin in his heart and this man kept the sin in his heart covered up. That's the only difference. That's the only difference.

Well, did you know that when Jesus met this young man, when Jesus met him, he was already on the way. The 10th chapter of Mark where this is recorded is called on the way chapter. Jesus is on the way down to Jerusalem to die for the sins of this young man.

And imagine how sad Jesus felt when he saw him turn away, when he was going to Jerusalem to die for him. But Jesus didn't call him back and make it easier as you and I would. He didn't call him back.

He knew the sin of his heart and he knew he had to turn against it. Now let's read this. This is in the 10th chapter of Mark, beginning with verse 17.

And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running and kneeled to him and asked him, Good master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God. Thou knowest the commandments. Do not commit adultery, do not kill, do not steal, do not bear false witness, defraud not, honor thy father and mother.

And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I deserved for my youth. Then Jesus beholding him loved him and said unto him, One thing thou lackest, go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and take up the cross and follow me. And he was sad at that saying and went away grieved, for he had great possessions.

Now as the brother in the back said a moment ago, God's grace, God's grace, unmerited favor. This man didn't deserve a thing in the world but hell. He didn't deserve a thing but hell, eternal hell.

But because he repented of his sin, when he saw that Jesus was his Messiah, he called him Lord and he had a complete change right there about money, had a complete change. Gave away half he had and then went out and paid back everybody he'd ever, ever oppressed. And this man kept his money that he loved and went on to hell, went on to hell.

Now friends, holy God can never forgive sin in the sense of excusing it. God's grace and that brother what he meant by God's unmerited favor meant that he'd sent his son into the world to die. God's love sent his son into the world to die.

And the mildest sinful thought you ever had came from the devil. And Jesus had to take that sin in his own body because holy God can never forgive anything that comes from the devil in the sense of excusing it. He does not excuse it.

He does not excuse sin at any time. And you know I've been astounded at the heresy I hear in Southern Baptist churches. Heresy in Southern Baptist churches? What kind of heresy? You listen to this.

You know people are teaching children it's understood. When you do wrong, you just go back on your knees and ask God to forgive you. Holy God must always punish sin.

And that's why Christians often have to suffer in this life. Now the Lord lets people suffer in this life for two reasons. And I think the reason I said this morning the Lord doesn't always cure sickness of his own.

He does sometimes when we are cleansed enough to ask him. But from my study of the Word of God I've reached the conclusion that Jehovah God has two reasons for letting people suffer. Sometimes he lets them suffer physically.

Sometimes he lets them suffer financially. Sometimes he lets them become disgraced by their children going into sin, deep sin, and the parents are disgraced. He has different ways for two reasons.

One is to purify us. Chasing us for our sins and our failures to live like we should live when we are his children. Now he doesn't chase the neighbors.

You don't punish the neighbor's children, you know. You don't discipline your neighbor's children. You discipline your own children.

And the wicked may prosper all the time in this life. They've got their punishment in hell. Christians are not going to be punished in this life, in hell.

And we've got to take ours in this life. And the Lord can let all kinds of things, sometimes financial reverses, different ways. He has to punish his children to bring us to repentance.

That's the first reason. To make us holy. His plan for every person is that we are to be holy like him.

And another reason he lets us be punished is to show to the lost world and the sinful people how holy we are and how we will take punishment at the hands of God. And that's the reason he let Job suffer. To show what a man of God Job was.

And of course in the end the Lord showed Job something that he himself didn't know about. And that was his sinful nature. That was his sinful nature.

He didn't know he had a sinful nature. But he knew he was walking with God way back when he didn't have one line of Bible. Job is the oldest piece, supposed to be the only piece of literature in existence today.

He didn't have a line of Bible and yet he walked with God. And it's just amazing how much he knew about God. And so the Lord lets us suffer today to show how, either to make us holy or to show somebody else how holy we are.

How we can take it. How we can take it. Because we have a living Lord living inside of us.

We have a burden bearer and we don't have to give in and act like an unsaved person every time something goes wrong with us. Well, what does this mean to us today? What does this mean to us today? Are we living uprightly like this young man? Bible teaching. Going to church all the time.

Busy in the church. While this young man's occupation was teaching the Word of God. And yet, he was guilty of the same sin in God's sight that this scoundrel was.

And here we have a good man in hell and a bad man in heaven. Because Jesus had to come and die for everything that Zacchaeus was. It was unlike holy God.

He had to take all the sins of Zacchaeus and his own body and go to the cross. And God can never forgive sin just because we are sorry and because we repent. That sin must be punished and the wages of sin is death.

And the only forgiveness God has is to see your sin and my sin on His Son. And he had to go to the cross and become sin for us. And when God sees our sins on His Son, that's His forgiveness.

And there are just two places for your sins. Your sins are on you, are there on Christ. And they're still on you if you've never put them on Christ, though you may have been baptized.

You may be a church member. If you've never come to the cross of Christ as a lost sinner and taken refuge in Christ's death, you're still in your sins in God's sight. The only forgiveness God has, I repeat, is seeing you in His Son.

And we read in the first chapter of Ephesians, we are accepted in His beloved Son. But Jesus was already on the way going to Jerusalem to die for that young man's sins. But he kept his money and he lost his soul and lost his money and everything else.

If this young man lived to be 70 years old, if he lived to be 70, if he lived 37 years longer than the time that Jesus saw him, he became a pauper. Property in those days was olive orchards, vineyards, houses for rent, land, cattle, slaves. That was property.

And all of that was destroyed. And when the Jews Jews just kept sinning, rebelling against Rome and rebelling against Rome and putting Christians to death and putting Christians to death, putting Christians to death. And they lost their nation.

And many of them lost their own lives. And the innocent have to suffer with the wicked. The innocent, when a nation is punished, the innocent have to suffer with the wicked like Daniel and his friends had to suffer and the innocent when Babylon captured the Holy Land.

God's purpose was to punish the leaders. They were responsible for the idolatry and for the sins, but the righteous had to suffer. Individuals then suffer for their own sin.

But when a nation sins, we all have to suffer. The righteous have to suffer with the wicked. Friends, God never forgives sin because we are sorry.

His only forgiveness is transferring your sins to his son. And when does he transfer our sins to his son? When we do. When we put our sins over on the cross of Christ and take Christ as the Lord of our lives, God sees our sins on his Son and not on us, and that's the only kind of forgiveness God has.

No human being can refuse Christ as Savior and ever have any sin forgiven. All of their sins are stacked up against them unless they take Christ just for themselves. Now, I've been asking those who were here this morning.

How many were not here this morning? Let me see your hands. Not here at the morning service this morning. Were all you young people here this morning? I didn't see this many young people.

Those who were not here this morning, please raise your hands. I just want to see how many we have at this service who were not here this morning. Well, all the others are here.

Well, I ask the people, I assign homework. I have homework every day. And the first lesson in the homework that I assign when I go to a church is to face up to what you look like in the sight of God.

See how many sins you need to be made right and trust the Lord to deliver you from day by day and to take out of your heart. So, I ask everybody this morning that was here to go get a big sheet of paper and make a list and put numbers down the left-hand side and I want you youngsters to do this who were not here this morning. Get you a big sheet of paper and put numbers down on the left side and after that you

just make a list of everything that you can think of that you've done that's not right that you're in the habit of doing.

And when a mother has to tell a boy or girl twice to do something that's your sin. You've rebelled against your parents and you're guilty of rebellion. And you know what the Lord did to the rebels? He had rebels put to death.

Now, what about that? What about that? He had rebels put to death. He didn't put up with rebellious sons according to God's law were to be stoned. And if God was the civil ruler of the universe today how many people would be stoned? People are put to death for fornication rebellion against the parents and adultery and all kinds of sins that we excuse today.

All homosexuals are being put to death not permitted to live. If God was the civil ruler of the universe today the electric chairs would be running day and night catching up if he were our ruler today. But he's not our civil ruler.

And a woman to talk too much. Women can sin with their tongues were to be dealt with. And now and when you disobey your parents that's called rebellion.

Rebellion against your parents. Now you just write out everything in your heart and life that's unholy and you keep this as your secret. Don't let anybody else see it.

Now I hope you young people will stay for the next service. You'll be able to understand what I'm going to give in the next service. Now dear Lord we thank you for this wonderful group here and for their attention.

Now you reveal to their hearts the truth that's been given. We pray in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen.

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