

## Talk It Over

### Deep Problems...Deeper Grace

(Week 3)

### Expose The Problem Of Pride

#### SMALL TALK

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of being wealthy?

#### VIEWPOINT

2. **READ Mark 10:17-31.** What did the man want Jesus to explain to him? (10:17)
3. Why did Jesus say to the man, "No one is good, except God alone"? (10:18) What was the man's assumption about how to enter the kingdom, and what was Jesus trying to drive home in this conversation?
4. Why did Jesus answer the way he did about "the way to inherit eternal life"? (10:19-21; compare also Mark 8:34-35)
5. What explanation was given for the reason the man walked away from Jesus? (10:22) What explanation did Jesus give in his debriefing with his disciples? (10:23-31)
6. **READ Mark 8:36-37:** What is the worth of a soul? What is the worth of your soul?

#### GETTING PERSONAL

7. The guy had the right question, seemingly the right motive, and came to the right person, so why did Jesus demand such a tall order from this man?
8. On what basis does anyone receive the Kingdom?
9. Has money ever stopped you from doing what God wants?

#### MAKING PROGRESS

10. What do you need to confess, deny, and drop from your life in order to grasp Jesus as the only lasting joy and security?

September 20, 2020

## Deep Problems, Deeper Grace

In this series we have focused on how both science and the Bible, specifically psychology and theology, are actually in agreement: Humans are happier with boundaries.

We have focused on how God's commandments wake us up to our need for Deeper Grace found in our savior Jesus.

Titles in this series:

- 1 WAKING UP TO THE PROBLEM
- 2 WHY PROFANITY IS A PROBLEM
- 3 EXPOSE THE PROBLEM OF PRIDE**
- 4 ~~LIFT THE SEWER LID~~ How to make your life a sweet fragrance!

The Greek word for PROUD in the New Testament is always negative. It (*hyperēphanos*) comes from two words, “hyper” meaning “above” or “over” and “*phainomai*” meaning “I appear.” It means: **Showing myself above others because I see myself above others, even God.** When I'm proud in this sense, I see myself (*hyper*) “above” or “over” others. I no longer see myself properly as a creature and God as Creator, I see myself above others and I'm central. I worship myself. For the proud, life is all about me, and all about now. The proud are self-deceived, and self-assured. They have the hyper “I've got this” mentality.

Our question for today is this: What does it take to expose this kind of pride, because it often hides behind more acceptable façade's.

- Earthquakes can do the trick.
- Facing down a bear, perhaps. Or lions or tigers.
- Standing too close to a volcanoes when it erupts.

- Maybe then you might feel a little small rather than larger than life with the “I’ve got this” mentality.

But there is another method that Jesus used to expose pride. It is an often overlooked method, even though it is still recommended. The apostles used this method also.

## I. Jesus taught the COMMANDMENTS to the PROUD

Jesus was filled with grace toward the downtrodden and broken people who knew they had problems. But when he encountered a proud person, he often used God’s commandments for the purpose of bringing people to their point of need. It did not always work, however, even though it was the right method. This is about one of those times.

*Mark 10:17 (NIV2011) As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. “Good teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”*

The man looks like he has the right posture of humility!

He sounds like he has the right assessment of Jesus!

He wants the right thing and asks a good question!

This young man wants to know – “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” It is kind of like asking how do I get to heaven.

So he asks the good teacher. And watch how Jesus responds.

*Mark 10:18 (NIV2011) “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone.*

Notice that Jesus doesn't go straight to the answer. Why? Because he wants to clear up the man's wrong beliefs before he explains the right answer. So, Jesus tells him, "No one is good except God." That's important.

We tend to split the world between good people and bad people. But the Bible tells us something different. The Bible tells us that

apart from God himself there is nobody who is good. Jesus said it here. Paul said it in Romans 3:23. And Jeremiah said it. We will read that in a bit.

Then, what Jesus does next is point someone who has a pride problem, to the solution to every pride problem.

Now let me pause here a moment to tell you how serious this is.

Do you know who has a pride problem?

I do.

Do you know who else?

You do.

Since the fall of humanity. Everyone has a pride problem

It takes the commandments of God to expose this pride problem.

So, Jesus is about to do that. But the man is so self-deceived. He thinks he is one of the good guys. He is one of the good guys asking a good teacher, what is next, what else do I do. Let's see what happens. Jesus said,

*Mark 10:19-20 (NIV2011) {19} You know the commandments: 'You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honor your father and mother.'* {20} "Teacher," he declared, "all these I have kept since I was a boy."

Clearly, this guy thinks he is good, but Jesus knows better. He just said so. Nobody is Good but God alone. But was the guy listening?

Jesus knows the truth this guy needs... First he needs to know he has deep problems.

**II. Because you won't take His PRESCRIPTION unless you know you are SICK**

*Jeremiah 17:9 (NIV2011) The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?*

This is something the rich young man did not believe about himself. We can see this by the way he answered Jesus. I've done all that... "I've got this. I've been following the commandments."

Oh really....

**Sometimes our own mothers do us harm.** Oh Jimmy you have such a good heart. You are so loving, so smart. You can do anything you put your mind to. Jimmy, you are so talented. You can be anybody you want to be. Jimmy, God has so blessed you.... Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. Oh, it can even go worse. When a teacher sees more objectively and says Jimmy did something not so good, sometimes Mom, you are tempted to side with Jimmy. Don't do it! Listen to an objective view. Not just Jimmy's teacher, but listen to what God says about Jimmy's heart.

It is like this rich young man has a very proud momma. And he has deceived himself accordingly.

So now what does Jesus do?

*Mark 10:21 (NIV2011) Jesus looked at him and loved him....*

This is important to notice. Jesus is not so disgusted with this man's self deception that he is going to blast him out of the water. No, he loves him so much he is going to draw a line in the sand that will identify where he has been grasping at the wrong place for joy and security. He thinks he is blessed with wealth, but instead wealth has become the wrong center of his devotion. Jesus knows this of him. For you or for me, he might have drawn a different line in the sand, or he might have pointed out how we did not keep the commandments as well as we think we do.

*Mark 10:21-22 (NIV2011) Jesus looked at him and loved him.*

*“One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” {22} At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.*

Wow. He only lacks one thing for eternal life. Just one. But read carefully - what is the one thing? Is it giving everything to the poor? I don't think so. It's the last phrase - those two words: "Follow me."

There is only one way to inherit eternal life: follow Jesus.

The problem is the thing that keeps him from following Jesus.

Jesus simply touched on one issue that proved that the man is not as “good” of a man as he assumed. His answer demonstrated it, and so did his actions. The man was not willing to follow the Lord, if it means giving up his wealth. It should become clear to him but probably doesn't because he is self-deceived, that **he is breaking the two greatest commandments. He did not love the Lord with all his heart, and he did not love his neighbor as himself.** It is obvious to us, but not to him that He loves himself (and his money) more than the Lord and more than his poor neighbor.

There is more. If you keep money as the central gravitational & motivational pull of your life you will not follow Jesus. You can't follow Jesus until you leave your idols. You cannot serve two masters, and you cannot follow in two directions. So, for this man, Jesus was identifying the problem that came between him and following Jesus.

So what happened to the man? Did he ever follow Jesus, or did he gain the world and lose his soul? We are not told. But I do know there's still time for you.

This was the man's problem: the love of money was his motivational center. What would Jesus point to as the thing coming between you and following him?

The commandments wake us up to the problem or problems that come between us and God.

Just to make sure his disciples understand what just happened. They had a little debriefing.

### III. Jesus offers GRACE to the HUMBLE

*Mark 10:25-27 (NIV) 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." {26} The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, "Who then can be saved?" {27} Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God."*

Let's be clear. It isn't by doing a good thing that you are saved. You cannot save yourself. "With man this is impossible." That's why God sent his son Jesus as the savior.

If you think that you can go to Heaven without being born again, you're ignorant of two things: You don't know how wicked your heart is, and you don't know how holy God is. Jesus makes sure we know God alone is good, and we are not.

God opposes the proud, but he gives grace to the humble. What God wants is for us to agree that we need a savior. We need confession. God wants our agreement with his assessment. We have deep problems and we need a grace deep enough to cure us. This is found only in Jesus.

## ***Communion Transition***

Drop every other false security and reach for Jesus.

Confess, Repent, reach for Jesus. He reaches for you through the cross. Don't walk away sad. Reach for Jesus. Receive Jesus. Be transformed by Jesus. Follow Jesus.