

Conversations With Jesus *The Rich Young Ruler*

We're in week three of our series, *Conversations With Jesus*. Today, we look at a conversation that doesn't end well. It doesn't have a feel-good moment. This is yet another mark of the integrity of Scripture. If you were making up a Jesus story in the first century, you would be inclined to prop up the hero of your story rather than having someone meet the hero and walk away.

The lesson of the story is NOT that Jesus is so challenging that some people will not be interested in Him. The lesson of the story is be careful with what you allow to capture your heart.

In this life, you will serve what your heart desires most.

Notice the pushback from Jesus in this conversation: "Why do you call me good?"

Jesus is respectfully asking the man, "Are you saying that I am God?" IF the man understands, believes and trusts Jesus as Savior, then he has eternal life already and the conversation would have gone in a totally different direction.

Not embracing Jesus for who Jesus is means that the man is on his own; he will represent himself when he goes out into eternity to face a holy God. To help the man see his need, Jesus goes to the Law. Jesus pushes in THAT direction to draw the man into seeing his need as an imperfect person who is accountable to a perfect God.

The purpose of the Law was to act like a thermometer. It's to reveal your condition. If you are sick, you don't need more thermometer. You need to be healed.

John 6:28-29

Then they asked him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?"
Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."

Mark 10:17...21

Rich young ruler: "What must I do to be saved?"
Jesus: "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor...then come, follow me."

Why did Jesus give different answers?

Jesus did NOT say to the rich, young ruler – "Do more." Jesus DID say, "Believe in me."
To sell everything and follow IS to believe in Jesus.
Jesus was not saying different things; He was saying the same thing to different people.

Wealth was considered evidence of God's blessing.
You had a good life if you had good income; good stuff; good things.

Here's another way to describe the thinking of the day: A good God gives good things to good people. In saying, "sell everything," Jesus was saying, "smash your idol."
In saying, "smash your idol," Jesus was not giving the man a burden but a blessing.

You will serve whatever your heart desires the most.