

1 Mark 10:17-25 – The lady who delivers death

Rienecker, TSK, Henry, Poole, Alexander, Geneva, Family, Robertson, Handfuls, PNT, Gill, Broadus, Vincent, Brink, Gaebelein, FourFoldGospel Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: There is a lady, when she gets into a man's life, brings a life of peace and contentment (满足). She changes that man's life from misery and sadness to joy and security. This woman's name is Wisdom.

But there is another woman who, when she gets into a man's life, promises joy and security, but in reality only brings depression and death. Her name is Covetousness (贪婪). She is a controlling woman. It is about this woman you will hear about today.

Our headings are:

The Young man wanted eternal life

The Lord told him what it would cost

The Woman told him it wasn't worth it

Our goals are: That you will see how covetousness hinders you from coming to and living for Jesus, and that, as a Christian, you will learn to give up your relationship with her in order to progress (进步) in your Christian life.

1 The young man wanted eternal life

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?"

1. A really rich, young, ruler (Luke 18:18) zealously (充满热情地) came to Jesus and knelt down before him.

This young man had the right action: kneeling before Jesus, showing humility (谦卑). He was not acting like a ruler...but a man who needed help! So far, so good!

2. Then this rich young ruler asked Jesus: What shall I do to inherit eternal life?

There is a sense of earnestness (渴望) with this man. He wanted eternal life. (Most people want eternal life.) But his question showed how deadly ignorance of truth could be. He wanted to know what he could "do" to inherit eternal life. He assumed, like every other religion, that salvation was in his hands. If he only did the right things, he believed he would be saved.

3. While the rich young ruler's words showed his ignorance, at least he came to the right source: Jesus, the one who is "the way, the truth, and the life."

Only Jesus had the words of life...words that would teach him how he might receive salvation.

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

John 6:68 But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

The rich young ruler had confidence that Jesus would speak the truth to him.

4. Lessons:

a. Come with zeal and humility to Jesus. He has the answers to life's greatest need: Eternal life! He has the answers to man's salvation needs; he has the answer to man's sanctification (成圣) needs.

b. Those who go to other gods are doing a useless things. And going to other gods makes Christ angry. False religions are a part of the Devil's deception of the ignorant (无知者). The Devil gives a false sense of hope under the cover of religion. But only when one comes to Jesus can he be saved.

c. Those who look to their own good works for eternal life are doing a useless thing. There is nothing you could do - try as you might - to inherit eternal life. The Devil loves to give people the impression that they could take care of their own future. These are the moralists (道德主义者) ...they think they can have salvation (救恩) by moral living.

d. This message of the exclusivity (独特性, 唯一) of Christ you must bear to the world. Don't hide it. Call men to come to Christ. Only at Christ's feet is there hope. The fact that you have the message of Christ's exclusivity must not make you arrogant. It should make you humble.

2 The Lord told him what it would cost

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

1. First, Jesus challenged the rich young man's assertion (断言) that he (Jesus) was good.

Why did Jesus do this? Jesus has good reason for this. That word "good" was only properly applied to God. So if the man thought Jesus was good, and therefore believed he was God, **Jesus wanted the man to do what he, the "Good Man" said!**

19 "**You know the commandments** (诫命) : 'Do not commit **adultery**,' (奸淫) 'Do not **murder**,' 'Do not **steal**,' 'Do not **bear false witness**,' (作假见证) 'Do not **defraud**,' (欺诈) '**Honor your father and your mother**.'" 20 And he answered and said to Him, "Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth."

2. Then Jesus told the man that if he kept the commands *he would show* that he was saved.

Jesus wasn't saying that he could be saved by keeping the law. No one is saved by keeping the law. Jesus highlighted the 2nd table of the law, for the young man to show he was saved. This meaning is implied!

3. The man's response was that he had kept those laws (more or less – never perfectly) from his youth.

But one of the 6 laws of the 2nd table was missing from Jesus' list: Law 10. Jesus did not ask him if he kept the law against covetousness. **He knew this man was covetous, having an insatiable (不满足的) desire for possessions.**

21 Then Jesus, **looking at him, loved him**, and said to him, "One thing you lack: **Go your way**, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and **come, take up the cross, and follow Me.**"

4. Hearing the young man's response, Jesus loved this man, and proceeded to speak truth to him.

This was not saving (救赎的) love. Jesus does not show saving love to all men. **All men experience Christ's love or goodness** (He sends the rain on the good and the bad.), but not all receive his saving love and imputed goodness. Jesus simply had a strong feeling toward this man for his lost condition.

5. So Jesus pointed out that while the man kept the 5 laws reasonably well by man's standards, he was possessed by this evil woman named Covetousness – who was leading him to death.

This was why Jesus wanted the man to show that he truly believed.

James 2:17 Thus also **faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead**. 18 But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." **Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.**

6. How could he show that faith and conquer covetousness?

Christ told him to **sell everything he had and give it away**. He had to throw away that dead baby that came from Covetousness. **The fact is, the Lord was being evangelistic** (传福音的) for he knew it was **impossible for the young man to be saved by obeying the 10th command**. Literally Christ was saying: "See how much control this wicked woman has over you. Come to me for help. **Ask me to radically (彻底地) change you** - change in your roots – to get rid of covetousness. Then, and only then, will you **show me that new life by being willing to sell everything you have and give it to the poor.**"

6. Lessons:

a. The Lord may call you to give up something to show you are saved. (Talk is relatively cheap.) **Moses** had to give up the delightful pleasures of Pharaoh's palace. Hebrews 11:24-26. **Abraham** gave up his rich country to live as a wanderer in Canaan. **Elisha** gave up his land and farming to become a poor prophet. **Paul** gave up his ambition to be a great Pharisee to be a constant prisoner for Christ. Just so this young man had to abandon his relationship with this woman of death – Covetousness – and excommunicate her children - lusts!

b. Search your life and see what you have to be willing to give up in to serve the Lord. Would you be willing to give up a job, an improper relationship, entertainment...? Are you willing to chase that woman out and all her wicked children – Covetousness and all her lusts! If you really have salvation you have to show it.

3 The woman told him it wasn't worth it

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

1. The rich young man became sad because Covetousness controlled his life: How he lived, talked, and worked.

He was a very rich man, but his allegiance 忠诚 to money stopped him short of salvation. He could not have 2 gods.

Matthew 6:24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. **You cannot serve God and mammon.**

23 Then Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, "**How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!**" 24 And the disciples were astonished at His

words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, "Children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God!

2. Jesus remarked how people who have that woman of death – covetousness – in them will refuse to give up her children – lusts (情欲) of the flesh, lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life – for the true God and his kingdom.

3. Furthermore, Jesus knew that this woman of death could cause havoc 混乱 in a Christian's life as well.

When she creeps in the Christian is poor in his worship, he has little time for his family, he had no time to take care of his health and get proper exercise, he has little time for his friends, and no time to evangelize...

25 "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

4. Jesus then illustrated how hard it would be for a man who loves money to enter into God's kingdom.

It was impossible...impossible as trying to pass a camel through the eye of needle.

But though the disciples thought it would be impossible for any man to be saved, for that was what it looked like, Jesus reminded them that with God, all things were possible.

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."

5. Lessons:

a. Covetousness make wealth into a god. When wealth becomes a god it makes a fool of the possessor. The fool denies there is a true God. Yes, and even Christians can be temporary fools. Christians abandon God from time to time to worship money or some other idol. The consequences are very harmful: frustration, depression, and even death. Covetousness is like a bird sitting on an asp's eggs.

b. Further, know that the money god (as all gods) requires full time devotion (奉献) and affection. Your whole life will be dedicated to worship of money if money is your god!

c. Jesus can break the love of other gods and replace it with love for him. This is the only solution. Yes, it is humanly impossible, like the impossibility of a camel going through the eye of needle, to give up what you dearly love, but with God, all things are possible. So don't lose hope if you know someone who is obsessed with wealth and work...the Lord can break any bondage. Keep pointing him to Christ.

4 **Conclusion:**

Many want the riches of heaven without showing the requisite (必要的) change in their lives now. They don't want the change now because **they have not had the inward change.** But they **have to show their true faith.** This rich young ruler refused to show true faith, because he had none, so he went away sad. He was not willing to give up his god to whom he was truly devoted. He lost the only hope of having eternal life. He loved Covetousness too much. And while she promised much, she brought forth death.

Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Covetousness is not just a sin for the unbeliever like this rich young ruler. As a Christian, you can bring in Covetousness alongside of true God. When this happens, imagine how God feels: **Jealous and angry.** When this happens it hinders your spiritual progress. Job 31:24,25, 28: "*If I have made gold my hope, Or said to fine gold, 'You are my confidence'; If I have rejoiced because my wealth was great, And because my hand had gained much; This also would be an iniquity deserving of judgment, For I would have denied God who is above.*"

2. When evangelizing others, including your children, expose their gods: Covetousness and her children – a lust for a good name, a lust for adultery, a lust for entertainment... **Expose their gods so they will abandon their gods, show them how futile (无益的) their gods are, call them to trust in Jesus, and urge them to show their faith.**

Finally, as a non-Christian, know that good intentions and sweet talk do not please God. You have to be willing to give up something to show you believe. Do you love anything more than God? May you not leave this world with great sorrow as this rich young ruler, but may you say today: **Thank God for wealth, but thank God a thousand times more for Jesus Christ dying for me...the one whom I will forever worship.**