

Date: _____



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

Jesus Is the King Series, Lesson 42

Lesson Title: The King Calls for Everything

Take Home Point: Salvation is only through Jesus.
You can't get you to heaven on your own.

Warm-Up:

A man dies and goes to heaven. At the pearly gates, St. Peter says, "You need 100 points to get into heaven. Tell me all the good things you've done, and I will give you points for each item, depending on how good it was. When you reach 100 points, you get in." "Okay," the man says, "I was married to the same woman for 50 years and never cheated on her." "Great! That's worth three points!" St. Peter says. "Three points?" he says. "I also attended church all my life and supported its ministry with my tithe and service." "Terrific!" says St. Peter. "That's certainly worth a point." "One point? Well, I started a soup kitchen in my city and worked in a shelter for homeless veterans." "Fantastic! That's good for two more points!" St. Peter says. "TWO POINTS!" the man cries. "At this rate the only way I get into heaven is by the grace of God!" "Come on in!" replies St. Peter.

Read: Matthew 19:16-26

Observation (What happened?):

What was the young man seeking?

Jesus told the man to do two things. What were they?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

Why do you think Jesus told the man to give away everything he had?

Was it his money that kept the young man from following Jesus? Or his love of money? (Look at 1 Timothy 6:10 for a hint!)

Insight:

Isn't it interesting how different the human perspective is from God's? The difference really stands out in this week's reading. Notice that when Jesus told him to obey the commandments, the rich young man asked, "Which ones?" Which ones?! Where had he gotten the notion that it was okay to obey some (the "right" ones) and not others? In his heart he knew he hadn't—and couldn't—keep all of them, so he hoped Jesus would list the ones he'd kept. But Jesus caught him anyway by focusing on his heart. Later, the disciples were amazed that being rich didn't improve the odds of getting to heaven. Again, Jesus was teaching that God looks on the heart, not externals. Jesus wants us to care more about him than we care about our stuff. It's our heart focus that matters.

Application (What does it mean to me?):

Think of three things you have given up to follow Jesus more closely. (This may be more than material things; perhaps you've given up time you would use in other ways.) Spend some time thanking God for his grace in helping you do that. Then spend some time examining your heart to see if there is anything hindering your relationship with Jesus that you need to give up. Pray for God to help you in this, too.