

The Rich Young Ruler

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[0 : 00] Welcome to everyone today to the service. I need to excuse my voice, I've developed a bit of a cold, so if I stop early maybe that's a bonus for you.

But please excuse my voice, I think the mic will pick it up hopefully anyway. So we're going to begin our service singing in Psalm 122.

Psalm 122. We'll sing the whole of the Psalm.

I tried when to the house of God go, what they said to me.

Can it be with [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Of God he failed to heal.

[1 : 55] And to the place the nights go up.

That nights are gone go there. Through this will set him on the earth.

To God's name not to thee. For thrones of judgment.

In the thrones of the lips of the sea.

In the thrones of the earth.

[3 : 02] In the thrones of the earth. And thine feet. That there's not lovely.

And thy feet. Are still prosperity.

That for thine wish. That fear is still.

Within thine whole streaming. And ever may thy sonnest.

Prosperity regain. Now for my friends.

[4 : 14] And better to see. Is he in the mercy.

And for the hearts of God. Our Lord.

I'll seek thy good only. Let us join together in prayer now.

Gladius and eternal God. Gladius and eternal God. Gladius and eternal God.

we pray for your Holy Spirit to enable us to have that worship and to engage in that holy worship of God we bless you today O Lord for all that makes you worthy of our worship and we give thanks that your worthiness is set out for us in so many ways in your word and we give thanks that you are God and worthy of all worship throughout all creation we pray today that many will come and turn to you in worship many will come for the first time to be drawn into the worship of God we thank you O Lord today for every advantage we have the advantages we have under the gospel we pray that these may be blessed to us that we may truly regard them in a way that would value them highly and would seek to make such use of them as would prepare today not only to serve you in this world but for eternity itself and we thank you for all the ways in which you bless us from day to day from week to week for your upholding strength and for the way in which you give us so favorable conditions in which we gather today to worship you we do pray O Lord that as we come together in this way your blessing will reach to each one of us we pray for the children here in their midst O Lord we ask today that you bless them and as they hear of the things of God we ask that they be established in your ways we pray that your blessing will give them even in their young days to remember their creator and to turn to the ways of the Lord to follow you and we ask today as they receive further teaching in the things of the gospel that these things may be prized by themselves and that they may come O Lord to be in future days by your preservation and by your own blessing of them and to be notable in your church and in your cause in the world and so bless us now we pray and hear us in all our prayer and pardon our sin for Jesus' sake

[7 : 29] Amen Well children it's good to see you here today always good to see children in church children are a very important part of the church they're not the church of the future they're the church of the present they belong to the church now and we have to remember that they are such a special part of the church just now as well now if I said the word Titanic how many people how's your hands up if you've ever heard that word Titanic before oh lots of hands going up that's good can anybody tell me what the Titanic was at the front you know what it was what was the Titanic it was aboard it was a big ship and it left this country in 1912 in April 1912 to sail across the Atlantic then something terrible happened to the Titanic who's going to tell me what happened to it yes it hit an iceberg and after that what happened it sank it sank sadly it sank a lot of people over a thousand people were drowned they lost their lives when the Titanic sank very very sad occasion that there was one man on the Titanic whose name was

John Harper anybody ever heard of John Harper no well John Harper was a minister he was a pastor and when the Titanic was sinking he had his life vest on a life jacket and he was preparing to leave the ship like everybody else and he went round the ship asking people are you saved do you know Jesus as your saviour and he came to this man who didn't have a life jacket and the man said no I'm not saved I don't know Jesus so he took off his life jacket and he gave it to that man and that man survived he was rescued sometime after that and he told the story of John Harper how John Harper had given away his own life jacket which meant he was saved through that wonderful act of kindness

John Harper has a church named after him in Glasgow it's called Harper Memorial Church and he was worthy of being remembered because of what he did I'm not sure I would have done that after all the ship sinking you've got your life jacket on it would be very difficult it would be a great act of love to give away your own life jacket in order for somebody else who didn't have one to be saved but you're learning from the Bible about something even more amazing than that a love that's even more amazing than that it's the love of Jesus because Jesus gave himself to the death of the cross he gave himself to die so that we wouldn't die for our sins and when he gave himself to die the death of the cross that was God in his love providing salvation for us because the Bible tells us in John 3 that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whoever should believe in him would not perish but have everlasting life so it's important for you to remember

John Harper to remember what he did to remember what a great act of love that was but it's more important still to remember Jesus and what he did in his love and how he gave his life so that we might be saved and it's the best thing you can possibly do because he gave himself to save sinners the best thing we can do is give ourselves to him so that we too will go to heaven to be with him we're going to sing again to God's praise psalm 119 this time psalm 119 from verse 140 we'll sing to the end of that section to 144 thy words most pure therefore on it thy servants love is set small and despised

I am that I thy precepts not forget thy righteousness is righteousness which ever doth endure thy holy law Lord also is the very truth most pure trouble and anguish shall be found and taken hold of me yet in my trouble my delight thy just commandments be eternal righteousness is in thy testimonies all Lord to me understanding give and ever live I shall so these words thy words most pure therefore on it thy servant's love is set thy words most pure!

[13 : 13] are on it thy servant's love is set small and disified I am yet I thy precepts not forget righteous My goodness is my goodness, which ever content is due.

Thy holy law, Lord, also is the very tremendous view.

Trouble I, which I'm even, and taken hold on me.

Yet in my trouble, my delight, lightest calm and friendly.

Eternal righteousness is in thy testimonies all.

[15 : 24] Nor do we understand, may you give.

And ever do live like you. We're now going to read from God's Word from the Gospel of Mark.

And chapter 10. The Gospel according to Mark, chapter 10. We'll begin reading at verse 13. Mark 10, beginning at verse 13.

And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them. And his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased. And said to them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not.

For of such is the kingdom of God. Then I say unto you, Whoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

[16 : 38] And he took them up on his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them. 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 to him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God. Now 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 to him, Master, all these I have observed from my youth.

Then Jesus, beholding him, loved him, and said to 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, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved, for he had great possessions. And Jesus looked around about and said to his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God?

[17 : 50] And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, Journal, how hard it is for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God.

It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?

And Jesus looking upon them said, With men it is impossible, but not with God. For with God all things are possible. Then Peter began to say to him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee.

Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my sake and the gospels.

But he shall receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands with persecutions, and in the world to come, eternal life.

[19 : 00] But many that at first shall be last, and the last first. And may the Lord bless this reading of this word to us.

Let's engage in prayer once again. Gracious and eternal God, as we read your word today, we pray for your Holy Spirit, for that enlightening power by which we might come to have our minds opened, our wills renewed, and hearts to receive, not only this word, but also the word that became flesh, to receive yourself, to embrace you, O Lord, willingly, as our Saviour.

We ask you today that your blessing will meet with each one of us, for you know our condition, you know our circumstances in life, you know what we are, so much better than we know ourselves.

We pray today, Lord, that through this time of worship, we might truly learn more of the wonderful truths of the gospel, but especially that we might come more and more to embrace the Saviour that is offered to us in it.

And we ask today, Gracious One, that we may rejoice in your presence through knowing that we are indeed safe in the hands of the Lord, and that we have embraced that which he has provided for us, even eternal life, in the person of your Son.

[20 : 21] We pray today for all the gatherings of your church throughout the world. We pray for your people in all their circumstances, some very different to our own here. But we recognise, O Lord, that you have but one church, one people belonging to you throughout the whole earth.

We pray that today your people will be encouraged and will come to be equipped by you further to serve you in this life. We pray that you would help us as your people to walk in your ways faithfully, and to realise that there is a dark power that seeks to bring us away from obedience to Christ, and that seeks to fill our mind with things which sometimes appear to be the truth but are not.

And, Lord, we ask that you would protect us from every species of false teaching, and as we come across them in the history of your church, as we come across them in our day and generation as well.

Lord, help us to cleave to your word. Help us to realise that you have guided your church down through history, and to come to a conclusion about the most important issues, especially those things that are foundational to the Gospel, to our salvation, to our relationship with God.

That your blessing, then, we pray today, to the preaching of your word. We pray that that will be so, Lord, throughout our own presbytery area here. We ask that every congregation throughout our islands will know you, and will know today of your blessing, of your word to them.

[21 : 57] Encourage them, we pray, and grant that all the congregations we know at this time, like this one here, who are vacant of a pastime, and that they will come to be provided for, Lord, by yourself.

We pray that you would bless the Gospel among the meantime, and you would continue to own your word, and to acknowledge that it is your word, which is itself infallible, for it is your word, and it is not going to return to you empty.

It will accomplish that which has pleased you. We pray, Lord, today that you would come to draw many others to the preaching of the Gospel, to the pastorate in the church, and in our own denomination, especially in our own locality, when we find so many congregations vacant.

Lord, we know that the harvest is great, and yet the labourers are few. Pray, you say to the Lord of the harvest, that he would raise up labourers for the vineyard. And so we pray to you, Lord, today that you would call men who would come to give themselves, by your own power, by your own calling, to the work of the Gospel.

We pray that in our day that may be many raised up, will come in future months and years, to be a faithful pastor of the Lord, faithful in the preaching of your word, faithful in adherence and love for your truth.

[23 : 19] We ask your blessing too, Lord, to be with us as a people and as a nation. We acknowledge, O Lord, your people acknowledge, your people pray in such a way as acknowledge how far we have fallen from the standard of righteousness, which alone exalts a nation, as your word tells us.

Our sin is a reproach to us. Our abandonment of your ways. Our elevating of ways which are not only contrary to your word, but are an offence in your eyes.

Lord, we pray for mercy. We pray that you would turn us unto yourself. And we pray that in doing so, that you would come and bring about once again a climate of Gospel righteousness, by which much fruit will be born to your glory and to your praise, and by which your church and cause will be advanced in the world.

Remember, we pray all the nations of the earth. We pray that you would bless those in leadership over these nations. Some, Lord, we know, not in a way of giving credence to you or to your existence, at least not in the way your word calls upon us to do.

But we pray that you would raise up leaders for all the nations of the world who will fear the Lord. We pray, Lord, that it may be so in our own nation as well. And we pray that you would grant that as we bring before you our rulers and those that earn power over us, as your word requires us to do, to pray for them that they may be made into leaders that will be unashamed of your truth and will hold to the things of the Gospel rather than things of secular minds, and minds which seek to have no more but human wisdom to guide their thoughts and ways.

[25 : 07] Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from such bondage. Bring us into the liberty of the Gospel, which alone can make us free. Hear us, we pray now, and pardon our many sins.

Wash us freely, for Jesus' sake. Amen. We'll sing once more, this time in Psalm 9. Psalm number 9, at verse 7.

We'll sing verses 7 to 12. God shall endure for a, he doth for judgment set his throne, righteousness to judge the world, justice to give each one.

God also will a refuge be for those that are oppressed. Refuge will he be in times of trouble to distress. Verses 7 to 12. God shall endure for a.

Amen. God shall endure for a, he doth for judgment set his throne, in thy righteousness to judge the world, justice to give each one.

[26 : 36] God shall endure for a, A God who is a refugee, for no such a oppressed.

A refuge with thee in times of private justice.
And they that know thy name in thee, their confidence will place.
For thou hast not forsaken them, that truly seek thy place.
O sing ye, precious, to the Lord, that dwells inside yon hill.

[27 : 57] And on the nations among his kids record his hill.

When he inquired of their blood, he then remembers him.

And I will forgive, forget that God of my will be.

Well please turn with me now to Matt chapter 10. Matt chapter 10, which we read a short time ago. And looking at verses 17 to 22, these verses in particular.

This incident where we find this one who came to Jesus and asked, What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

[29 : 11] And the way that Jesus then replied. And how sadly this man went away very sad at that saying. But he had great possessions.

In some ways you'd expect that virtually everybody who came to Jesus and heard him. Saw his life as a perfect life. Heard his words, never a word out of place.

Looked at him as somebody who was obviously unique. You'd have thought that a lot more people would have come to place their trust in him. You'd have thought especially that those who were religious in those days.

The leaders of the people. That they especially would have come to place their trust in the Lord. When they came across and were confronted by the uniqueness of Jesus.

But of course we know from the Gospels that sadly that was not the case. Many people just rejected him. The leaders themselves rejected him.

[30 : 17] Many of the people heard him gladly. But even then some people who were following him for a time. As we find in John chapter 6. When he began to teach them certain things about his death.

About the necessity of it. They went back and they walked no more with him. They were looking for somebody. In terms of being a saviour and a messiah. That fitted their own idea as to what that should constitute.

And here's one such example. In this man. He actually came to. Ask Jesus a question. He heard what Jesus had to say.

And then he ended up by just walking away from Jesus altogether. He was disappointed with Jesus. So he chose to remain exactly as he was.

Jesus didn't fit his expectations. His idea as to what a saviour should look like and be. And it's no surprise therefore that we come.

[31 : 23] In preaching the gospel across many people. Who in one sense or another. Can admire something about Jesus. And would never sort of publicly.

Criticise him or whatever. But yet never come to the point. Where they give their life to him. Where they accept him. Wholeheartedly. As a saviour. And when you look at the three gospels.

Matthew, Mark and Luke. The account they give of this man. When you put them all together. There are three things about him. That you know. That you can see he was a ruler. He was quite important in society.

He was young. Relatively young. And he was rich. These three things characterised him. In terms of his place in the world.

In society. At the time. In order to look at this passage. Today under two main headings. First of all. He was sincere.

[32 : 20] And upright. But he was not saved. He was sincere. And he was upright in life. But he was not saved.

Secondly. He was disappointed. And sorrowful. So he was not persuaded. Of what Jesus had to say. He was disappointed.

And sorrowful. So he was not persuaded. To embrace Christ. He was sincere. And he was upright. Look at how he came to Jesus.

He kneeled in front of him. And asked him. Good master. What shall I do. That I may inherit eternal life. Now he wasn't saying that to Jesus. Just as a matter of course.

To test him. To see what he would say. It looks as if this young man. Was really sincere. That he was concerned. To find an answer. To his question. What must I do.

[33 : 15] That I may inherit. Eternal life. And he. Jesus immediately said. Why do you call me good. There is none good. No one good. But one.

That is God. Now Jesus. Wasn't suggesting by that. That he wasn't actually good. That Jesus himself. Wasn't good. What he is actually saying is. Why are you using this word.

Good about me. What do you understand. By that word. Good. Because. As he said. There is only one person. That is good. Perfectly. And that is God.

So why are you using that. That word. About me. It was. This young man. Had come. With this question. Good master. As a term of respect. But he hadn't really.

Thought deeply. About what it meant. As far as. This person of Jesus. Was concerned. Who is he. What is he in the world. To do. What is my relationship.

[34 : 11] With him. I'm calling him good. But what does that mean. What do I mean. By good. Is what Jesus was pointing to. He had used the word. Somewhat likely.

Seriously. Yes. But not really. Thinkingly. Not deeply. Enough thinking. What he meant. By good master. So. Now he needs to. Think about it.

And Jesus is pointing him. In that direction. Why do you call. Me. Good. There is none good. But God. And today. We're here in church. To think.

We're here to use our minds. Today. We're not here. Just emotionally. We're not here. Just as a matter of custom. Or habit. We're not here. Just because.

It seems. Like it's something. Respectable. To do. Surely. We're here today. To think. To use the mind. That God has given us. To think. About what he's saying to us.

[35 : 08] To think about the words. That he's given to us. To think about this. Personally. Especially. And what he means to us. Or doesn't mean to us. This Jesus. Who met with this man.

Well. He just. I think just. Saw in Jesus. A good teacher. A reliable teacher. Good master. What must I do.

That I may inherit eternal life. And of course. His mind is really. For all that it is. Not thinking deeply enough. On the word good. But he's not.

He's also not really thinking about. What is it to have. Or how do we have eternal life. He's coming with that question. But he's asking it from the wrong perspective. What shall I do.

And how often you find people coming. To Jesus with that. Same question. What shall I do. What must we do. That we may have eternal life.

[36 : 06] Starting from the wrong point. It's not what you and I do. It's what's been done already for us. That's really where Jesus comes to present himself in the gospel.

As somebody who has already done all that we require for us to be saved. What he requires of us is to accept that. To receive that without any doings. Without any performance.

Without any merits of our own. What must I do. Jesus is saying. Why do you call me good. You know the commandments. That's the next thing he points out to him.

Do not commit adultery. Do not kill. Do not steal. Do not bear false witness. You see that's deliberately. In answer to the man's point. What must I do.

So Jesus says. Well okay. You're thinking about doing. Here are the commandments. You know these commandments. How do you fit with these commandments. Now Jesus only chose out of the ten commandments.

[37 : 05] He chose the commandments. That speak about our duty to other people. Our commandments that speak directly. To our duty to God. Of course all of them ultimately are that.

But here are those that respect our relationship with other people. Don't commit adultery. Don't kill. Don't steal. Don't bear false witness. Don't defraud.

Honor your father and mother. And the man's confident answer is. Master all these. I have observed from my youth.

And the word he uses there observed. Is a word that really means. Literally. I have guarded these. I have kept these carefully. I have been very careful about. How I go about.

Keeping these commands. Or dealing with. These commands that you've just mentioned. I care for these commandments. His response is saying to Jesus. All these I have kept.

[38 : 05] From my youth up. See what he's doing. He's ticking the boxes. He's asked. What must I do. To inherit eternal life.

Jesus says. Here are these commandments. And as he goes through them. This man is ticking them all off. And saying. Always. I've observed. I've been careful about. I've been taught to keep them.

From my youth up. And that's what I've been doing. Now that's of course. A very common mistake. There are many many thousands. If not millions of people. In the world today.

Who think that being a Christian. Is ticking the boxes. To think that being a Christian. Is actually keeping certain rules. And regulations. Or having a certain creed. That you stick your name.

At the bottom of. Or boxes in terms of behavior. In terms of your daily life. In terms of this that. And the other. You can tick these off. And say. Well I must be a Christian then.

[39 : 02] And there are many thousands. Of people today. Who will be absolutely offended. If you told them. You're a lost sinner. If you don't have Christ. If you don't have your trust. In Christ.

But that's exactly. Where Jesus is coming from. He's saying to this man. Here are the commandments. What do you do with them? How do you relate to them? He's ticked all the boxes.

He's all these. I have kept. From my youth up. And yet when you go. To Matthew's account of this. In chapter 19 of Matthew.

Let me just mention. How he's brought before us. Same person. That same incident. But as you know. In the Gospels. There are some details. That are added. Some of the writers.

Add things that others leave out. It's the same incident. All the same. Matthew 19. And at verse 20. The young man said to him. All these things.

[39 : 56] I have kept from my youth up. What lack I yet? And I think he's conscious. Deep down he's conscious.

That yes. I've kept all these. Good master. I've kept all these. But I'm conscious there's something else. What else do I need to do?

I've kept all these. What else is there for me? To have. And to inherit eternal life. See it all follows. From the wrong starting point.

Because if you keep adding up. The things that you do. You're still going to come to the end of the list. And still be persuaded. To some extent or other. There's something else.

I'm not really satisfied yet. With my doings. There must be something more. Required of me. Maybe you're like that today. Maybe you've come to appreciate the gospel.

[40 : 57] To appreciate the commandments of God. You would never go out and deliberately break any of these commandments. But where does Jesus fit into your life?

Where does he himself fit into your daily way of life? Is it for you just a matter of taking certain boxes? And having done that.

Be satisfied with that alone. I've gone to church. I've read my Bible. I've done my prayers. All these things are doings. But it doesn't necessarily mean.

Of themselves. That they make us Christians. The box we really need to take is this one. I have accepted Jesus. I've given my life to him.

I've received him. As he's offered to me in the gospel. That's the box. Everyone needs to take. First of all. So here's a man.

[42 : 04] Who's sincere. And he's upright. But he's not saved. He knows the commandments of God. He's persuaded. He's kept them.

From his youth up. And then he knows there's something else lacking in his life. Let me put it this way. What is it today. That gives you the greatest satisfaction in life?

I know there's more to life than being satisfied. There's more to life than having satisfaction. But satisfaction lies at the very heart. What it means to be a Christian.

And I came many years ago now. To a Kirk session. To ask to go forward. To take communion for the first time.

Like yourselves. It was a vacant congregation. In Aberdeen. And the inter-moderator. Who was at the Kirk session. He asked me this question. What is the difference.

[43 : 04] Between seeking. And finding. And I can't remember exactly how I answered it. But it wasn't really exactly. As he was.

Requiring me to answer it. Anyway. He said. That's all very good. He said. That's fine. But the answer is this. Satisfaction. When you come to know Jesus.

You reach satisfaction in him. You realize that you have everything in him. That you require. Now there are no doings on your own part.

In order for you to be saved. But there are many doings following from that. Once you've come to be saved. You accept him first. And then your doings.

In response. Are doings of gratitude. Doings of service. Doings of love. For the one who has saved you. So here's a lesson for us all today.

[44 : 04] It's good to be sincere. It's essential to be sincere. It's good to be upright. To live a decent life. But it's even better to be saved.

It's necessary to be saved. And that's what this man is being taught. Sincere and upright. But not saved. Secondly.

He's disappointed. And sorrowful. So he's not persuaded. Then Jesus beholding him. Loved him and said to 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. Take up the cross. And follow me.

And he was sad at that saying. And went away grieved. For he had great possessions. And then Jesus followed that with this teaching that staggered the disciples even.

[45 : 01] How difficult it was for someone with great riches to enter into the kingdom of God. That's the sequel to the incident itself. But look at what it's saying first of all.

Jesus beholding him. Loved him. These are very strong words actually. In the language in which this was first written in Greek. It really means he looked upon him intently.

He fixed his eyes upon him. He drew his full attention to him. In other words. Jesus was looking at this man so intently. Right there in his presence. The man had no option but to look back and return.

And he would see how intently Jesus was looking at him. In other words. Jesus was serious. Jesus' focus was absolutely entirely on this man at that moment.

But not only that. You read here. Jesus beholding him. Loved him. Loved him. Isn't it remarkable?

[46 : 03] Here's a man that we're told was loved by Jesus. But he went away disappointed. He went away unsaved. When it says that Jesus loved him.

What does it mean? It means that Jesus saw in him something that was in fact good. He was sincere. He was upright. He really did want to know how he would inherit eternal life.

He saw he was close to the kingdom of God you might say. He saw that his motives were good. There were things about this man that were attractive. There were things about this man that drew Jesus' attention.

He loved him in that sense at least of the word loved. But then he went away from Jesus. He didn't accept him.

Isn't it amazing that somebody could be loved by Jesus in this way? That Jesus could actually show this man how seriously he thought upon him.

[47 : 09] How he thought that he was actually in a good place as far as his sincerity and his concern was concerned. How amazing that knowing Jesus was in looking at him in that way.

Knowing that Jesus was serious about him. Yet he turned away and left him. It didn't make any difference to his way of life.

What thoughts do you have yourself about Jesus today? Are they thoughts that you just have for a few moments and will disappear the rest of the day, the rest of the week?

Or are they the thoughts of someone who knows that you simply cannot live life without Christ? That you need him for every single step of your way through life?

Are they thoughts that say, Well, here is someone who was so serious about me and about sinners like me that he gave himself to the death of the cross so that I might be saved.

[48 : 14] How can I possibly not be serious about him? How can I actually respond in any other way but to accept him? To receive him? To thank him? And to make him the most important person.

The central person. The foundational person in my life. So Jesus looked at him. Loved him and said, One thing thou lackest.

Go thy way. Sell whatever thou hast and give to the poor. And thou shalt have treasure in heaven and come to get the cross and follow me.

Now when he says, Go and sell everything you have. Jesus is not actually suggesting there that In every case this is something we need to do in order to become disciples of Jesus.

That we need to give away pretty much everything we have. That we need to give that away to the advantage of the poor. It's not really at all that meaning that we take from this verse.

[49 : 17] What Jesus is really saying to him. There's one thing that you lack. There's one thing that you need to have as your priority. And that's me. In other words, Follow me.

Means, Put me first. Here's this man you see. For all that he's sincere. For all that he's upright. For all there's so much good about him. There's one crucial box that still remains unticked.

And it's this one. Putting God before everything else. Putting God before his riches. Putting God before his ambitions.

Putting God before his own thoughts. Putting God first. Not his own mind. Not his own ideas. Not his own view of what's necessary in order to have eternal life. It looks as if this man came for some confirmation from Jesus.

That his mind and what was necessary for eternal life was on the right track. And Jesus shifts him off it. You say, No, that's not. That's not how you come. To have eternal life at all.

[50 : 23] You put God first. You put other things next. Second to that. They must not be your priority. And that's why he went on to speak about the difficulties. Of those who have riches. By which he meant trusting in riches.

To enter into the kingdom of God. And he says, Come. Take up the cross. And follow me.

See, what a different way of life that is. What a different path that is. To him doing certain things. That as he thinks of it. Will actually lead to having eternal life.

Here is Jesus saying, The path that I am on. Is a path that ends in the cross. In my death. And elsewhere you'll find.

In the gospels. That this is how Jesus spoke. If anyone will be my disciple. Let him deny himself. Take up his cross. And follow me. What does he mean by that?

[51 : 24] Well, if you see somebody. If you saw somebody. Indeed like Jesus himself. When he began on his journey to the cross. The final part of it. He was carrying his cross. Until they took it off him.

And put it on someone else. If you found somebody. Carrying their cross. To the place of crucifixion. You could say. Looking at that person. On the way towards wherever they were going to be crucified.

However long a journey it was. The one thing for sure. You could say about that person. He is going to die. He's going to die. He's going to be crucified.

And die on the cross. And of course what Jesus meant was. You need putting God first. In a sense that's. Putting to death every other priority.

Instead of that. Everything else that you would actually replace that by. And here is a man who wants to hold on to his riches. Who doesn't want to change from his own view of how we come to be saved.

[52 : 29] He doesn't want to have these great possessions we're told he had here. He doesn't want to think of them as something we'd have to give away. In order to have God. In order to put God first.

He went away. He went away at that saying very sad. He went away grieved. That when Jesus is calling upon you and me to follow him.

It's not follow me the way you think best. It's not follow me. In terms of your own idea. What that means. It's not follow me.

In a way the world thinks of following me. It's not a way. It's not follow me. In a way a liberal theology. Or a theology would talk about. It just be no different really. To living in the world.

Except having a bit of a decency about your life. When Jesus says follow me. He is saying take up your cross. Put everything else second.

[53 : 31] To God. To Christ himself. Deny yourself. Don't let self. This self that's so much a part of all of us.

And especially this sinful self. With which we come into the world. Our lostness. Our fallenness. Our pride. Our wrong thinking.

Our twistedness inwardly. Jesus is saying. Deny yourself. Don't let that have priority. Instead. Put me there. Put me first.

And come. Follow me. Enter into that path. By which you put self to death. And follow me. And he went away.

Disappointed. Disappointed. He was sad. That's saying. And went away. Grieved. And significantly. That's a strong word as well. It's a word that really.

[54 : 29] Is used for something like. Bereavement. The grief. In bereavement. It's that kind of word. That's used here by Mark. To describe. This man's reaction.

He went away. Grieved. His hopes were dashed. He was really crushed. He'd never lived his life. Although he said. All of these commands. I've kept from my youth.

Actually. He had never even got past. The first commandment. Which was. Which is. You shall have no other gods. Before me. That's where he still was.

He had a God. Blocking his way. To eternal life. The God of his riches. The God of his self. He went away.

Disappointed with Jesus. He went away. Grieved. His heart mourned. Over what Jesus had said to him. For he had great.

[55 : 30] Possessions. That was his God. That's why he turned away from Christ. Disappointed. And sorrowful. So not.

Persuaded. Is there anything today. Between you and God. Between you and salvation. Between you and putting Christ first.

We all have to examine. Our lives. As to what we put first. What is our priority. What's most important.

Who's most important. Where is our life heading. Where is our life going to end. What is our destiny. What is our eternity. All of these questions.

Indeed every other question. Comes in some way or other. To bring us back to Jesus. And what he means to us. Good master. What shall I do.

[56 : 33] That I may inherit. Jesus says. Eternal life. From my passage. Has it made you think today. Has it made me think today.

What is my God. Who is my God. Is Jesus. Top of my life's agenda. Is living by faith in him.

The most crucial aspect. Of my daily life. May God bless. These words to us. Let's pray. Lord our gracious God.

We thank you today. For the way. Which you so clearly. Have shown to us. In your word. What our priority. Must be. And we give thanks. That the things of your salvation.

Are made so clear to us. In the scripture. We acknowledge. Oh Lord. That there is much. In your word. That brings us. Into great depths. Beyond even our capacity. To fully understand.

[57 : 34] But that is not so. With the things. To do with eternal life. And how we come to possess it. We give thanks Lord. For the clarity. With which you call us. Into that eternal life.

And its possession. And we thank you today. For the way that. The word has reminded us. Of how important it is. To have. The Lord himself. Before all else.

Lord. Teach us. We pray. Your ways. Guide us. In these paths. And teach us. Day by day. To examine ourselves. And our relationship. With you. In case we should be.

Persuading ourselves wrongly. That we do have eternal life. Hear us then. We pray. Accept our worship. Be with us. Throughout this day. Help us to keep it. To yourself.

Grant these mercies. To us now. For Jesus sake. Amen. Amen. Well we'll sing in conclusion.

[58 : 29] Now from Psalm 62. Psalm 62. Verses 5 to 8. My soul wake thou with patience.

Upon thy God alone. On him dependeth all my hope. And expectation. He only my salvation is. And my strong rock is he. He only is my sure defense.

I shall not you it be. In God my glory placed is. And my salvation sure. In God the rock is of my strength. My refuge most secure.

Ye people place your confidence. In him continually. Before him pour ye out your heart. God is our refuge. High. My soul.

Wake thou with patience. My soul with patience. My soul with patience. With the wicked Upon thy cross alone And independent of thy hope And expectation He only my salvation is And my strong rock is he In what mayest my sure defense

[60 : 20] I shall not live with thee In God my God In this place And my salvation is good In the garden of God Gives all my strength My remuneration to secure Give me my pleasure Your confidence In your God In your life

Be bold and bold Be your dear heart God is the refuge Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ The love of God the Father And the communion of the Holy Spirit Be with you now and evermore Amen