

Living The Word Devotionals

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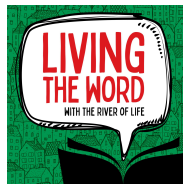
## Who Is Good?



By Mac Marye

Mark 10:18 “And Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.”

Jesus’ question is a deeply penetrating question that each human being must wrestle with. This passage comes from a section of scripture about a rich young ruler that comes to Jesus thinking he’s a pretty incredible guy. He rattles off all the commandments where he’s living successfully in. He’s expecting Jesus to pat him on the back for all the good he does.

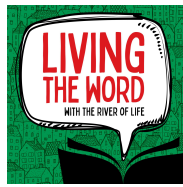


Words matter, however, and he calls Jesus 'good'. He says, "good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

I think we all wrestle with performing our religion well. We look at others and consider their good deeds compared to our good deeds and we either pat ourselves on the back or we fret about trying to work harder. Jesus goes with the rich young ruler's words and asks him back, "*Why do you call me good?*" He asks the question that we all must ponder: what makes a person good? Our own chosen morality? Our own performance? Being better than most of the people around me? How do we define good will be put up against how God himself defines good. But Jesus loves this guy so he asks him to answer why he would call Jesus good.

Some people say this passage proves Jesus was not God but I think he is actually saying he IS God. Here's his argument: Jesus makes the claim that only God is good. John 8:46 and 10:11 reveal Jesus claiming to be good. Thus, Jesus is claiming to be God. The rich young ruler defines good differently. He goes with the commandments as his foundation for good. But the moment Jesus tells him to go and sell everything he has and come follow me, he walks away sad because he had a lot of wealth. He breaks the most important commandment: love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength! His wealth was more important to him than following God. Maybe he kept a lot of the commandments but he broke one and the bible tells us when one commandment is broken then all the commandments are broken. Sin has separated the law breaker from God.

Many of us have that one thing that we don't want to give up for God. You might say, "God, *I'll follow you as long as my kids have a good life.*" Or, "God, I'll follow you as long as you make me comfortable in this earthly life". Jesus defines what makes someone 'good'. He tells us to



give up everything and then come follow him. That doesn't mean we lose everything but we must be willing to lose everything to gain him. He is far more valuable than the comforts of this life, the accolades that we may receive, or the secret delicacies of our sinful heart.

Where are you on this? Does your definition of 'good' need to change to line up more with Jesus' definition? Do you need to give up something you hold dear so that you can follow Jesus more boldly? I can tell you that when our earthly lives' end, we won't be judged by our standards of morality. We will be judged by God's standards. Make your move, Christian, to be aligned with our Savior so that the moment you meet him you'll be overjoyed.

Pray.