

WHO THEN CAN BE SAVED?

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LUKE 18:18-26

The word translated "ruler" is Greek *archon*, "generally, **one who has administrative authority, 'leader, official.'** "

It is used of various Jewish leaders, including those in charge of a synagogue and members of the Sanhedrin.[1]

Matthew's account (19:22) adds another detail and refers to the ruler as a "young man," Greek *neaniskos*, "**a relatively young man, 'youth, young man' (from about the 24th to the 40th year).**"

[2] Luke 18:23 tells us "**he was a man of great wealth.**" "Wealth" is Greek *plousios*, "**pertaining to having an abundance of earthly possessions that exceeds normal experience, 'rich, wealthy.'**"

Profile:

And so we have an earnest young man, wealthy -- very wealthy, indeed -- and probably because of his wealth and earnestness about spiritual matters, a person entrusted with governance in the synagogue, a ruler, a respected person in the community.

And in his fine robes, immaculately groomed, he is kneeling in the dirt of the roadside at the edge of town, with a burning question on his heart.

All the Gospel-writers place it near the end of Jesus' public ministry, and Mark supplies a bit of the context: As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him" (Mark 10:17a).

Jesus is about to leave the town. It is the man's last chance to ask his question, to meet Jesus face-to-face. And so he runs up to him and falls on his knees before him.

It is a picture of urgency and earnestness and humility.

Bartimaeus had the same experience.

(1)The man was of impeccable moral character; and this amidst all the temptations of youth, for he was a "young man" (Matthew 19:22), and wealthy, for "he was very rich" (Luke 18:23; Mark 10:22).

-Rich young ruler

-A man of great influence and affluence.

(2)But wealth and power notwithstanding, his heart craves eternal life.

Good works alone cannot save.

(3)Unlike the "rulers," to whose class he belonged (Luke 18:18), he so far believed in Jesus as to be persuaded He could authoritatively direct him on this vital point.

'Good teacher' was an unusual way of addressing a Rabbi. The adjective 'good' was usually retained for speaking about God.

(4) Jesus answered the man's question in a traditional Jewish way by talking about the need to keep the commandments. Jesus did not come to abolish the law and the prophets.

The man claimed to have kept them. Jesus probed him further.

The young man has kept all the commandments, but still senses a lack, an incompleteness, or else he wouldn't have come to Jesus in the first place.

Isaiah 64:6

But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as FILTHY rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

FILTHY from Hebrew AYD which means
MENSTRUAL SOILING

Now Jesus speaks to the young man's point of need:

"When Jesus heard this, he said to him, 'You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.' " (18:22)

Go and turn all your assets into cash, give to the poor and become a disciple.

If he does, Jesus assures the young man he will have treasure in heaven.

Exchanging fabulous wealth here on earth for fabulous wealth in the Kingdom of God.

Money can buy a bed but not sleep, food but not appetite, medicine but not healing etc.

How did the young man respond? Jesus prescription is unpalatable.

Refusal shows that he put himself and his wealth at the center of his affections. Although he kept the law outwardly, his heart was not right with God.

Clear proof that it's extremely hard for people whose hearts are set on riches to enter the Kingdom.

It's easier for a Camel to go through the eye of a needle.

Jesus had just taught His disciples about the importance of faithfulness with regard to money:

Luke 16:13:

"No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money".

Now his disciples have an object lesson to learn from -- an actual rich man, fabulously wealthy. Can he -- will he -- become a disciple?

Money, however, isn't the only thing that Jesus asks the young man to give up:

- **Possessions**, what money will buy, the objects of wealth. A new car, a nice house, a membership in the country club, and fashionable clothing.

- **Status and influence** that wealth affords. People make way for the wealthy, hoping that some of that wealth might rub off on them.
- **Power.** Wealth is power. It buys influence. It buys others who will now let the wealthy have their own way.
- Laughter changes....God made man, man made money....
- **Community leadership.** The man isn't very likely to continue as a respected ruler without his wealth. If he gives up his wealth he will be misunderstood and resented by the other influential people in his community. No, he won't be a ruler for long.
- **Family.** The young man probably comes from a wealthy family. But if he disposes of a huge chunk of the family wealth, will his siblings understand and accept it? Will his wife and family? His father or mother if they are still living?
- How often have you been tempted to do things that were wrong or unethical or self-serving because of the lure of money, even a little bit of money?
- **Mark 8:36-37 NIV**
- **“What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?”**

Money must either be controlled or it will control us. It is a sad thing when our possessions begin to possess us!

CONCLUSION

“Those who heard this asked, “Who then can be saved?” Jesus replied, “What is impossible with man is possible with God.””

Luke 18:26-27 NIV

Profiting from the example of Zacchaeus, (in the next chapter) it's possible to trade earthly possessions for the treasures in heaven.

“But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.””

Luke 19:8 NIV

WE ARE ALL SAVABLE.

TEACH AND DEMONSTRATE PRAYERS OF PROTECTION.

To God be the glory!