

A MAN WITH A GOOD QUESTION

By Keith Greer

"Now behold, one came and said to Him, Good teacher, what good thing shall I do that I might have eternal life?" {Matthew 19:16}

What a wonderful question! Any serious bible teacher would love to be asked this vital question. Yet, what makes this story so remarkable, is the person who the question was addressed. If one wanted a spiritual question answered, who better to consult than Jesus Christ!

Listen to what Jesus instructed him to do. " So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments." {Matthew 19:17} What did the young man say? He probably answered like many would today. **"Which ones?"**

"He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, "'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness, "Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself. "{Matthew 19:18,19} Jesus gave him a partial list of the ten commandments. All of these would be worthy for the young man to follow.

"The young man said to Him, All these things I have kept from my youth. **WHAT DO I STILL LACK?**" {Matthew 19:20} What a wonderful young man. He had kept these things in his life. Did you ever consider why he asked what he still lacked? In his answer we see a searching mind, understanding these things were not enough. Yet, for one to have done all these things, certainly he had a good beginning to build on. What was it he lacked?

" ... If you want to be perfect, go sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come and follow Me." {Matthew 19:21} The word perfect here, means "complete". For you see, Jesus could look into the young man's heart. This man's problem was the love of material wealth. Surely, he could see the greater value in spiritual wealth.

"But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. " {Matthew 19:22} He had asked the right question, to the right person and received the correct answer. Sadly, he gave the wrong reply!

So many times people ask good questions. By human standards they are good people. Many have the desire to do the right thing. Yet, when we give them God's answer, they go away sorrowful! What's the problem? Do they not understand the answers? Sadly, the problem is one of not being willing to pay the price demanded in discipleship. What is that price?

Total and complete commitment that will result in dedication to be a faithful servant of Christ. Nothing less will suffice. God desires us to commit our whole heart unto His service. Accomplishing this will mean that one must put self to death. Please consider the words of Paul in Philippians 2:1-5. Unfortunately, men find it difficult to submit and yield their lives to follow God's teachings in their lives. The cost is just too much – they think.

If a person just lacks "one thing", it is one thing too many for God! "For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul." {Matthew 16:26} This verse has always brought clear perspective in understanding why what God has asked is NOT too much. What do we gain by submitting our lives totally unto His service? Every spiritual blessing in Christ, true hope, constant help in time of need, and part of the greatest family on earth with the best Father? Someone said long ago – if you don't like the answer – maybe you should not ask the question! ***