

# One Way

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Preacher: Adedayo Ige

- [ 0 : 00 ]     So this reading is from Luke chapter 18 and starting at verse 18. A certain ruler asked Jesus, good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?
- Why do you call me good? Jesus answered. No one is good except God alone. You know the commandments. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not murder. You shall not steal.
- You shall not give false testimony. Honor your father and mother. All these I have kept since I was a boy, he said. When Jesus heard this, he said to him, you still lack one thing.
- Sell everything you have and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me. When he heard this, he became very sad because he was very wealthy.
- Jesus looked at him and said, how hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God. Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.
- [ 1 : 18 ]     Those who heard this asked, who then can be saved? Jesus replied, what is impossible with man is possible with God.
- Peter said to him, we have left all we had to follow you. Truly, I tell you, Jesus said to them, no one who has left home or wife or brothers or sisters or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God will fail to receive many times as much in this age and in the age to come eternal life.
- Yes, I see that you have been following a theme of one thing. Yes, I see that you have been following a theme of one thing. Preceding Easter, which is a good theme. The way to the cross.
- The way to the cross. The way to the cross. And the topic I was given today is one thing. And I decided to pick between the children coming to Jesus and the young rich ruler.
- And I decided to pick the young rich ruler, which our sister has just read to us. Today, as we gather to reflect on this encounter between this young ruler, very rich with Jesus.
- [ 2 : 42 ]     It's a narrative rich with wisdom and profound implications for our lives today. At first glance, the rich young ruler appears to be an exemplary figure that ticked all the boxes.
- He is a devout Christian, a devout observer of the law, young and affluent. He embodies all the aspirations that anybody could wish for at any time.
- He's in a position of privilege and honor. He's in a position of religious observers. However, beneath the facade, the outward facade, that's a profound spiritual hunger.
- A yearning for something more. There must be more. There must be more. When I first came to this country, when I started my district nursing career, I was working in the city of London.
- And on that Sunday morning, BBC One, there was this affluent man. I've forgotten the name now. They interviewed him.
- [ 4 : 09 ]     And they said, you, so rich. What do you want in the church? And the man gave the testimony.

Yes, I know I'm comfortable financially. Yes, I know I could have as many holidays in a year, even exotic ones.

I traveled in first class. But deep inside me, there's something more. I wasn't fulfilled.

And that is the first thing that excites me. I said, oh, this one can come on BBC. Praise the Lord. Life is more than wealth.

Life is more than riches. Jesus perceiving the innermost thoughts of this young ruler, engages him in a dialogue that calls to the core.

[ 5 : 19 ] He puts his finger in the heart of the matter, which is the matter of the heart, which is the cost of being a disciple of Jesus.

He begins by listing some of the commandments to which the ruler responds that he has kept them since his youth. Jesus did not quote the law to signify that anyone can be saved by observing the law.

But he put it as a mirror before the young ruler to look at himself, to see where he was lacking. He didn't stop there.

He challenged the young ruler to go beyond mere observance of the law and to surrender fully to God's will. And even when you look at riches, at wealth, when you look at them, they are very, very tantalizing.

Difficult to part with. In my ministry, I've just retired about three years ago.

[ 6 : 41 ] I realized that the most Indian people are the most, are the richest people. They can't part with money. I've seen that play up.

The pivotal moment arises when Jesus invites the ruler to sell all his possessions, distribute them to the poor, and follow him.

This command strikes at the heart of the ruler's attachment to material wealth, revealing the true cost of discipleship.

Jesus unveils the radical demands of following him. It is not merely about adhering to a set of rules, or maintaining a comfortable lifestyle.

It's about complete reorientation of priorities. It is about relinquishing anything that stands in the way of hope, without devotion to God.

[ 7 : 56 ] This rich young ruler, which appears also in Matthew chapter 19, verse 20, may be the only man in the Gospels who came to the feet of Jesus and went away worse than when he came.

And yet, he had so much in his favor. He was moral, religious, earnest, and sincere, and probably would qualify for membership in any Baptist church of modern day.

Yet, he refused to follow Jesus Christ by doing the one thing needed to have eternal life.

And instead of obeying, he went on his own with great sorrow, unable to part with his earthly wealth.

What is it that was wrong with him? What was wrong with him? In a word, I put it, spiritual blindness. He couldn't see.

[ 9 : 20 ] in spite of the fact that he came to the right person, Jesus Christ, asked the right question, what can I do to inherit eternal life?

And received the right answer. One more thing. Sell your possession, distribute it to the poor, come and follow me.

He made the wrong choice, wrong decision. Why? Because he failed to see the mirror, to see himself in the mirror that Christ put in his face.

Therefore, he will not do what he was commanded to do. He was a superficial young man who saw all he was doing but failed but failed to see what he should do.

Let's just look at the areas that blinded him or the areas he couldn't see. About three things. One is view of Christ.

[ 10 : 34 ] the rabbis were called master or teacher. But, it was most unusual for a rabbi to be called good because the word, that adjective good, they reserved it only for God.

as you have seen, as you will see in Psalms 25 verse 8, Psalm 34 verse 8, Psalm 86 verse 5, and Psalm 106 verse 1.

This explains why our Lord asked the young man what he meant. For if he really believed that Jesus was good, then, he had to confess that Jesus was God.

By asking this question, our Lord was not denying his deity, but affirming it. He was testing the young man to see if he really understood what he has just said.

His subsequent behavior, that is the young ruler now, proved that the young ruler did not believe that Jesus Christ was God. If he really thought he was in the presence of the almighty God, then, why did he argue politely about the law, brag about his character, and then refuse to obey the world?

[ 12 : 16 ] How many of us will find ourselves in that position? We know all the theological words to say, the right words to say, but when it comes to the nitty gritty of doing, that is where we fail.

Surely, he knew that God sees the heart and knows all things. The second problem he had about his spiritual blindness is that his view of sin.

he also had a superficial view of his own sin. No doubt the young man sincerely tried to keep the law.

In fact, this and his self-righteousness or self-justification may have been what brought him to the feet of Jesus. Thinking, okay, I do this, I do this, I've kept all the things, I've done this, I've done this, what else do I need?

I think I'm qualified. Jesus did not quote the law to him as a means of salvation because obedience to the law does not save us.

[ 13 : 36 ] He held the law before the young man as a mirror to reveal his sin. But the young man looked into the mirror and would not see his stains and blemishes in his life.

When Jesus quoted from the second table of the law, he did not quote the last commandment, thou shalt not covet. Exodus 20, 17.

Jesus knew the young man's heart. So, instead of preaching to him about covetousness, he asked him to do something that a covetous person will not do, to part with his worth.

Nobody is saved by giving all his worth to the poor, but nobody can be saved who will not believe in Jesus Christ, turn away from their sin, and give their life to him, and follow him.

It's only by faith in Jesus Christ that we can be saved. This young man was possessed by love of money, self-righteousness, self-justification, and he will not let go.

[ 15 : 04 ] The third blindness that he had, I've told you, his view of Christ, his view of sin, and the last one is his view of salvation.

The young man thought that eternal life came to those who did something, which was a typical Jewish conviction, but when Jesus gave him something to do, go and sell your possession, and follow me.

He failed to do that. He refused to obey. He wanted salvation on his own terms, not on God's terms. So he turned and went away in great sorrow.

The disciples were shocked when Jesus announced that it was difficult for the rich people to be saved. They were Jews, Jews, and the Jews believed that riches were a mark of godly living or being godly.

If rich people can't be saved, there isn't. What hope is there for us? John D.

[ 16 : 27 ] Rockefeller will have agreed with them, for he once said that riches were a gift from heaven, signifying, this is my beloved son in whom I am well placed.

It is not possessing riches that keeps people out of heaven, because Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, Solomon, they were wealthy people.

but it is being possessed by riches and worth that keeps people away from heaven.

Worth gives people a false sense of success and security, and when people are satisfied with themselves, they feel no need for God.

I had a friend, I have a friend, we started humble together, and God just opened doors for him, and he became, he's just becoming wealthy and wealthy, and we were talking one day, and we were talking about wealth, and he said something very salient, you don't know what wealth is, you just want to keep on getting more and getting more, and I said, is it about getting more, or about let it pass through you?

[ 18 : 00 ] It's what we do with the wealth. Peter's comment, sorry, Peter's comment in Luke chapter 8, 18, verse 28, suggests that he had grasped the concept of eternal life.

Jesus was talking about to the young rich ruler, and Jesus by one of his amens, that is, when we say the amen of Jesus, we mean some of the statements he made, and those words are assuredly, verily, and so be it.

That is, his family family established, stand firm, nothing will change that. So one of his amen, he said, he assured them that anyone of you who lives anything, brother, sister, wealth, houses, anything, for the sake of the kingdom, will be rewarded in this life, and life to come.

And I've seen that play up in life. People who give and give for the sake of the kingdom, they get more and more, and they continue to give and give.

What lessons can we learn from this? One, let us not misunderstand Jesus' message. It is not a condemnation of worth in itself.

[ 19 : 31 ] Rather, it's a challenge to examine where our hearts truly lie. Are we willing to surrender everything, our possessions, ambitions, and desires for the sake of the kingdom?

Are we prepared to go, to let go of anything that hinders our relationship with God? Are we ready?

The second lesson we can learn from it is that Jesus assures us that our sacrifices, our giving the way, our letting go of anything for the sake of kingdom will be noticed.

The sacrifice we make going the extra mile to listen to somebody, to helping somebody, even to inconvenience our time, our schedule, they will not go unnoticed.

He promises a abundant blessing in this life, and the life to come for those who forsake all of it for his sake. Indeed, the treasures of heaven far surpass any ugly way and status we may possess.

[ 21 : 02 ] the first lesson we can learn is that as we reflect on this passage today, one thing, one thing, let us examine our own hearts and consider what may be hindering us from wholehearted devotion to Christ.

may we be willing to let go of anything that impedes our journey of faith and embrace the abundant life that Jesus offers to all who follow him.

To close, Jesus said in Luke chapter 9 verse 23, whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow him.

The young rich ruler didn't see the reason why he should deny himself of his riches and follow Jesus.

But when you look at of which I believe strongly, the young rich ruler will have made himself confesant with, Proverbs 28 verse 11, he said, rich people pictured themselves as wise, but their real poverty, their real poverty is evident to the poor.

[ 22 : 40 ] And verse 27 of the same chapter in the Proverbs it says, whoever, whoever gives to the poor will lack nothing, but a curse will come upon those who close their eyes.

to poverty. We may think how giving out will make me richer. That's human knowledge.

That's human conception. And that is why Jesus said to people, it may look difficult, it may seem difficult, but with God, all things are possible.

may we trust in God's grace to empower us to live lives of radical obedience and wholehearted devotion to him.

And truly, if we have faith in God, I want to use Warren Westby's definition of faith to close.

[ 23 : 44 ] faith, if we truly have faith in Christ, faith, according to him, is confident obedience to God's word, no matter what the situation is and what the consequence will be.

God bless you.