

April 28, 2019
GOD NEVER SAID THAT - Part 1
“All That Matters is You’re a Good Person”

2 KEY QUESTIONS:

1. How good is good enough?
2. Who or what defines what is good?

Matthew 19:16 (ESV): “...a man came up to [Jesus], saying, ‘Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?’”

This young man may be asking the wrong question, because his underlying assumption is that it’s about what *he* can do.

Matthew 19:17 (ESV): “And he said to him, ‘Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments.’”

Jesus challenges him, saying that ultimately only *God* is truly good, so God and His perfection is the standard for doing good.

Matthew 19:18-19 (ESV): “¹⁸He said to him, ‘Which ones?’ And Jesus said, ‘You shall not murder, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, ¹⁹Honor your father and mother, and, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”

Matthew 19:20 (ESV): “The young man said to him, ‘All these I have kept. What do I still lack?’”

Sometimes abiding by the *letter of the law* is a cop-out for doing what the law really intends, what’s right and loving, and also much, much harder.

Jesus: “²¹You have heard that our ancestors were told, ‘You must not murder. If you commit murder, you are subject to judgment.’ ²²But I say, if you are even angry with someone, you are subject to judgment!...” (Matthew 5:21-22 NLT)

Jesus: “²⁷You have heard the commandment that says, ‘You must not commit adultery.’ ²⁸But I say, anyone who even looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” (Matthew 5:27-28 NLT)

The commandments were never intended to be what made a person right with God and get them into heaven – they were descriptions of how a person already committed to God *would attempt to live*.

James 2:10 (ESV): “For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it.”

This may seem unfair if we’re thinking of sin as something I *do*, but sin is something in me; it infects me, and if it infects me *at all*, it affects all of me.

Romans 3:23 (NLT): “For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard.”

The laws in the Bible actually become reminders to me, every time my thoughts or even actions betray me, that I’m guilty of sin.

Romans 3:20 (NLT): “For no one can ever be made right with God by doing what the law commands. The law simply shows us how sinful we are.”

Because the law also shows us how far short we fall of God’s standards, God can use them to lead us to realize we can’t save ourselves and we need Jesus Christ.

Galatians 3:24 (NAS95): “Therefore the Law has become our tutor *to lead us* to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith.”

Sin is an infection of my soul, and I have to believe “by faith” that Jesus’s death on the cross became the perfect substitute for my sins; God has truly forgiven me and wiped my slate clean.

1 John 1:8-9 (NLT): “⁸If we claim we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and not living in the truth. ⁹But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.”

The rich, young man is “only fooling” himself, believing *he can make himself right with God*, which is the epitome of sin.

Matthew 19:21-22 (ESV): “²¹Jesus said to him, ‘If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.’ ²²When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.”

Jesus wasn’t saying we have to give up all our stuff to be saved, but we do have to put God first.

Matthew 19:23-24 (ESV): “²³And Jesus said to his disciples, ‘Truly, I say to you, only with difficulty will a rich person enter the kingdom of heaven. ²⁴Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.’”

Matthew 19:25 (ESV): “When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished, saying, ‘Who then can be saved?’”

No one can do enough, be good enough, but God never said it was about doing good – it’s always been about trusting God.

Matthew 19:26 (ESV): “But Jesus looked at them and said, ‘With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.’”

Ephesians 2:8-10 (NLT): “⁸God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God. ⁹Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. ¹⁰For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.”

God loves for us to do good, but God never said that *doing* good, even being a *good person*, is all that matters, because none of us are good enough by God’s standard.

Romans 5:8 (ESV): “but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

We receive God’s salvation not by our limited goodness but by having faith that God really did this for us through Jesus Christ.

Next Week: Bad Things Don’t Happen to Good Christians

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