

Mark 10:13-31 “How to Approach the Servant”

Please stand and open your bibles to John 1:1-13

The context of today’s passage puts us with Jesus and the disciples on the road to Jerusalem. It is the pilgrim highway that goes by way of beyond the Jordan. There are large crowds going with them as they head to celebrate the Passover. We will see two sets of people coming to Jesus. One that comes with simple faith and the other with works. These two stories are together in three of the gospels and I believe they are there on purpose. Why? Because the purpose of the gospel is to get you to believe in Christ. To receive Him. Plus, the authors were only the human instruments that God was using to bring us His word.

It would not be long after this moment that Jesus would say these words:

John 14:26

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

So, the Holy Spirit has put these two stories as bright contrasts for us to see how one is to approach the Servant. How one is to come to Jesus. We just read how John put it and now we can see it in action with those that come to Him.

Jesus Blesses the Children

Mark 10:13-16

Here we have another opportunity to come down on the disciples. They just recently were schooled by Jesus when they were arguing who would be the greatest and Jesus used a little kid to teach them. Don't you know that this is the Messiah? He doesn't have time to play day care! He has a Kingdom to start planning. We have to remember that they are in a place where they can't see because they refuse to hear. But as always Jesus takes their failure and turns it into a lesson. Let's look again at His answer:

Mark 10:15

Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.

How does a little child receive the kingdom? What could they possibly have to offer? Nothing! That's the point. You and I have nothing to bring. The way to the kingdom is by the free gift offered by Christ.

Ephesians 2:8-9

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

John 1:12-13

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

All of these verses point to the fact that salvation cannot be earned, worked for, achieved in any manner. It can only be received, just like a little child. Nothing to bring, no strength to do, no alternative motive, just come. This story has to be included with the next because look what happens...

Mark 10:17

Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, “Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?”

Now we know this guy was not privy to what just happened. He comes and asks the million-dollar question, right? Could we not wish this would happen to us all the time? He has two problems with his question. The first we point out is he wants to know what he can do. In Matthew we get some more context:

Matthew 19:16

Now behold, one came and said to Him, “Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?”

We just saw that it is a free gift to be received by faith. The second problem Jesus answers with:

Mark 10:18

So Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God.

Jesus is giving him and everyone listening something to think about. If Jesus is good, which He is, that means He is God! He is also pointing to a reality that the scripture plainly paints of us:

Psalms 14:3 and Psalm 53:3 and Romans 3:10

There is none who does good, no, not one.

Isaiah 64:6

But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, Have taken us away.

But Jesus will go along with his question and will ask him and will find out just how good he is...

Jesus uses the good person test

Mark 10:17-22

Here is one proud person! He doesn't even take a breath before he bursts out that he has keep all of these. Another message he must have missed was the sermon on the mount! But Jesus in a great act of His love tells him the truth. He purposely kept out the one that has got him...thou shall not covet. It was his riches that had him. Matthew states Jesus's answer like this:

Matthew 19:21

Jesus said to him, "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, follow Me."

Hey kid, the only way to eternal life is to be perfect. No one is so what now?

We always look at the response of this young man in the negative. How do you see it?

Mark 10:22

But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

I heard teachers and commentators say, "How sad indeed!" or "I hope he changed his mind later". I have a problem with that. Why? Because if he would have been able to be perfect than Jesus would not have to die. Just do what the kid did. Give up all your stuff and keep the law. If he can do it than why can't you? Of course he went away sad. Hopefully that sorrow led

him to Jesus with the right attitude. His need for a Savior! Jesus points this out after the kid leaves...

Jesus's response

Mark 10:23-27

Now the first thing I want you to get out of your head is Jesus is referring to a gate in the city. How many of you have heard this? They say there is a gate that is really small that if you work real hard you can get your camel through. We know it's not by the answer from the crowd. Why did they answer like this? Because they assumed that riches were a blessing from God, and you would not be rich unless you were right with God. That's why they said "Who then can be saved?" Jesus wants them to think. Because in the next day He is going to go through the process of redeeming mankind through His death and resurrection. There is no other way that is why the answer...

Mark 10:27

But Jesus looked at them and said, "With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible."

This is a verse you need to memorize and have underlined. It is the best thing He could say to them and to us. For man it is impossible for us to save ourselves but not with God. The answer of Jesus implies hope. That God will make a way, even for rich men to be saved. For all, because He is about to

accomplish that for us. That is good news! But, of course, Peter has to open his mouth...

Peter's response and question
Mark 10:28-31

It is funny that Peter would say this as Matthew adds this context:

Matthew 19:27

Then Peter answered and said to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?"

They still don't get it. They are about to experience shock and awe. At first it will be great and then it will seem that all their hopes are lost and then the first Sunday. At this moment in time it seems like a fair question. And Jesus gives them a fair answer. I love what He tucks in all they will receive...

Mark 10:30

who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with **persecutions**—and in the age to come, eternal life.

That's right Peter you have given up a lot to follow Me. Well, you will get back all that and more...Persecutions! And it will be exactly what he gets! Then He leaves us with the Paradox of all paradoxes....

Mark 10:31

But many who are first will be last, and the last first.

You want to be great? Be the servant. You want true riches? Be the one who gives all. You want to be esteemed? Esteem others better than yourself. Following Jesus is anti-flesh and anti-world. It takes the humility that this verse implies.

Before we leave today, we need to touch on one more thing. That is using the law in our witness. It is a good way to show someone they have sinned against God. But we don't ever want to leave them there. They need to know that we are all in the same boat. We have all sinned. The law cannot save you. You can use it to start the conversation, but you **MUST** end with the gospel. Just to remind us...

Romans 3:19-20

Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

This is what Paul is saying. All your use of the law can do is prove we are all guilty. Just as the case with the rich young ruler James would remind us...

James 2:10

For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.

Please remember it is only a tool to lead us to the hope in the gospel message as Paul says here:

Galatians 3:24-25

Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

Do you not realize that the law is powerless? It can be a tool to open someone's eyes but cannot and will not save anyone. Leaving someone with just the law and judgement will not do anything. The power is in the gospel...

Romans 1:16

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes...

The power to salvation is not through convincing someone they broke the law but in the Gospel...

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures

Romans 3:21-26

But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...

...being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed...

...to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

We need to remember that a person only has to receive the gospel to be saved. Some people mistakenly take people through the law and share the gospel and then tell them to turn from the sin that they just showed them through the law. By doing that you just took the power out of the gospel. Yes, they need to acknowledge their sin. But once that it is done, they need to know that God did the impossible for you. All they need to do is receive it. The power is in the gospel not the law. I want to leave us with how John put it. Did you know his gospel is meant to be evangelical?

John 20:31

these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

And what did we start with today...

John 1:12-13

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

You can come to Him today. Nothing is stopping you. Nothing is impossible to those who believe.