

It's Total Allegiance to Jesus

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Preacher: Jim Masters

[0:00] please take your Bibles and go to Matthew's Gospel Matthew chapter 19 Matthew chapter 19 verse 16 if you're visiting with us or left your cell phone at home you pull out that black Bible and chair in front of you and go to the back and go to page 16 page 16 for Matthew chapter 19 verse 16 Matthew chapter 19 verse 16 through 26 Matthew chapter 19 verse 16 through 26 again page 16 in that black Bible I'm going to read and then we'll do our study for this morning about the young rich man and behold coming to him one said teacher what good thing shall I do that I may obtain into her life and he said to him why are you asking me about what is good there's one who is good but if you want to enter into life keep the commandments and he said to him of what quality and Jesus said you should not commit murder you should not commit adultery you should not steal you should not bear false witness honor father and mother and you shall love your neighbors yourself the young man said to him all these things I've kept what am I still lacking

Jesus said to him if you want to be complete go sell your possessions and give to the poor and you shall have treasure in heaven and come follow me but hearing this word the young man left grieved for he was one who owned much possessions and Jesus said to his disciples truly I say to you it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven and again I say to you it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of the needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God and when the disciples heard this they were astonishingly shocked and said well then who can be saved and fixing his gaze upon them Jesus said to them with men this is impossible but with God all things are possible reciting the pledge of allegiance has caused quite a stir back in October of last year a teacher was reassigned duties to avoid the pledge of allegiance after complaints over him regularly kneeling in front of his whole class this was in New Jersey another article

Tay Anderson's first meeting as a new secretary of the Denver Board of Education began with an act of protest on December 19th Anderson remained seated while the room recited the pledge of allegiance and he says he will continue to sit in future board meetings until systemic double standards in American society are remedied as the article says interesting I looked up the history of the pledge of allegiance the pledge was written in August of 1892 by the socialist minister Francis Bellamy it was originally published in I guess this was like an article of some kind the youth's companion on September 8th 1892 and it read like this I pledge allegiance to my flag and the republic for which it stands one nation indivisible with liberty and justice for all the pledge was it underwent editing twice 1923 and then again in 1954 in 1954 they added the phrase under God interesting little bit of info about the original salute to the flag they used to salute the flag and then when it came to that part

I pledge allegiance to my flag the arm was extended to the flag with the palm up it was changed in World War II you can imagine why because it resembled the Nazi salute so they actually changed it to be over your heart now as Christians we can have what I would classify as a tissue issue about the flag should you stand for it should you say it should you not say it etc.

etc. but one thing that is a non-negotiable for us as Christians is our pledge of allegiance to Jesus which is not just in our daily response to them as Christians but this is a key aspect of the gospel we pledge we pledge allegiance to our Savior the one who died for me and we call others to pledge allegiance to our Savior so as Matthew is writing his gospel about bowing down and worshiping Jesus the Messiah the Son of God he's the King of Israel he's telling us here it's total allegiance to Jesus he wants to communicate to his readers his hearers what you see before you with this historical real genuine account with this young rich guy following

[6:24] Jesus believing in Jesus it's about total allegiance to him what does sacrificial Jesus discipleship look like what does it mean to be a sacrificial disciple of Christ a true Christian a true follower of Jesus is his sacrificial disciple we're willing to sacrifice now with the real hope of future

reward it's total allegiance to Jesus the focus here this section and we'll look at in 23 to 26 and then next week one writer puts it like this quote the relationship between present sacrifice and future reward end quote and today this the first part we're going to look at it's this discussion between this young this youth who refused to sacrifice riches to follow

Christ and then remember we talked about this last week Jesus is going to teach his disciples a lot of this section this next last historical narrative discourse section is Jesus interacting with his disciples and teaching them training them young man asks three questions Jesus gives him three answers to show him something that this man's love for wealth was incompatible with being a true follower of Jesus a disciple of God's kingdom tell that to those prosperity gospel preachers one of Kenya West knows this one is called to follow Jesus no matter the cost no matter the circumstances notice how it begins it begins with surgery or probing

Jesus does allegiance probing he's going to probe this man or do surgery he's going to start cutting he's going to cut pretty deep with this guy probing with this guy you see here in verses 16 to 20 watch how it begins and look behold coming to him one said teacher okay stop right there remember something whenever you see someone calling Jesus teacher in Matthew's gospel maybe not necessarily in Mark's gospel Luke's John but we know from Matthew's gospel I think I have it up here don't I yes anyone in Matthew's gospel who called Jesus teacher did not adequately understand or believe his true identity so automatically this guy did not understand or believe who Jesus said he was he didn't understand Jesus identity so that's red flags right there right there there's red flags teacher he didn't really believe

Jesus to be who he claimed to be teacher what good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life good thing he wanted the spectacular the amazing he was looking for some awesome great deed that would put him over the top make him look awesome you know it's interesting his focus was on his own goodness instead of God's goodness God is the one who's good we're not good song says you are good you are good and there's nothing good in me that's so true he was focused on himself he wanted to obtain it eternal life by Jesus assigning him some dazzling outstanding good deed that would earn him eternal life that the way to God was doing good in some outstanding meritorious action to one writer puts it like this quote to make good the deficiency he was lacking this is this is what this guy wanted okay so now put yourself in the shoes now of the disciples imagine what the disciples were thinking here is the ideal recruit to join our team yeah young rich intelligent eager ready to do something to earn the kingdom perfect we need that guy

Jesus what are you doing leave the poor guy alone boys sit down let me teach you no he's not the ideal recruit Christ would shatter what they've been taught their whole lives Jesus now he starts doing the probing verse 17 and he said to him why are you asking me about what is good immediately Jesus began to unravel this young man's erroneous understanding and assumptions Christ's answer showed the man's focus was on his goodness not God's because he says there's one who is good and you ain't him buddy plus not to mention the fact to seek good means one will seek

[12:38] God not seek to do something and then Jesus says this but if you want to enter into life keep the commandments he challenged the man what the man truly thought how to get eternal life keep the commands he says Jesus statements to the man were probes to reveal his heart he's beginning to cut to see what's really there because notice how the man responds look at verse 18 he said to him and from your new American standard says which ones literally it's like this of what quality or of what sort what what do you mean of what quality what's that supposed to because he thought there was some special commands there's like some hidden thing here

Jesus basically gonna tell him no it's all of them buddy not just a second set but all of them see the real issue was this man's heart which was set on riches the root of his problem was covetousness a love for wealth which you'll notice Jesus doesn't bring up that commandment interesting because that's the tenth commandment of what sort Jesus said you shall not commit murder you shall not commit adultery steal false witness honor father mother love your neighbors yourself he listed off the sixth the ninth commandments followed by the fifth and then he ends it adding it to the statement love your neighbors yourself and

Jesus he did this on purpose to see if the man understood that these must be kept perfectly and that he fell far short of God's perfect law because remember what the sermon on the mount said you've heard it was said you should not commit adultery you've heard it was said you should not commit murder but the issue was the heart adultery in the heart murder in the heart look at how this

man responds verse 20 young man said to him all these things I've kept whoa he audaciously and boldly affirmed he kept them but then he says this what am I still lacking but then he affirmed he was lacking something it's striking he knew he was lacking but he wasn't going to like Jesus answer because Jesus answer was going to be what you're lacking is me it's not about your goodness God being good to you and Jesus because we're not good people why do bad things happen to good people why do bad things happen to bad people he knew he was lacking he understood his deficiency but he was blinded by his own self focus and selfishness he knew he lacked but he didn't really want it his self confidence truly came out he had total confidence on how he rated on the good righteous scale as far as he was concerned he was self deceived because he failed to see that the law kills and it condemns the law is like a mirror you wake up in the morning you walk by the mirror you go oh

I thought I look better than that no I don't I don't look better than that I look bad right you walk by the mirror that's who you are that's what the law does it's just a mirror it kills you and condemns you it displays who you are there there's no hope and the law is good and right not us so look at what Jesus is doing he's doing surgery he's cutting and he's cutting deep he's probing into this guy and then finally the allegiance is now revealed where does his allegiance truly lie that's revealed now because look at verse 21 Jesus says yeah you're still lacking if you want to be complete or perfect go sell your possessions and give to the poor and you'll have treasure in heaven here's a way to add to your incompleteness which is actually the key to everything because this is the heart of the gospel forsake all your wealth and give to the poor because his wealth prevented him from truly loving

[18:32] God and his neighbor and when he would do that he would have treasure in heaven remember the sermon on mount chapter 6 verse 19 to 24 don't lay up for yourselves treasures on earth but treasures in heaven for where your heart is that's where your treasure is what you treasure that's where your heart is and we take the view that when Jesus says sell and come follow me he's saying sell in order to follow me sell in order to follow me why does Jesus put it like this because his wealth is preventing him he loved his stuff you want to do something radical to the young man you want to do something amazing outstanding Christ called him to divest himself of all his most valuable assets so as to benefit others not like him if he really didn't love his stuff this would be no problem because he would have heavenly treasure you want to do something outlandish undermine your whole way of life by leaving all the stuff that you hold dear at

God's disposal that's big this would force him to trust God this would force him to rely on him for his needs to display absolute allegiance to God or Christ he must cut off his absolute allegiance to his stuff he must willingly part with his idol his idol was money and come and come follow me he called the man to rely on Jesus and the values of his kingdom not on his wealth not in his self righteousness Jesus was saying sit under me sit under my teaching sit under my authority I must be first the allegiance is revealed surgery and the probing was cut out and allegiance was revealed there goes look and there he goes it was cut out well I can make this statement well he kicks this and fires this thing back up so does Jesus require all his followers to give their money away that's why you'll see big barrels there in the back as you go out this morning you can put all your stuff in the barrels and then no no the issue is what or rather who we truly love Jesus was doing surgery he was probing this guy comes to him but he was revealing what really was in this guy's heart and Jesus is not condemning riches or getting rich that's an absurd conclusion socialists proclaim this communists say this others who are just they're only thinking about themselves they say that this is what

God says no it's not about you being rich it's not about you being wealthy that's not the issue the issue is who what who we truly love do we love Christ is he our focus oh yeah right here Jesus condemned his covetous love for riches above Jesus and look at his response look at verse 22 but hearing this word the young man went away deeply grieved because he was one who owned much who had many possessions see he did not really love his neighbor because if he did he'd be willing to give up everything as Jesus described and he certainly did not love

Jesus nor give Jesus the authority that he deserved because he did not drop everything in order to follow Jesus he was totally clueless he failed at the first command to have no other gods before the one good God he wasn't good God's good his God was his wealth and when it came to following Jesus Jesus demanded all one writer puts it like this quote God demands undivided loyalty from those who would be his end quote this is the gospel the path to God is giving him your all another

writer says this quote loyalty to the kingdom cannot take second place end quote interesting you contrast this man

[24:56] I should go this way this man with what Jesus brings up in the parables of the kingdom excuse me parables of the kingdom in Matthew chapter 13 you remember that when he found the pearl when he found the treasure what did this man in Matthew chapter 13 do what did he do he sold everything he had and went and bought that field he wanted to buy that pearl when he bought that field where that treasure was buried and you have this guy joy sadness great extreme gladness sorrow so he really didn't keep those commandments after all any of those commandments Jesus showed that the last section of the commands is done in light of the first command love the Lord your God with all your heart soul mind and strength if Jesus is first and foremost and not wealth then we will truly love each other if we have a problem loving each other then the problem lies in our love for Christ this man served money not God

Jesus mentioned this in chapter 6 verse 24 you cannot serve God and money he loved his stuff not God and certainly not Jesus and definitely not others our love for the stuff of this world prevents us from seeking God and his kingdom and again excuse me the evil is not in being rich the evil is in loving riches more than Jesus Christ that's where the evil lies it's it was sad he knew he was lacking and yet sadly he was unwilling to truly do something about it to follow Jesus no matter the cost it was right there in front of him so I asked the question is there anything standing between you and God what is it stuff money people relationships whatever

Christian let this challenge you and the gods you serve versus our Lord this is what this does a great passage to remind us of the gospel truth and God's grace to us in Christ and our allegiance to him because of the gospel our response to him in the gospel we're going to do that tangibly in the Lord's Supper as a reminder to us so Jesus is doing probing he's doing surgery it's revealed and then Jesus starts teaching his disciples allegiance to Jesus is hard it's not easy notice what he says in verse 23 he pulls his disciples aside and starts teaching them truly I say to you it's hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven and again

I say to you it's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God allegiance to Jesus is hard rich people struggle easy for them to rely on their riches and on God it's easier to rely on getting whatever they want in this life than depend on Christ that's the danger of riches that's the danger of money that's the danger of wealth she or he may concentrate on their money to the harm of their spiritual sight their spiritual growth people they like to quote right money is the root of all kinds of evil it's not money I tell people all time no that's not what it says it's not no the love of money money is not the root of all sorts of evil the love of money the love for riches is deceitful wealth can desensitize people to their deepest need which is Jesus alone and that's our problem in our American culture we have such a culture of wealth and things that we take advantage of all the time and we get desensitized to our true need of Jesus and the gospel and grace and compassion and apart from the power of God no one especially a rich person will enter the kingdom with difficulty will a wealthy person enter God's kingdom and then Jesus says this here in verse 24 a camel will go through the eye of a needle that the whole thing that maybe you read about there was some part in the wall of Jerusalem a little part that the camels would go through that's called the eye of that's nonsense that's not historically true it's completely and totally inaccurate there's no historical account of that at all what is true is in Palestine the camel was the largest animal and the needle was the smallest thing that they had so it's easier to get a big huge camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God is virtually impossible that's what Jesus was saying it was a great story it's a great story it's just not true truth is wealth can be a huge barrier to the gospel because we're tempted to be self-sufficient without God or dependence on him the wall barrier can only be destroyed by God and his power in the heart it's the only way and look at how the disciples respond in verse 27 astonishingly shocked and they said then who can be saved why did this shock them this shocked the disciples because they were under the false notion that riches were proof of

[31:31] God's approval are you rich God has blessed you they thought that wealth was God's blessing a sign of his blessing as a matter of fact they would have been told if you're blessed in this life it means God's going to bless you in the kingdom that's what they thought they were taught this their whole lives it struck them right between the eyes it should strike those prosperity gospel preachers right between the eyes and those who listen to them as well then who can be saved if someone with riches can't enter and riches doesn't mean that God approves of him or her how can

anyone be saved I mean if these people who have God's blessing enter God's kingdom with difficulty what does it say about most of us who aren't rich what does it say about me what does it say about you allegiance to

Jesus is hard yet allegiance is made possible by God you should say God alone verse 26 and looking upon them literally it's this fixing his gaze upon them he intently looked at his disciples because he was going to tell them a very important truth not something across the board not something anything he's not talking about salvation he's not making some blanket stand about anything he spoke in the context of salvation with men this is impossible yes it is totally impossible not just the salvation of a rich person but anyone his disciples need to understand this without God you can do nothing nothing no one can be saved but God is not limited like humans so he says but with God all things are possible only God God in his powerful sovereign grace can overcome all such idolatrous coveting love for stuff and money and change the heart or will of a person to bow down and worship Jesus the Messiah the Son of God the King of Israel only God in his grace can do that salvation is in the hands of a powerful God who's able to bring the needed change in a person's heart and life he can do that all of it depends entirely upon God he can save anybody he wants but it cannot be earned by riches or by poverty

God grants it given to you it's a gift as one writer puts it quote the kingdom of God overturns all human valuations and possibilities or as Jonah said salvation belongs to the Lord a true disciple leaves everything to follow Jesus he's first and foremost more than girls money or gold fame achievements anything you give him your all as the song goes my heart is yours my heart is yours take it all take it all my life in your hands my heart is yours my heart is yours take it all take it all my life in your hands real eternal life is

Jesus having first place not out of duty the way we live matters because God loves us in his son knowing and following Jesus is eternal life it's total allegiance to Christ so what does sacrificial Jesus discipleship look like what does it mean to be a sacrificial disciple of Christ a true Christian a true follower of Jesus is his sacrificial disciple we're willing to sacrifice now with the real hope of future reward it's total allegiance to Jesus what a great segue to celebrate the Lord's Supper to remind ourselves yes yes my allegiance is to you yes yes my devotion is to you remind ourselves of his grace his love for us and that

[37 : 14] I can't do anything to get his approval it's nothing that you have done it's what Christ has done and you just say I'm I'm yours I am yours my life in your hands so we will celebrate this together if you're a Christian maybe you're saying I'm not a member of this church look you come from a church of like faith and practice we're baptists so we would embrace the fact that you have been baptized by immersion partake of the elements with us but if you're not a Christian this is not for you you shouldn't be taking this and if you're cannot reconcile with that person and you need to go reconcile don't take the elements wait go try to reconcile if you have tried and you can't that's one thing but if you haven't wait go to reconcile then come and celebrate how God's been reconciled with you and his son again let this be a reminder to us of how nothing can separate us from the love of

God in Christ Jesus our Lord recant that remind yourself of this gospel truth and remind yourself of your allegiance to your savior your redeemer his total allegiance to Jesus yes father our hearts are yours truth we will take the time to remind ourselves of our devotion to you our allegiance to you total allegiance to you we remind ourselves of the gospel truth of how much you love us in your son so take it all take it all my life in your hands may the words from

Matthew's gospel and may the words of the gospel may you allow it to fill your mind right now to fill your heart may you be so impacted by God's grace to you and his son and how it's not dependent upon anything in you to get God's approval it's all about Jesus Christ has done for us for you and let this be the response of your heart so fill your mind with the gospel and after a few moments

I'll ask these guys who are so faithful to do this to pass out the bread to us okay you