



new life fellowship

Sermon Title: Morality or Jesus?
Speaker: Matt Manno, Pastor of NextGen Ministries
Scripture: Matthew 19: 16-26

Just then a man came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?" "Why do you ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, keep the commandments."

"Which ones?" he inquired.

Jesus replied, "'You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, honor your father and mother,'^[c] and 'love your neighbor as yourself.'"

"All these I have kept," the young man said. "What do I still lack?"

Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly I tell you, it is hard for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."

When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished and asked, "Who then can be saved?"

Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Matthew 19:16-26 (NIV)

Sermon Outline:

The young ruler is already living a good life, when he asks Jesus what he must do to have eternal life. Jesus lists the commandments to follow and the young ruler says he obeys all those things. The rich young ruler feels the gift of eternal life is a transactional exchange and asks what more must he do. He is living in a prison of his own morality, thinking he has everything he needs and doesn't feel he needs Jesus in his life. Jesus hears the ruler's question and he tells him that he is not focusing on where the good in his life comes from – God.

The ruler is stuck on his own behavior and doesn't see Jesus right in front of him. Jesus is inviting the ruler into relationship with him, to start trusting in what has already been done by Jesus for him.

Today society tells us we are what we do and are shaped by what we do -- whether it be with grades in school, at our job or in our relationships. We approach God with the attitude if we are doing good in our own record, that we would be good with God. The goal of our faith isn't a moral life, it's a relationship with Jesus.

RECORD--our morality can put us in a place that we find ourselves trusting and depending on our own record, it is possible to work very hard for God and have no relationship with Him. Jesus is inviting us to a place of being and not doing.

MATURITY--the word "perfect" in this passage means to be made whole, to be made mature. Jesus is speaking into the things and possessions, that keep us from having a relationship with God.

We cannot live a life of faith without an authentic relationship with Jesus Christ.

Sermon Summary:

This Sunday Matt Manno, Pastor of NextGen Ministries, talks about living your life out of a deep love for Jesus.

Sermon Questions:

1. How does this scripture connect for you the topic that was discussed today? What words resonate with you? Why?
2. In your family of origin, was keeping rules/norms the way to earning stature? Did your family set out their own goals for you or was their room to let God grow and guide you?
3. What in your life do you feel defines you? Do you ever feel your record is not good enough and you must do more?
4. What spiritual dangers can one fall into believing you can do something to earn righteousness?
5. Is your life oriented more around morality or Jesus?
6. Do you view this passage as 'we are to give away all our wealth', or as Jesus saw the one thing in this person's life that he had a relationship with greater than God? If the latter, what do you need to give up in your life to allow for a greater relationship with Jesus? If the prior, what does that say about the power of money in society?
7. Are you able to accept you may get to the goals you are seeking if it meant you had a close and deep relationship with Jesus?