WHAT MUST I DO TO INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE?

Mark 10:17-31

Key verse 17

 As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. “Good teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

**Introduction**

 In today’s passage, Jesus talks with a young man about how to inherit eternal life. Usually old people are the ones thinking about eternal life. Young people are just not interested in eternal life. They are more interested in their social media, boyfriends and girlfriends, or the sports. But this young man was quite different because he was very serious about eternal life. Jesus loved him and taught him how to inherit eternal life. May the Lord help us to pick up desire to seek eternal life like him.

1. Read verses 17-20. What does this man’s question reveal about himself? (17) What did Jesus teach about God? (18) What commandments did Jesus speak about? (19) What does the man’s reply show about him? (20)

1-1, Read verses 17-20.

17 As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. “Good teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

18 “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone. 19 You know the commandments: ‘You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honor your father and mother.’[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+10&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24608d)]”

20 “Teacher,” he declared, “all these I have kept since I was a boy.”

1-2, What does this man’s question reveal about himself? (17)

***17 As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. “Good teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”***

* As Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem to take away the sin of the world, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him.
* He seemed to have an urgent problem to solve before it was too late. This was the last chance for him to ask because Jesus would die soon in Jerusalem.
* This man had a serious life problem; he was not sure whether or not he had eternal life. He was like Nicodemus who came to Jesus to solve his life problem.
* He was young. (Mt 19:20) He was a ruler and rich. (Lk 18:18) His power, wealth, and youth did not secure him with an assurance of having eternal life.
* His wealth and power did not secure his salvation. So he came to Jesus to find his life direction. “What must I do to inherit eternal life?”
* His question reveals his fundamental misunderstanding about eternal life. He understood eternal life in terms of ‘doing’ something to inherit it.
* He earned everything his heart desired by working hard. In the same way, he felt he had to ‘do’ something to inherit eternal life. He was wrong.

1-3, What did Jesus teach about God? (18)

 ***“Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone.***

* Jesus declared that no one is good except God alone. Rom 3:12 says, “There is no one who does good, not even one.”
* He thought that he felt pretty good about himself when he helped others. Jesus said this to help him think of God as the solution to his problem.
* Jesus helped him know who Jesus really was, and find eternal life in him. Here we learn that human goodness is a relative term.
* All men are sinners before God. This means we can become forgiven sinners only by God’s mercy alone. We cannot earn eternal life by our human efforts.

1-4, What commandments did Jesus speak about? (19)

 ***You know the commandments: ‘You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honor your father and mother.’[***[***d***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+10&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24608d)***]”***

* Jesus quoted from the fifth commandment to the tenth. These commandments concern love of one’s neighbor. “You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.'” (Ex.20:12-16)

1-5, What does the man’s reply show about him? (20)

 ***20 “Teacher,” he declared, “all these I have kept since I was a boy.”***

* As for him, keeping the law was only a matter of outward observance and ritualistic ceremonies.
* He did not grasp the idea that the law also requires inner obedience, which no one can fully satisfy.
* Maybe he tried to turn his eyes and run away when he saw a beautiful girl coming his way.
* In spite of his honesty and devotion, this young man had kept the commandments superficially, for his own future success.
* He did not hurt others but at the same time he did not love them like himself. He kept the law passively.
* In truth, he did not keep the commandments concerning the love of neighbors. God gives true happiness and joy to those who truly keep the law of God.
* But this man had kept the law of God in order to feel good about himself. He did not live for God but only for himself.
* As a result, he did not feel the life of God in himself. He looked ok outwardly, but he was very miserable on the inside because of his self-centered life.
1. Read verses 21-25. What did Jesus ask the man to do? (21) How did he respond? (22) What did Jesus say about the rich based on the man’s response? (23-25)

2-1, Read verses 21-25.

21 Jesus looked at him and loved him. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” 22 At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.

23 Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!” 24 The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, “Children, how hard it is[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+10&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24613e)] to enter the kingdom of God! 25 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.”

2-2, What did Jesus ask the man to do? (21)

***21 Jesus looked at him and loved him. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”***

* Jesus loved him not because he was a man of great achievement, but because he still had a potential to grow in God’s image.
* Jesus loves young people because they have dreams and visions. Jesus was concerned about the spiritual condition of young men.
* Jesus loved this young man and gave him a chance to make a decision. Jesus knew what his spiritual problem was.
* This young man was serving Money as his master. As a result, he could not serve God. That was the one thing he lacked.
* In order to follow Jesus, he needed to depend on God, not on his great wealth. It was the most important moment of life to him.
* Jesus, the Messiah, gave him an invitation to follow him. It was an invitation to have a great life.
* The Christian life can be compared to a treasure hunt. In the parable of Matthew 13, one man found treasure hidden in a field.
* So he sold all he had and bought that field. Christians are those who sell all they have and buy treasures so that they can have treasure in heaven.
* Heavenly treasure is secure because there are no thieves in heaven. It never spoils or fades away. Jesus also said to the young man, “Then come, follow me.”
* Jesus graciously invited him to become his disciple. It required his courage to give up his love of money and follow Jesus. He was at the door of the kingdom of God.

2-3, How did he respond? (22)

***22 At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.***

* He had no courage to give up his material possessions. Without courage, no man can follow Jesus. He did not receive the kingdom of God like a little child.
* He did not receive Jesus’ invitation with a humble heart. He calculated the cost of giving up his great wealth and went away sad. Jesus was very sorry.

2-4, What did Jesus say about the rich based on the man’s response? (23-25)

***23 Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!” 24 The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, “Children, how hard it is[***[***e***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+10&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24613e)***] to enter the kingdom of God! 25 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.”***

* Like this rich young man, rich people have a tendency not to seek the kingdom of God because they like the things of the world more than God.
* The disciples were amazed at his words. Jesus understood them very well and continued to teach them in verses 24b-25.
1. Read verses 26-31. What did Jesus teach His disciples about salvation? (26, 27) What blessings did Jesus promise to give to those who left everything to follow Him? (28-31) What can we learn from Jesus’ teachings about eternal life?

3-1, Read verses 26-31.

26 The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, “Who then can be saved?”

27 Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.”

28 Then Peter spoke up, “We have left everything to follow you!”

29 “Truly I tell you,” Jesus replied, “no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel 30 will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—along with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. 31 But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”

3-2, What did Jesus teach His disciples about salvation? (26, 27)

***26 The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, “Who then can be saved?”27 Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.”***

* At his words the disciples became negative, and they were even more amazed and said to each other, “Who then can be saved?”
* They thought that the rich young man was a good candidate to enter the kingdom of God. If he could not enter, then who could?
* Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.”
* Here we learn that salvation is not a matter of possessions. Salvation cannot be earned by our superhuman efforts.
* It is impossible to gain salvation by our human goodness. Salvation is a matter of faith. It is a gift of God that comes from our faith in Jesus.
* God provides salvation through his one and only Son who died for our sins and rose again by the power of God.
* Romans 1:16 says, “I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes.” We accept it like little children.

3-3, What blessings did Jesus promise to give to those who left everything to follow Him? (28-31)

***28 Then Peter spoke up, “We have left everything to follow you!”***

***29 “Truly I tell you,” Jesus replied, “no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel 30 will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—along with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. 31 But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”***

3-4, What can we learn from Jesus’ teachings about eternal life?

* Peter was saying to Jesus, “Jesus, I am better than the rich young man.” But Jesus indirectly assured him with the promise of reward.
* These verses tell us that it is necessary for Christians to leave home to follow Jesus. In Jesus’ times, leaving home was not an easy thing to do.
* But the disciples left their homes and societies to follow Jesus. However, they had a future security problem.
* Jesus knew his heart very well and said, “I tell you the truth, no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mothers or fathers or children or fields for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age–and in the age to come, eternal life.”
* The real meaning of these verses is not the problem of leaving home or having a hundred mothers and fathers or a hundred sisters. Rather, the point is about God’s sure rewards to those who sacrifice to follow Jesus.
* God himself is their reward. The true happiness of man comes when he accepts God himself as his own reward and inheritance.
* God does not give us cash as rewards. He gives us himself as our reward. Like Abram in Genesis 15:1, God alone is the reward of God’s children.
* In addition, God gives us a new spiritual family. God rewards us 100 times more than what we gave up. Reward is greater than what we lost.
* We have more sisters, brothers, mothers, and homes than ever before. This is true. Jesus gave it all for you. What have you lost for Jesus?
* God rewards them with persecutions. Those who sacrifice many things to follow Jesus also receive persecution as their reward.
* Through persecutions and hardships, a child of God can learn how to trust and obey God all the more. Also, he can struggle and increase his faith through many persecutions and trials until his faith shines like pure gold.
* As a result, he wins victories and renders glory to God. Sometimes God’s way of rewarding is mysterious and is too deep to understand for fallen mankind.
* God rewards them with eternal life. This is the best reward we can have. If we become the children of God, we will live forever in the kingdom of God with Jesus.

**Conclusion**

 Living in this materialistic society, it is easy for us to be lovers of money, saying, “Money is good.” But today Jesus teaches us that God alone is good. Jesus challenges us not to love money but love Jesus and follow him. Let us repent of our love of money. Let us love Jesus more than money. Let us follow Jesus, leaving our sinful past and worldly treasures behind. Then God will bless us more than we have ever imagined. When we lose something for Jesus and his gospel, God will bless us a hundred times over in this present age with peace and inner deep joy and true hope that is to inherit eternal life in the kingdom of God.

**One word: Eternal Life**