

## WHEN BEING GOOD IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH

Dear Friend:

Have you ever heard of the Parallel Gospels? It simply means this: Matthew, Mark and Luke have a lot in common regarding content. Evidence shows that Mark was written first and Matthew and Luke probably used Mark's account as a key source. One of many same events recorded is the story of the Rich Young Man (Ruler). The rich young man encounters Jesus, and he wants eternal life.

Mark 10:17 says the man ran up to Jesus and fell on his knees. Both are acts of respect and desperation. What do we know about this man? Not much. Piece the story together from all 3 gospels and we know this: he is rich, he is young, he is successful, he was a ruler (probably in the Synagogue), and he was not saved. His encounter with Jesus did not last very long but there were 3 stages. In verses 17-18 I see what I call the Bothered Stage. Something inside his heart and soul bothered him about the spiritual condition of his life. Let's give the man some credit - he desperately came to Jesus for help. Somehow, he identified Jesus as a soul satisfier.

The second stage I call the Brash Stage. He did have pride, and plenty of it. Jesus begins the conversation where the man would understand it: "Are you keeping the (Mosaic) Law, including the Ten Commandments?". At this point 99.9% of the Jewish people believed you obtained eternal life by keeping the Law of Moses. In his brashness the young man said: "When it comes to keeping the Law...I'm perfect". Jesus challenged him: "Great, now go sell everything you have and give it to the poor". Ouch!

Third stage: the Broken/Bankrupt Stage. Mark 10:22 says his face fell, and the man went away sad. His reaction revealed he did not keep all the commandments. He couldn't keep Commandment #1, "You shall have no other gods before me". The rich young man was good, but not good enough. No one ever has nor ever will keep the Law perfectly, that's why we need our Savior, Jesus Christ. It can be painful but it's true: before we receive salvation, we must be broken. Broken of belief that salvation comes through self-righteousness, broken of our pride, broken of the notion that we are ever good enough on our own to get into heaven.

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Mike

(For more on this topic, see you Sunday).

Prayers: Victims' Families of the air disaster in D.C. & Philadelphia, Pastor Les Smith (kidney transplant complications), For a great Scout Sunday and salvation Sunday for anyone who does not know Jesus!

Events: Scout Sunday this Sunday, Communion, Congregational meeting after church