

## Wandering About Treasure (Matthew 19:16-30)

It is interesting to me that the Bible contains about 500 verses on prayer, 500 verses of faith and over 2,000 on money and possessions

- The Four Gospels = 1/10 verses
- **Why do you suppose that is?**

It's not that Holy Scripture condemns wealth or wealth getting (not normal for Jesus to ask this)

- Indeed there are many in the Bible that God blessed and used who were tremendously wealthy
- There are those in Scripture that God Himself made wealthy (not bad)
  - Which is good news because **we are all wealthy** by world standards (this is not about someone else)
  - We must hear: **"It is hard for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven"**
- **Why do you suppose that is?**

Though Scripture does not condemn wealth, it does warn us about it

- The danger of **"the love of money"** (1 Timothy 6:10, NLT)
- **Why would wealth make us wander? Why did this man "go away sad, because he had great wealth"**

From what I can tell, this guy was everything everyone wants to be: **Rich... young... (v. 20) ruler...** (Cf. Luke 19:18)

- He was also a morally upstanding guy + reverent & respectful (Mk 10:17 = **knees**)
- Even with all of this going for him, he had deep spiritual concerns (**see verse 16**)

Jesus is pretty hard on this guy (see **verse 17a, b**)

- Challenging the man's understanding of **good** (not a denial of deity)
- Resetting (right-setting) the standard (i.e. this man was not the standard)
- Jesus has upset the man's equilibrium a little already
- (**see verse 17c-20**)

**"All these I have kept", the young man said...**

- Interesting, Jesus did not challenge Him on that (though perhaps He could have)
- Because He did not need to... the man said, **"What do I still lack?"**
  - Economically successful
  - Socially successful
  - Morally successful
  - Religiously successful
- But sensed that **something was missing** (that is not surprise to us... though we doubt)

Jesus is about to do with the man, what He does with all of us at one time or another

- He is going to go deep; put His finger on "the thing"; get to the heart of the matter
- **He is going to challenge, confront, and expose the man's true source and center of joy and security**
- Listen, we need to understand what is happening here... (The Gospel of Mark helps)
  - **Jesus looked at him and loved him, "One thing you lack, " He said... (Mark 10:21)**
  - Don't hear that about anyone else in the gospels; Jesus does not ask this of anyone else

What Jesus is saying and requiring of the man is pure love (an attempt to meet the man's deepest desire)

- **Perfect** = *Teleios* = **that which has reached its aim** (i.e. **all you are hoping for and to be**)

**"Go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."**

- Jesus is exposing and confronting the man's truest treasure and offering him a truer one
- One's treasure is exposed, when one is confronted with going without it
  - Not that it is bad to **value** other things
  - But nothing else satisfies (**"What do I still lack?"**)
  - Because of love, Jesus is offering the man more (**come, follow me.**)
  - **The man can't see it—he cannot imagine life without his treasure... and so misses true treasure**
  - v. 22 = **he went away [from Jesus] sad, because he had great wealth**

### This is the crux of the whole thing

- In Jesus' list of the **commandments**, there was one glaring omission (every other time asked...)
- **Matthew 22:36-38, NIV**
- Jesus got there... but in a much deeper, probing way (that didn't allow the man to claim **success**)
  - He showed the man that there was actually something **radically wrong** (sin of idolatry)
    - Jesus drilled down (in His love) and got to the root of what was **radically wrong**
  - This is true of all of us—but wealth seems to have a unique ability to blind us to that truth (**vv. 23-24**)
  - Friend: More used of God... a mess (therapy) (the power of the distraction of wealth)

But, there are other distractions... other lesser treasures

- Jesus (in His love) will sometimes, for some of us, cause us to confront our **"deal breakers"** (**nothing changes**)
- **"Deal breakers"** are usually things we cannot imagine our lives without (idols...maybe good/maybe bad)

I think that part of the deficiency of our modern, popular Christian culture is that we would say to the man as he walked away, **"Don't go away! You can still have what you want... just add Jesus"**

- We would perpetuate the subtle lie of Satan and sin that you can find true happiness in life apart from God (and obedience to God) (This is why we continue in sin)
  - Jesus loved the man too much to let him believe our lie
  - Satan said in the Garden that God wants to keep us from happiness

### We often see Jesus as being in the way of our treasure (cosmic killjoy), or a way to our treasure (Cf. a genie)

- But He is actually meant to be our treasure
  - True and better wealth is found in Him (**Philippians 3:7-11, NIV**)
  - And in following Him...
    - But, we are slow to be convinced of that (**verses 27-30**)
    - So, we battle for **first place** in this life time
    - Peter, would just have to trust Jesus on that... **wait and see**

But, the invitation of God is to also **taste and see** (**Psalm 34:8, NLT**)

- We fail to **taste** when we fail to **follow** (cf. the man)
- We must see in the text what the man failed to see (the love of God in Christ)
- If only the man had known that Jesus had already forsaken His riches and became poor for him
  - **2 Corinthians 8:9, NLT; Philippians 2:6-8, NLT; Romans 8:31-31, NLT**
    - Not **in the way** of your treasure, not **the way to** your treasure—**Jesus is** your treasure

The disciples had misunderstood so much... they thought the man's success and position and possessions were...

- **Verse 25**

The man had misunderstood so much... he thought that something he could achieve would satisfy Him

- **Verse 26**
- **Romans 3:19-25b, NLT**

### Only Jesus saves, only Jesus satisfies

- We are often blind to our false saviors and false satisfactions
- What is Jesus (in His love) confronting and exposing in your life?
- What makes you wander?
- How can you discover that? (**Follow Him**)
- **We misunderstand so much...**
  - **True treasure...**
  - **True freedom...**
- The freedom of obedience: **1 John 5:3, NASB**
  - The man in the text missed a freedom that Jesus had offered Him
  - The man was in bondage and was blind to it (though he sensed a missing... had a longing)

**Psalm 42:1-2, NIV**