

WHAT THE RICH YOUNG RULER GOT RIGHT – MATTHEW 19:16-22

INTRODUCTION

1. The account of the Rich Young Ruler is a familiar story to many of us.
2. It teaches us the valuable lesson of putting the Lord first in our lives above all else.
3. But sometimes we focus so much on this idea that we lost sight of some of the things that this young man got right.
4. When we do we miss out on some other valuable lessons.
5. This young man got....

DISCUSSION

I. THE RIGHT QUESTION

- A. This young man asked, “what good deed must I do to have eternal life?” (**Matt. 19:16**).
- B. This is a really, really good question.
- C. One could say it is one of the most important questions anyone could ever ask (**Luke 10:25; Acts 16:30**).
- D. This is not just because of the value of eternal life.
- E. The reality is that without Jesus we are hopelessly lost in sin (**Rom. 3:23; Eph. 2:11-12**).
- F. This young man understood what so many in Jesus’ day grasped.
- G. To have eternal life requires us to do something (**Acts 2:37; 22:10; Luke 3:10, 12, 14; John 6:28-29**).
- H. But unless we are humble enough to recognize our need for Jesus, we won’t see the need to ask this question (**1 John 1:8, 10**).

II. THE RIGHT PERSON

- A. There were plenty of people and places this young man could have gone to with his questions.
- B. He could have gone to the Pharisees, the scribes, or some learned Rabbi.
- C. He could have sought out the wisdom of the Epicureans or Stoic philosophers.
- D. He could have turned to a myriad of options among the pagan peoples across the Roman Empire.
- E. His environment is not that far from our own with a variety of people and philosophies that claim to have the answer to life’s pressing questions.
- F. But he didn’t go to any of these.
- G. Instead, he brought his question to Jesus.
- H. And Jesus pointed this young man to God and His word (**Matt. 19:16-19**).
- I. This is also the person we should be seeking for wisdom and truth (**John 14:6**).
- J. And we can hear the voice of Jesus if we will search the Scriptures (**John 5:39-40; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; John 10:27; John 6:68**).

III. THE RIGHT ANSWER

- A. Today if you ask someone the question this young man asked, you will get a variety of answers.
 - i. Some might say you don’t have to do anything at all.
 - ii. Some might say you just believe, and you will receive.

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- B. But because this young man went to the right person, he received the right answer.
- C. Jesus told him that he needed to keep God's commandments (**Matt. 19:16-19**).
- D. Now because of the long controversy over "faith versus works" Jesus' answer might seem strange to some, but it shouldn't.
- E. Jesus isn't talking about someone earning or meriting God's favor.
- F. Keeping the commandment is what we were made to do (**Eph. 2:10; Luke 17:10**).
- G. What Jesus is talking about is just another way of speaking about faith, loyalty, and love for God (**John 14:15; 1 John 5:1-3**).

IV. THE RIGHT ATTITUDE

- A. Notice this young man's attitude when Jesus told him what he needed to do.
- B. He said that his practice was to keep God's commandments (**Matt. 19:20**).
- C. Not only that, he also expressed a sense of inadequacy, that something was missing.
- D. Now notice that Jesus doesn't question his response even though He knows what this young man's weakness is.
- E. Perhaps it is because this young man expressed a sincere desire to serve and obey God.
- F. What is our attitude to serving God?
- G. Do we feel like we have to or He will send us to Hell (**Matt. 25:24-30**)?
- H. Or do we recognize our place before God and our duty to serve (**1 Sam. 3:10**)?
- I. Do we recognize the great love He has shown for us in Jesus (**Rom. 5:6-8**)?
- J. Do we recognize our inadequacy before Him without His grace (**Rom. 3:23**)?
- K. If you and I want to inherit eternal life, we must respond to God's grace with genuine loyalty with all our being (**Matt. 22:37-40**).

V. THE RIGHT TIMING

- A. But there is one more thing we need to notice that this young man got right.
- B. In one of the other accounts, we see that he had been in the habit of keeping God's commandments from his youth (**Mark 10:20**).
- C. Why is it that so many want to wait until later to start a relationship with God?
- D. The reality is that we don't know what tomorrow will bring.
- E. We don't know the hour of our own death (**Jas. 4:13-14**).
- F. Nor do we know the hour of the Lord's return (**Matt. 24:36-44**).
- G. Instead of waiting we should be seeking the Lord from our youth or wherever we find ourselves now (**Eccl. 12:1; 2 Tim. 3:14-15; 2 Cor. 6:2**).

CONCLUSION

1. The account of the Rich Young Ruler doesn't have a good ending despite the fact that he got the right question, the right person, the right answer, the right attitude, and the right timing (**Matt. 19:21-22**).
2. In the end he made the wrong choice.
3. Today, by God's grace, we know the right question to ask and where to go to get the answers and what we need to do to inherit eternal life.
4. What will we choose to do?