

What Good Deed Must I Do to Have Eternal Life?

by Thabiti Anyabwile

The kingdom of heaven belongs to the humble and insignificant, and cannot be bought with money or morality, but requires humility and repentance.

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Scripture: Matthew 19:13

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Description

Thabiti Anyabwile emphasizes that eternal life cannot be earned through good deeds or wealth, but is a gift from God that belongs to the humble and insignificant, like children. He contrasts the rich young ruler's reliance on morality and possessions with the call to follow Christ, which requires total surrender and trust in Him. The sermon highlights that true treasure is found in the kingdom of heaven, which offers a hundredfold return for what is given up in this life. Anyabwile encourages listeners to abandon self-reliance and embrace the grace of God through faith in Jesus, who alone provides eternal life.

Transcript

We remember you before our Lord. We are so encouraged by the works of the Lord that you're in here. It's much larger than that little church that we are part of.

I am so pleased to be here, in part, because I respect your pastor so much. A godly man, a humble man, a man who thinks of you all so deeply, as I'm sure you know. And that's just evident to me in the way that he talks about you, in the way that he rejoices over the work of the Lord in this place, and in his faithfulness in the Word, in the Scripture.

So it's a great and humbling privilege to be serving with Paul this morning in the Word, and to have had the week with his gorgeous family. Paul is like most of us men who are married. We married way up, you know.

We married well above ourselves, and so we are thankful for the Lord's grace in our lives. I just want to introduce my wife and kids just real quickly. This is Christy, sitting just before me, and my daughters, Athea and Eden.

We're just thrilled to be here in Canada. I will say that, though I respect Paul, I love him dearly, he brought me here under false pretenses. He invited me to come to a conference in Paris during the summer.

Little words like Paris, Ontario, or Canada matter, you know. And we've got to invite you to the Caribbean to see summer. Well, a riddle this morning.

You like riddles in Canada? Some people do, some people don't. A riddle. What belongs to the insignificant, but the rich can't buy, and is worth a hundred times anything you give for it? So, what belongs to the insignificant, the rich can't purchase it, and it's worth a hundred times anything you would give for it.

Any thoughts? I'm also from the Caribbean, we talk back. The kingdom of heaven. That's the riddle that really our text opens up for us this morning in some ways.

That's the lesson, the burden, I think, of Matthew chapter 19 verses 13 to 30. That the kingdom of heaven, if you're taking notes, belongs to the insignificant. Like little children, as we shall see.

But it can't be bought with either morality or money. It's not for sale. And thirdly, whatever we give for it, in order to possess this great treasure, we receive a hundred times anything we lose to enter the kingdom of heaven.

So if you wouldn't mind, let me read for us again Matthew chapter 19 verses 13 to 30, and we will work our way through the text with those three points. The kingdom of heaven belongs to the insignificant. Can't be bought, number two, with money or morality.

Number three is worth a hundred times anything we lose because of it. Verse 13. Then children were brought to him that he might lay his hands on them and pray.

The disciples rebuked the people, but Jesus said, Let the little children come to me. Do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven. And he laid his hands on them and went away.

And behold, a man came up to him saying, Teacher, what good thing must I do to have eternal life? He said to him, Why do you ask me about what is good? There's only one who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments. He said to him, Which ones? Jesus said, You shall not murder.

Should not commit adultery. You should not steal. You should not bear false witness.

Honor your father and mother and you shall love your neighbor as yourself. The young man said to him, All these I have kept. What do I still lack? And Jesus said to him, If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven.

And come, follow me. When the young man heard this, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. And Jesus said to his disciples, Truly I say to you, only with difficulty will a rich person enter the kingdom of heaven.

Again, I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God. The disciples heard this. They were greatly astonished, saying, Who then can be saved? But Jesus looked at them and said, With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.

Then Peter said in reply, See, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have? Jesus said to them, Truly I say to you, In the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or heaven or lands, for my namesake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life.

But many who are first will be last, and the last first. Well, the kingdom of heaven belongs to the insignificant. We see that in verses 13 to 15 there.

A passage opens with people bringing little children to Jesus to bless them. We don't know if this was a general blessing or whether they were looking for particular kinds of prayer, perhaps healing for sick children, but notice the reaction of the disciples. Verse 13, the disciples rebuked the people.

It was as though the disciples had decided that these little children were perhaps an inconvenience to our Lord, that they, he, Jesus, had greater things to be concerned with. You see here in Matthew 19, verse 14, how the Lord responds to them. But Jesus replies, verse 14, Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them.

For to such belongs the kingdom of heaven. He laid his hands on them and went away. It seems the disciples have forgotten something that Jesus had taught them earlier.

If you look back in Matthew chapter 18, those first three verses there, the text reads, At that time the disciples came to Jesus saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said, Truly I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. It seems the disciples have already, just two chapters later, forgotten that lesson.

It reminds me of what our friend Ken Sandy says, that Christians leak. We all are sort of like sieves. We're taught certain things and we have it for a moment and it just sort of leaks out, doesn't it? And the Lord just has to continually teach us again.

And we praise God for that, for that's a demonstration of his mercy and his grace. I'm a little slow. And so I'm thankful that the Lord, in his gentleness and his kindness, reminds us again and again of these great lessons regarding himself and his love and his kingdom.

And here he applies again the same message that he had really rebuked them with in Matthew chapter 18. You can see the picture in Matthew 18 where these burly fishermen are arguing about who's first in the kingdom. Peter says, Surely it's me, I'm the one who speaks up all the time, I'm the bold one.

And Matthew, perhaps the tax collector, the scribe says, No, no, no, in the kingdom you need an administrator. You need someone who knows how to document and put in place policy. Sorry to any bureaucrats among us this morning.

Be encouraged that you will be in the kingdom. You know, and others come along. John comes along and says, I'm the beloved disciple.

He loves me. Surely I will be greatest. And Jesus, without sort of entering into the fray, takes a little child, puts him in the midst.

These twelve burly men. He says, Unless you become like him. Forget about being great in the kingdom.

You'll never even enter the kingdom. Now what's he saying? He's saying that children are naturally humble. All of us who have children know better than that.

Proud little rascals. They come with that downloaded. That software is already installed.

It's all about me and mine. And they're not humble naturally. What he means is, is that in his day, children had no standing in society.

They had no rights, really. They own nothing or possess nothing. They were utterly dependent upon adults in the society.

They were humble and insignificant in the sense that that they had no resources of their own that they would depend upon. They had to be dependent upon others. Serve them and care for them and watch over them.

Jesus here in Matthew 18 and Matthew chapter 19. He reminds the disciples that the way into the kingdom is not up but down. You don't enter the kingdom by, as we would say in the Caribbean, big upping yourself.

You enter the kingdom by humbling yourself. By divesting yourself of all self-reliance. By letting go of pride.

By letting go of any sense of deservedness. He says, unless you become like this little child, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Unless you flee from yourself.

Unless you forget about yourself. Unless you relinquish anything starting with self. And grab fast to him and his cross.

Unless you humble yourself in repentance and in faith, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. And so he says in Matthew chapter 19, listen, let the children come to me. The kingdom belongs to such as these, the insignificant.

Those who come before my father, their hands empty, broken, contrite. Blessed are those who mourn. Blessed are those who weep over their sins.

Blessed are those who are poor in spirit. Theirs, theirs is the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom belongs to such as these insignificant, humble children.

Trust upon the Lord. And see the contrast there. You see these two scenes, verses 13 to 15, open with with Jesus blessing these little children.

And versus 16, about 30, we switch scenes now. He leaves the little children and now comes into the focus. Not a child, not an insignificant, not a humble one.

But but a rich young ruler now comes into the scene. Someone with resources, someone with means, someone with ability, someone with achievement and accomplishment. See the contrast, first of all, in the in the disciples reaction.

You remember, they rebuke the children. They said, no, no, no, no. The master has no time for such little ones.

But then they are stunned in chapter 19 when Jesus says that it's more difficult or it's easier for Camel to go to the eye of a needle than for a rich man to go into heaven. You remember that question. Well, who can go to heaven? Surely the middle class have an easy access to heaven.

And surely the wealthy will be sitting in first class in heaven. You see the assumption there. They assume, as we often do in an evangelical culture that looks to be respectable to the world.

They assume that that standing and status and resources and wealth and basic morality are, in fact, keys to the kingdom. Rejecting insignificant, they honor the wealthy. There's another contrast here, too, though.

The contrast between Jesus's interaction with the children and his interaction with the rich young ruler. And this is where we discover that the kingdom of heaven cannot be bought. It can't be bought with money.

It can't be bought with morality. See here, this this interaction between Jesus and the and the ruler. Verse 16.

Behold, a man came up to him saying, teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life? This is what we see. The first thing about this rich young ruler is he he has a kind of vague religiosity. As he's asking about eternal life.

Well, here's a man who presumably has everything. And yet he's missing something. He has a vague sense of religiosity.

He knows that there's a life beyond this one. And perhaps he's he's like us. Many of us grew up in Christian homes and we can't remember a time when we didn't hear the things of God.

And this was perhaps a young man who grew up in a Jewish home and he couldn't remember ever not hearing Torah and not hearing the things of God in some sense. So he has a sense of God and a sense of the life to come. And he comes asking about that.

He's he's vaguely religious. But then notice also that this man is is basically moral. So Jesus in response says, why do you ask me about what is good? There's only one who's good.

If you were in a life, keep the commandments. He said to him, I love this question, which ones are called commandments. It's not like God has, you know, some really intense suggestions that are short of commandments.

The commandments, he says, keep the commandments. And this basically moral person says, which was it? Is that how human morality operates? We think of ourselves as basically good, as pretty good. With by which we mean good enough.

We if you press us, we're honest. There are some faults that we we have. There are some things that we've not yet perfected.

But but basically, they don't count as much as the things we do pretty good. This is how this rich young ruler seems to be responding to the Lord. The Lord says, keep the commandments.

He says, which ones? Notice Jesus's response. As he continues to talk to this man who thinks he's basically moral, he lists off several commandments. You shall not murder.

You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You should not be a false witness.

Honor your father and mother and you shall love your neighbor as yourself. Now he's growing self-confident in his morality. The young man said to him, all these I have kept.

Really? What do I still like? Verses 21, 23, we find out that this man is not only vaguely religious and basically moral, but we find out that this man unannounced to himself, unawares, is also a materialist. Jesus says, then, well, if you want to be perfect, go and sell what you have. Give to the poor.

Come and follow me and the kingdom will be yours. And listen to what the man does. He goes away sad because he had great possessions.

Now, we should not ever be in the habit of rewriting the Bible. But we might even render that verse just looking at the man's reaction is he goes away sad because his possessions had him. He was controlled and trapped by his own wealth.

We know this man, don't we? I know this man. We see this man walking around all the time. People who are who are vaguely religious, who are basically moral, but at bottom are perhaps materialists.

They love this life. They love the treasures of this life. They love the things of this world and have given a choice between the things of this world and the life to come.

It's a no brainer for them. It's this world. I know this man because I used to be this man.

I grew up in the Bible Belt in southeastern United States, that large swath of territory that that is supposedly home to conservative Christianity, really to cultural Christianity in so many ways, where you meet so many people like myself and my family who would have said, yeah, we're Christians, by which we meant we're not. We're not Hindus or something. You know, this is a, quote, Christian country, but but an abiding faith in Christ, a saving knowledge of Christ, a encounter with the crucified and resurrected Lord.

We didn't have that. I certainly didn't have that. Growing up, all I knew of church really was that when my older brothers got in trouble, I'm the youngest of eight kids, when my older brothers got in trouble, they would go to church and clean up.

They'd go to church to sort of get themselves together for a little while and let the storm blow over. And then they'd be right back to what they were doing. I was the youngest of eight kids and I'd seen them take enough butt whoopings to know there's certain things I wasn't going to do.

I was going to be basically moral, vaguely religious, basically moral. But but growing up imbibing that that that propaganda, you know, it's propaganda in Canada. It's called the American dream.

White House picket fence, two and a half kids. Philosophy was make all you can, can all you get, sit on your can. Was growing up imbibing that I was I wasn't rich, but I was this young man go through high school.

I get arrested my junior year in high school really for being stupid. I had a I had a pocket full of money from my summer job and I was hanging with a couple of guys who were up to no good. And and they were

doing dirt, as we called it.

And and I cast my lot in with them. I joined in with them. And in God's kindness, ultimately, we got arrested.

And all of the false popularity started coming down. I had been a high school athlete. Pretty good basketball, you know, finger roll.

Been nice on the court. And all the popularity that had been sort of growing up around being an athlete in a on a pretty good team in a small town in the States. All of the favors that that sort of occurred along with that.

I came crashing down when I got arrested. My father left when I was 14. I didn't know it at the time, but looking back, I was just angry.

Angry young kid, vaguely religious, basically moral. Pretty good student chasing after the things that I would always assume were the end of life. The the houses, the family, the cars.

I go off to college and in college I saw somebody I'd never seen before in my life. I'm on campus my freshman year and there are these men on campus in in suits. Very clean cut.

Very strong. Possessed with discipline. Talking about the importance of of men sticking with their families and raising their families and talking about the importance of of contributing to the community and and living for righteousness sake.

And like a moth to flame, I was I was drawn to them. I I'd never seen these kind of men. I had never I'd never heard men talking this way.

Long story short, these were all Muslim men. My sophomore year in college, I converted to Islam. And I really became zealous for Islam.

I was I was on campus, the campus saw. Having experienced what a shallow Christianity, I haven't experienced the Christian witness that was not gospel centered or cross centered at all. I had come to believe that the church was was just this pie in the sky, wonderful club for gray haired old ladies.

It wasn't real. It wasn't any power in it. After I had been arrested my sophomore year, I had gone to church and and I had been in trouble.

And I had seen what my brothers had done. So I thought, well, I'm in trouble. I'll go to church and I go to this little church and the gospel's not preached particularly clearly.

I certainly didn't have ears to hear the gospel in my sin. And I remember thinking sitting in that little church that, you know what? I want this thing to last longer than it seemed to last with my brothers because they're always in trouble. So I'll join the church.

One day, the pastor gives this invitation to people to come and join the church. So I go up front. I don't know really what's happening.

They ushered me off into this little room and nobody ever explains the gospel. Nobody ever asked me if I know what it means to be following Christ, if I'm if I'm trusting him as my savior. Nobody ever examines me

spiritually.

And we we come back out after a few minutes. And then a deacon presents me to the church and says, we have a candidate here for baptism. I thought, really? OK, that's what it takes.

Let's wash this thing off. A couple of weeks later, I was dunked and I got out of the water and I went around the corner to the pool hall where I spent all my time. Anyway, nothing had changed.

No new life. So when I come to university and I see these men who seem to be possessed of a different kind of strength and a different kind of dignity and a different kind of discipline, I cast off any concern for anything called Christian. And I dive headlong into Islam, become the campus Saul.

I remember I remember pastors who would come to the campus and would preach in the open air on the on the brickyard in the courtyard with the students. I just delighted in those days. I would I would miss an entire day's classes just to stand out there and harass and to argue and to and to resist the cross.

It's a real enemy of the cross. And I was depending really upon my own righteousness. I made prayer five times a day and and I gave to charity, I gave alms and anything else I could do as a Muslim, I would do.

Zealous, just like this young man, trusting myself, trusting my own morality, trusting my own righteousness and living ultimately, even though cloaked in religious scar for this world. But the kingdom can't be bought with morality, can't be purchased with wealth. And see how the Lord Jesus here in his own evangelism disabuses this young man of of his own assumptions.

We we see there that he comes to Jesus and he asks, what what good thing must I do to be saved? And notice how Jesus begins to scratch at the vague religiosity of this man. He says, now, now, why do you ask me about what is good? There is there is only one who is good. In other words, have you have you come to see and to recognize that that that God is the fount of goodness? And have you come to see and to recognize that I am who I say I am, the son of God, God, the son, that that I am the one who comes with the words of eternal life and that I'm the one who defines goodness.

Notice that Jesus moves on, he not only begins to scratch at this man's vague religiosity, but he also begins to scratch at this man's assumption about his own goodness, about his own self-righteousness. He lists the commandments there that the man is to keep. Did you notice something about those commandments, those five or six commandments? They're all from the second half of the law.

The commandments that have to do with our horizontal relationships, our relationships with each other. Isn't that the fatal flaw of moralism? It almost always is horizontal. It never looks up.

So Jesus leaves off the first four commands that have to do with our relationship with God. And this fellow isn't even stunned by that. He isn't even bothered by that.

He moves on. Those I have done. What else do I like? You see the difference? Christianity and moralism are two different religions.

It is completely possible to be moral and a basically good person and be going to hell. You may be moral with no concern for God and loving God. Christ exposes that in not only quoting these particular aspects of the law, but in telling him in verse 21, if you would be perfect, go sell what you possess and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven and come follow me.

We see where this man's treasure is. It's not in heaven, it's in his pocket. It goes away sad.

Christ exposes the fact that this man has been gripped by an idol. His heart has loved wealth. His heart has loved this world.

And he's not prepared to put Christ before all things. He's not prepared to worship Christ and Christ alone, to exalt the Lord himself and to give all that he has to follow the Lord in discipleship, in love. But that's the sum of the commandments, isn't it? The first commandment, love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your mind, all your soul.

The second one's like it. And this man thinks that by doing the second, it's a pretty good proxy for the first. It's not.

You must love God above all things, even to the point of forsaking this world, that Christ may be first, that Christ may be uppermost in his affections, that Christ may be uppermost in his ambitions, that Christ and his kingdom may determine and drive and shape his life and his laws. I remember when I heard that message for the first time. I was a zealous Muslim, as I had said, and the little campus persecutor and was faithful in Islam for several years.

And I remember one year, this time of year, during Ramadan, sitting at my desk, Qur'an open, reading the Qur'an, preparing for the morning prayers, reading in the Qur'an various things that all of a sudden were clear to me that could not be true. Just a settling awareness, like a blanket over a babe or a dew on the lawn, just sort of resting on me, that what I was reading just simply could not be true. For on the one hand, you read in the Qur'an, in a chapter like Maryam, that Christ is virgin-born.

It reads much like the Gospels, that Christ is born of a virgin. On the other hand, Islam, every Muslim worth his salt would say, to call Christ the Son of God in any unique sense would be to commit blasphemy, to make partners with God. I couldn't reconcile how the Qur'an could teach something so clearly Christian and yet deny the implications.

On the other hand, just reading through the Qur'an and seeing the Prophet himself saying to Christians and saying to Muslims, bring me your books, bring me your books and I will show you the truth out of those books because those books, the Law of Moses, the Psalms of David, the Gospels, those are revelations from God, those are signs from God. I couldn't reconcile how as a Muslim I could hold and affirm this book as being a record from God, a revelation from God and yet reject almost everything in it. And so it all just came crashing down.

I didn't turn to Christ. My heart was hard toward the cross. I threw my hands up, unable to find answers that I thought was satisfactory.

And for a better part of a year, I waffled between agnosticism and atheism. My best days I was agnostic, you know, maybe there's a God but who could know him? See, even as a Muslim, my idea of God was still vaguely religious. It teaches a view of God so transcended that you really can't know him in any essential way.

Yeah, we talk about his beautiful names, his attributes, but God is so far beyond us that we can't know him. So I returned to my vague religiosity and my own sense of morality and throw my hands up and walk away. And on my worst days I just said, there is no God.

It's what the fool says in his heart. Lived that way for about a year and my wife and I got pregnant with what would have been our first child. I'm the youngest of eight kids.

She's number seven of eight, the youngest daughter. And so it was the babies about to start having babies and our families would descend upon our home and we would have these cookouts and just have a wonderful time. On weekends I share with Paul that our families are so large we could have invaded Canada, you know.

But we saw how that worked out in 1812. So we would have these wonderful times of celebration and really, you know what? My hope was being built on the prospect of having this child, the pitter patter of little feet. The White House picket fence two and a half kids was starting to come into shape.

My materialistic heart was digging itself deeper and deeper into the soil of this world. Three months into the pregnancy we go to the baby doctor to hear the baby's heartbeat for the first time and my wife is on the table and the doctor is doing a little thing with a little magic stick looking for the baby's heartbeat and two minutes pass and five minutes pass and ten minutes pass and it seems like an eternity. And in the iciest voice I've ever heard from another human being, this doctor just turns and says, there's no heartbeat.

And the Lord dealt to me a deep, a deep and humbling blow. It was a loving hand that dealt the blow but it was a blow. So we went home and for the better part of some months really depressed.

I wasn't living for anything beyond myself. Flipping through the channels and one day, lo and behold, there's this preacher on television and he's just preaching through the scriptures, just verse by verse. And I thought, wow, I didn't know they did that.

And it made sense and I thought, you know, who rewrote the Bible when I wasn't looking? This new translation is fabulous. And I started watching it and in ways I couldn't understand, the words had life. They were drawing me.

I watched his show for weeks really, would tape his show and my wife would come home. She was a school teacher and we would watch the sermon. And I remember the first time she came home, I said, man, you've got to watch this on TV.

She's like, what is it? I said, this is this preacher on TV preaching. She's like, you watching the preacher? What's going on? I said, no, I don't know. This guy's different, man.

This guy's great. We found out his church is in the Washington, D.C. area and my wife's sister lives there. So we visit my sister and we go to his church on a Sunday morning.

I'll never forget. He preaches an exposition of Exodus 32 called What Does It Take to Make You Angry? Here I was, this angry young man, angry from the time his father had left, grown more angry in all the years of his practice of Islam, angry and empty, sitting about 10 rows from the front in a church with about 8,000 people in it. It's just me and the pastor and no one else.

And as he lifts up idolatry from that passage, and as he lifts up the sinfulness of sin, the repulsion, the rebellion, the ugliness of our sin against the Holy God, the offense of it and the justness of God in responding to sin in wrath and judgment and righteousness, I was convicted for the first time of all the sin that the Lord was showing me that day. As he talked about this sin or that sin, I was checking mental boxes, yes, did that, yes, did that, was an expert at that, helped others to delight in this sin. It was the first

time that I had really felt the weight of conviction of my sin.

And I sat there and as he was in the second half of that sermon, not only did he lift up the sinfulness of sin, but he lifted up the sin bearer, he lifted up Christ. He told of how God's justice and mercy were reconciled in Christ, his Son, how it is that a holy God, infinitely angered against the ugliness of sin, could at the same time punish sin and absolve the sinner. There was no answer for that in Islam.

There was no way to reconcile God's justice with his mercy. And here the cross comes rushing forward that this is how God does that. This is how God remains perfectly just, perfectly holy, and also perfectly loving and perfectly merciful.

His Son takes the sinner's place, suffers the sinner's punishment, bears our shame and our guilt. The wrath of God is poured out on the Son of God so that those who have sinned against God might come into his love and his mercy through repentance and faith. And as I heard that good news, God's Spirit worked upon my hard heart and God's marvelous kindness to us.

My wife and I both came to faith that Sunday morning under the preaching of the Gospel. And he gave us new life, this bankrupt moralist, this worldly heathen, this guy who had had vague ideas of God and had even spent years being opposed to God. In his sheer grace and his sheer mercy, God said, Come, live, enter into life, possess my kingdom by repentance and faith in my Son.

Beloved, that's the same Gospel that's been saving people for thousands of years now. That's the same good old message that when heard with faith makes a man, makes a woman, makes a child brand new. Even today.

Perhaps you've come this morning and you're not a Christian. Perhaps you have been looking at this rich young man or maybe even listening to my own story and you've been thinking, if the truth be told, yes, I'm only vaguely religious. I can't say that I know God.

And if the truth be told, I am living, yes, a moral life and I'm really depending upon that morality, not upon the work of Christ on the cross. I'm pretty good and surely God would not judge me. I was raised in a Christian home and my parents are Christian and my grandparents are Christians and we always go to church.

Maybe you've been thinking here with your own life that your ambition is not to live for the kingdom but to live for this world. Maybe you're headed off to college or you can't wait to finish up high school or maybe you're in a career and all of your energies are directed at more and more and more of this life and if you're honest with yourself, you have no longings for heaven. No longings for Christ.

Beloved, if that's you this morning, hear the invitation of God, the call of God, the demand of God really. For all men everywhere to repent of their sins and to believe upon Christ and to enter into this eternal life. This rich young ruler asked the right question, what may I do to get eternal life? The good news is it's not a matter of what you do.

It's a matter of what Christ has done. If you trust what Christ has done in dying for you and taking the wrath of God in your place and you trust that the Father has accepted his sacrifice as indicated by the resurrection then trust it wholly. Trust nothing else.

Don't let even the slimmest piece of paper insert itself between you and Christ. Hold fast to him by faith. Run to him and close with him.

Depend upon him. Cast yourself upon him. Trust nothing else.

Abandon yourself. Become insignificant before the Father and claim I only have Christ and Father. You've told me it's enough.

In him and him alone I trust. And see what Jesus offers in the way of his reward. Look there at those last three verses in our chapter, Matthew chapter 19.

The kingdom of heaven belongs to the insignificant. It cannot be purchased with money or morality. And whatever you give up to follow the Savior is returned a hundredfold.

Verse 28, Jesus said to them, Truly I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands for my namesake will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life. Many who are first will be last and the last will be first.

You see how glorious is the trade. This world is perishing. It's passing away.

This world, though it has the illusion of permanence, is really quite transitory. When God turns his face toward this world in judgment, in fervent heat, Peter says this will pass away. The soul endures.

And Jesus speaks here in verse 28 of a day when he brings a new world, when he ushers in the renewal of the cosmos, when he ushers in the renewal of all things. He says, Now, when I come in my kingdom, I'm coming and also giving thrones. Here he speaks to his followers, his disciples of the twelve thrones that they will sit on and judge Israel by.

But elsewhere in the scriptures, we're told of other thrones and other judgments. So we're told that as Christians, we will judge even the angels in first Corinthians six. We see the picture of those thrones and being sharing in his glorious reign throughout the book of Revelation.

Christ is bringing honor and glory. And he shares with his people. And notice here, he says now in verse 30.

Everyone who's left houses or brothers or sisters or fathers or mother or children or lands for my namesake will receive a hundredfold. If this rich man, young man had just only been a good business person. He would have seen the profit in trading this world for the world to come.

If he'd been an average accountant, he would have seen looking at this balance sheet, that the wise thing to do was to abandon all and follow Christ and see the treasures that Christ holds out. I don't know what it would be like to have a hundred brothers and sisters or a hundred mothers and fathers. But I know it's good because he doesn't say you're going to have a hundred mother-in-laws.

Isn't this the family of God? This is what you have inherited and gotten a foretaste of in the family of God here at Grace Toronto. Isn't this a preview of the hundredfold, the infinite return that comes with Christ? Haven't you known the love of Christ through the love of a brother or sister perhaps sitting right next to you? In sickness, the meal prepared and delivered. In mourning, the sharing together with others in your

grief.

In joy and rejoicing, the rejoicing together in the goodness of God. Haven't you had that multiplied in your own life as you have fellowshiped with God's people? It's a foretaste, the glory that's coming at the renewal of all things. The consummation of Christ's reign.

We are a colony of heaven. This church is migrating. You are headed toward this appointment when the sky shall be split and Christ shall descend and the trumpet shall sound and the angels shall shout and glory shall wash over all.

John says, seeing him, we will be like him. We will be transformed. See, first comes humility.

Then comes glory. That's the pattern even in this section of this chapter. First comes the insignificance of the little child of being humble and being nothing in the world's eyes and abandoning ourselves and clinging to Christ as insignificant nothings.

And then comes the glory of sharing in his reign, of being with him when he comes and being livish face to face with his love. It's the pattern of all of scripture. Joseph sold into slavery.

First came suffering and humility and then made the ruler of Egypt. Then came glory. David, the little shepherd boy, first came nothingness.

Then to become the greatest king of all Israel. Do we not see that in our own Savior's life? The Lord made himself of no reputation. He humbled himself and became obedient, even obedient to death, even obedient to the curse that he had pronounced against us in our sin.

Men whose hands he made drove nails into his hands. He bled and suffered and died. First came his humility.

Oh, but in the resurrection and in the coming and in eternity comes glory. Comes a ruling Savior King who ushers in a reign that we share in if we trust in him. I'm not sure what the Lord is calling you to forsake.

It's clear that following him is costly. Notice Peter's response there around verse 23. A little bit later, 27.

Thank you. That's my help me. See, we have left everything.

We have left everything. We have left everything. We have left everything and followed you.

To follow Christ will cost you everything. You will lose this life. But you will gain eternal life.

And that's 100 times better than anything you're called to forsake here. My non-Christian friend, I am certain that you have things that are that are beckoning you. Into the world.

You have things that are calling out to you saying don't follow Christ for you will have to give up this or you will have to give up that. Don't don't follow Christ because it is going to be costly. Don't don't follow Jesus.

Don't don't listen to this man. Don't don't trust Jesus. Don't don't do that because it's going to hurt you.

Beloved, be assured. That that is the lying lips of sin. That is the deceit of Satan.

For Christ who gave his blood who gave his life for you will not now take your life and waste it. And will not now take your life and and and spoil it with lesser pleasures. I hope you see that that you were made for pleasure.

You were made for joy. But I hope you see is not the joy of this passing life is the joy of that life to come where you will see God. And as the psalmist says be satisfied.

You were made for a God sized satisfaction. And those little whisperings. That divert your mind from Christ.

Think about them for a moment. Have they really satisfied you to this point? They cannot. They were not made to.

You were made to be satisfied with Christ alone. To enter his kingdom. And to receive eternal life.

Repent of your sins. Turn away from them now. Renounce the old life.

The life lived vaguely religiously and morally. But but apart from God. And turn to God.

Through faith in Christ. Trusting that he is who he said he is. The son of God.

Who gave his life to ransom you from your sins. Trust that that's enough. Trust that in him.

You will be reconciled to God. Enter into this kingdom. And receive joy.

Everlasting. It's the best news you will hear today. Believe on Christ.

Let's pray. Father indeed our hope is built. Nothing less.

Jesus blood and righteousness. Lord make that more than. An off song lyric.

Make that our abiding awareness. Our hope is built upon the right rock of Christ. And grant oh Lord that having trusted in him.

We would. We would delight. In the pleasures and the treasures and the glories.

Of your kingdom. And live for him Lord more. More faithfully by your grace.

Depending upon your spirit. Grant oh Lord that we should be continually abandoning ourselves. That we might be continually trusting ourselves to Christ.

Lord we pray that you would. You would grant oh Lord some person this morning. Ears to hear your gospel.

And faith to trust. Pray that you would make them new oh Lord. By your spirit.

That you would grant them everlasting life. And have their eyes open oh Lord. And their hearts open.

And that they would Lord receive. They would receive the gifts. Repentance and faith.

That they would love you. Having finally seen you for who you are. Lord we thank you for this rich young man.

We thank you Lord for. Setting this account down in your scripture. We thank you Lord that you have preserved it for us.

That we might profit by it. We ask Father that you would. You would cause your word to take root in our hearts.

To strengthen us who believe. And change those oh Lord. Who have not yet.

We ask this Lord in Jesus name.

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