

Valley Bible Church
Sermon Notes for March 22, 1987

The Rich Young Ruler
Matthew 19:16-22
Dale Whitehead

Introduction: “What good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?” “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved.”

What does this really mean?

How Christ responded.

The man who came to Jesus asking is very prominent, a ruler (probably a ruler in the synagogue) also a young man, a very devoted Jew and very rich.

Jesus’ response is given in a way for the man to understand the essence of saving faith. That the man must transfer his trust from himself and depend completely on Jesus.

Verse 17: “Why are you asking me about what is good? There is only One who is good.” Jesus is saying, “you are bad, you are a sinner.”

Jesus goes on, “**If you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments.**” Jesus has already told him there is only One who is good, so there is no way that he could keep the commandments.

Jesus is trying to get the man to recognize his sinful nature. How does the man respond? He says. “**Which ones?**” and “**all these things I have kept.**” So he is claiming to have led a perfect life.

Romans 3:19-20: through the law comes the knowledge of sin. This rich young man saw himself as righteous, without flaw. So here we have a man trying to have a relationship with God by his own good works.

Jesus is telling him come to Me, trust Me, transfer your trust to Me, make me the Lord of your life.

Verse 21: Jesus says, “**Go and sell your possessions and give to the poor.**” Jesus is saying “Believe on Me, Trust Me.”

Verse 22: Did Christ succeed in humbling this man? No, the man went away refusing to trust in Jesus.