

What must I do to inherit eternal life?

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[0 : 0 0] Okay, everybody ready to jump into Mark? Mark chapter 10. And we're going to be looking at a passage.

It's found in three of the Gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Fairly well known, I think. This is the story or the account of the rich young ruler.

However, it's a young man who is looking for answers, and he hears about Jesus, and he comes to Jesus, and he asks him one of the most important questions that anybody could ask.

What must I do to live forever? That's a question I think anyone should ask. We've talked about this in the past, that a lot of people don't care for their own souls.

They don't ask that question nearly as often as they should. But he's looking for assurance to know, what is it that I can do to be sure I'm going to live forever?

[1 : 0 8] Jesus gives him an answer. And it's an answer that actually surprises many of us because it doesn't seem like the right kind of Christian answer that we would expect that we would give somebody today.

Well, why is that? I mean, this is Jesus, the Savior of the world, and the answer that he gives seems odd to many people. So we're going to take a look at this and look at it from what we, like we've been doing with a lot of the book of, or the Gospel of Mark, is look at it in its context and what was going on at that time and comparing it and contrasting it with the age of grace in which we live today.

So we're going to start in Mark 10, verse 17. We're just going to read through this passage and then we'll go through and look at it in detail. Verse 17, Now as he was going out on the road, he came running.

Sorry. Now as he was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before him and asked him, Good teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? So Jesus said to him, Why do you call me good?

No one is good but one. That is God. You know the commandments. Do not commit adultery. Do not murder. Do not steal. Do not bear false witness. Do not defraud.

[2 : 3 0] Honor your father and your mother. And he answered and said to him, Teacher, all these things I have kept for my youth. Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said to him, One thing you lack.

Go your way. Sell whatever you have and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven. And come, take up the cross and follow me. But he was sad at this word and went away sorrowful for he had great possessions.

Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God. And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, Children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God.

It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. And they were greatly astonished, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?

But Jesus looked at them and said, With men it is impossible, but not with God. For with God all things are possible. Then Peter began to say to him, See, we have left all and followed you.

[3 : 46] So Jesus answered and said, Assuredly, I say to you, There is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands for my sake and the gospels who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands with persecutions and in the age to come, eternal life.

But many who are first will be last and the last first. So the first question we ask, Well, who is this guy?

Some guy is coming up, running up to Jesus. He's kneeling down. He's showing honor, respect. He's calling him a good teacher. So this is somebody who is respectful of Jesus, thinks that he can find answers, important answers from Jesus.

This is not somebody who's like the Pharisees, right, who have come to Jesus just to check him out, really suspicious of him and really trying to entrap him. That's not what's going on here.

But when we look at all three of the parallel passages, both in Matthew, Mark and Luke, we get some of a larger picture of who this person was.

[5 : 02] Here it just says one came. That's it. One came. And that doesn't tell us very much. But between all three parallel passages, we get a description of someone who was a young man.

We find out he was wealthy. That's a big part of the story. And that he is a ruler. And so, what does a ruler mean?

Well, typically, someone would be described as a ruler, at least among the Jewish people, if they were a ruler of one of the synagogues. So synagogue was kind of like a church that we would have today.

But they would typically have somebody who wasn't necessarily like a pastor, but they would be in charge of overseeing the synagogue, making sure that it was maintained, making sure that things were announced, and that things were done decently in an order.

That's what a ruler of a synagogue would be all about. So that was probably his role. But he asked this question, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

[6 : 14] This is a man who had a true concern for his eternity, for his soul. We talked about that the other week, how important it is, how important it is to Jesus that each one of us is concerned for our eternity just as much as he is.

And like I said just a second ago, notice how this man's demeanor is not, he's not, he's not questioning Jesus, he's not testing Jesus, he's asking, it seems, from a very humble heart, it's a genuine question, with humility, what do I need to do to make sure that I can live forever?

And if you've been a Christian for any length of time, you might read what Jesus says here in the next verse and be a little bit surprised or shocked.

Because typically in the Christian world, if somebody would come to you and ask you, well what do I have to do to have eternal life? And wouldn't that be great if lots of people came to us and asked us that question?

It doesn't happen very often, I would imagine, with you as much as it happens with me. People just don't run to Christians and say that all the time. But what would you say?

[7 : 33] What do you have to do to inherit eternal life? Well that song that the ladies just sang for us, look to the cross, look at what Jesus did for you.

But that's not what Jesus says here. Here's, well, first I guess I'm getting a little bit ahead of myself. Jesus says, why do you call me good? No one is good except for one and that is God.

Now this little passage here where Jesus says this is actually used by some who deny the deity of Christ. Especially Muslims will use this frequently to say, hey see, look, even Jesus himself did not believe he is God because somebody came to him and called him good and he says, hey, don't call me good.

I'm not God, only God is good. Is that what Jesus said? Not quite. He's just saying, hey, why are you calling me good as a rabbi?

You think that I'm just a rabbi. Why are you calling me good? When it comes to goodness, we should know that who is the one that is good. It's God.

[8 : 51] And the rest of us, we need help. And that's actually a big important part of the context here of this whole passage. So I think Jesus here is trying to set up the conversation.

But back to the answer that Jesus gave, here's what Jesus said. you know the commandments and he lists some of them. Do not commit adultery.

Do not murder. Do not steal. Do not bear false witness. Do not defraud. Honor your father and your mother. You'll notice that almost all of these except one come from where?

Come from the Ten Commandments. Those tablets of stone that Moses brought down from the mountain.

There's only one which I'll mention that just briefly because it's interesting, right, when you have a list of commandments that Jesus gave as an example.

[9 : 53] And actually, Jesus mentions a few other different ones if you look at the parallel passages. So I don't think this is exactly what Jesus said, but this is an example of what he said when giving examples of commandments.

commandments. But the one that doesn't come from the Ten Commandments is do not defraud. But it actually does come from the law of Moses in Leviticus chapter 19 verse 13 which says you shall not defraud or cheat your neighbor.

You shall not defraud or cheat your neighbor. And then it goes on to say the wages of him who is hired shall not remain with you all night until morning. It's interesting this is talking to employers.

Hey, if you promise to pay somebody don't hold on to their pay. A lot of people especially in that day they were day laborers. They lived hand to mouth.

As we would say today they were depending on their next paycheck for their next meal a lot of them. And so holding on to that wage was a way of really cheating your neighbor.

[11 : 11] And I think Jesus might have brought this up because well here's somebody who is probably an employer, right? Somebody with a lot of wealth. But why did Jesus answer with looking to the commandments?

Looking to the commandments for eternal life. Well there's from what I can tell there's two big views about this. the first one is those who would teach that in order to have salvation today you need to obey the law you need to do good works and if you do good works then you can find salvation you can get to heaven you can earn eternal life to some degree earn your righteousness righteousness and so they would say look this is Jesus we need to make sure we're listening to Jesus and what he said and so Jesus said you have to do good works you have to obey the law in order to earn eternal life that's what we all should do then there are those who say well wait a second there are other parts of the Bible that say something very different they say hey we need to teach that salvation is by grace through faith alone regardless of any works and so they would look at this and they say

I think Jesus was doing something different I think Jesus was being sarcastic right he was saying here's what you have to do but knowing that well this man didn't actually do these things or doesn't do them perfectly anyway and they would say well the reason this is is because well when we read in the epistles of Paul for example in Romans 3 28 it says this therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law wow that seems to be a direct contradiction with what Jesus said right apart from the deeds of the law you are justified you are made righteous also in Ephesians 2 8 it says for by grace you have been saved through faith and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God not of works no works of the law are required to be saved and then 2 Timothy 1 9 says this who has saved talking about the Lord who has saved us and called us with a holy calling not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ

Jesus and so obviously Jesus knew what Paul taught in Romans right wait a second Paul hadn't written Romans yet what's going on here why is there this seemingly huge difference between what Jesus is teaching here is Jesus just being sarcastic and trying to make a point or is something else going on I think this is important we've been going through this as we going through the gospel of Mark making a contrast between what were the rules what were the requirements during this particular time this particular age and how are things different how can we contrast this with what the rules are the requirements in the age of grace in which we live I think we should take Jesus his words very literally and very seriously but apply his words to the time and the people it's intended for you see

Jesus came the Bible says under the law he was born under the law of Moses our Bibles if you look in your Bible and you go to Matthew chapter one and you turn one page over to the left you'll see some big words it says the New Testament and if you go to the beginning of Genesis and turn over one page it'll say Old Testament and so we can easily think that well the Old Testament started in Genesis and the New Testament started in Matthew chapter one and you'd be wrong on both fronts right because when does the Old Testament the Old Covenant start well some people you know you might have a little bit of a debate but either Abraham or Moses but it certainly was not you know the first day of creation that's not when the Old Covenant started but really probably Abraham is when you could say that the Old

[16 : 06] Covenant started so when does this New Covenant start or what many people would consider the New Covenant something changed that's why there's those big divisions something changed but was it when Jesus was born or was it a different time the Bible says that Jesus came under the law Jesus says this on the Sermon on the Mount that we need to pay attention to he says this in Matthew 5 17 do not think that I came to destroy the law or the prophets I did not come to destroy but to fulfill for assuredly I say to you until heaven and earth pass away one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven but whoever does and teaches them he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven see

Jesus came he came upholding the law of Moses not undermining it he was born as a Jew he came explicitly teaching to the Jews to preach a kingdom that was promised to the Jews Jesus his ministry was very very Jewish and exclusively so in fact if you remember we've talked about this before Jesus sent out the twelve disciples he sent out the seventy disciples to go preach the gospel of the kingdom and he told them do not go into the way of the Gentiles don't even go to the Samaritans the half Jew half Gentile folks only go to the Jews because this message that we're preaching is for them right now and here is what the law taught the law that Jesus was upholding at this time Leviticus 18 5 it says this you shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments which if a man does he shall live by them

I am the Lord you see the Old Testament law that law of Moses taught that if you want to have life you keep the commandments as a Jew in order to have life you keep the commandments Ezekiel chapter 18 verse 19 says this yet you say who or why should the son not bear the guilt of the father God through the prophet Ezekiel was addressing this issue among the Jewish people that were saying that the children must bear the sin and the guilt of their parents so he says yet you say why should the son not bear the guilt of the father because the son has done what is lawful and right and has kept all my statutes and observed them he shall surely live if you don't keep the commandments you will surely die says right there in that same chapter of

Ezekiel but if you keep the statutes of Moses you will surely live also if we look at the ministry of Jesus we look at this time when Jesus talked about the good Samaritan and the Pharisees who were listening to Jesus this is when they asked him well who is my neighbor and Jesus described the or gave them the story of the good Samaritan well before that what led up to that is this passage in Luke chapter 10 verse 25 it says behold a certain lawyer stood up and tested him saying teacher what shall I do to inherit eternal life the same question notice this one is not with the same humility this is to test him what shall I do to inherit eternal life huh Jesus what do you have to say and Jesus said to him what is written in the law what is your reading of it where did Jesus point him to he pointed him back to the law of

Moses you shall and so he answered and said you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart with all your soul with all your strength and with all your mind and your neighbor as yourself and so Jesus responded and said to him wrong answer you're supposed to look to the cross is that him you have answered rightly do this and you will live you're right that's exactly what Moses taught getting back to our passage in Mark here verse 20 after hearing that he needs to keep the commandments this young man answers and says to him teacher all these things I have kept for my youth and so we ask the question really did he did he really keep these things some people would say you know this this young man is being he's being prideful shouldn't he know that he hasn't kept the law perfectly he's really just trusting in his good works wrongly when he shouldn't be he's trusting in his good works but I don't think really that's what's going on here this is a young man who knows the law he he says he's kept the law from his youth and he's actually concerned about his eternal life if he thought that he was keeping the law perfectly would he be concerned about his eternal soul no

[22 : 40] I think he'd be confident he wouldn't be coming to Jesus asking what must I do I think this young man actually knew that there were there were concerns that maybe he wasn't doing this as perfectly as he ought and is there something else I can do to make sure I can be confident that I can live forever it says in verse 21 then Jesus looked at him and he loved him Jesus looked at him with with a smile he loved him he wasn't angry at him Jesus really was concerned for him and loved him dearly I think he was being genuine Jesus cared for this young man's soul but he says this he says one thing you lack go your way sell whatever you have and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven and come take up the cross and follow me notice

Jesus doesn't actually say to him well actually you haven't kept the law he doesn't respond that way the one thing that he says you lack isn't well you haven't kept this certain law of Moses the one thing that Jesus tells him that he should do is actually not in the law of Moses what is this one thing really it seems to be three things he tells him one sell everything that you have to give it to the poor to take up your cross or the cross and three follow me selling everything and giving it to the poor notice how Jesus says sell everything he doesn't say sell everything you have and give the money to me now you might see that today with people on television sell everything you have and give it to me and then you can live forever or you'll be even more prosperous than you could ever imagine if you just give a bunch of your money to me

Jesus never did that he says sell everything you have but don't give it to me I mean Jesus had a treasury and do you think that Jesus and the twelve disciples could probably use a few bucks or a few denarii or whatever they had yeah probably could have but he said no go give it to the poor don't give it to me give it to the poor and he mentions when you do that you're going to store up for yourself treasure in heaven and then he says to take up the cross and what does that but really a cross back then was an implement of what execution death suffering when Jesus said take up your cross there was nothing in this man's mind about something future that Jesus would do dying on a cross even Jesus his disciples did not know about this much less some man who just came up to

Jesus for the first time I think if Jesus in our day Jesus might say something like take up your noose take up your electric chair or take up your guillotine and come follow me what the cross was a symbol of death and Jesus was saying take up your cross means I want you to prepare yourself for death I want you to be willing to die with me and he says come follow me he doesn't mean oh I want you to become a Christian you know a lot of times we call somebody a follower of Jesus that means they're a Christian you know you're a Christian you follow Jesus you listen to his teachings but that's not what Jesus meant here he's saying I want you to become one of my disciples

I want you to follow me around as I travel around and actually Jesus is headed very very soon or actually he's there in Jerusalem where he's getting ready to die and he's already told his disciples I want you guys to follow me and most of you are going to die too and so here's what he's calling this man to I want you to get rid of I want you to come follow me and die with me and if you do that you'll store up treasure in heaven and you'll have eternal life now the question is is this something that is required for all of us is this something that God requires from everybody to sell everything that they have and to give up their lives and if they do they can inherit eternal life it seems like this is something specifically that

[28 : 07] Jesus was calling his disciples to do Jesus actually when Jesus interacts with people he doesn't call everybody to drop everything and come follow him but there are many that he does ask them to do that he he actually promises a reward if they're willing to do that which we'll read here in a second verse 22 but he was sad at this word and he went away sorrowful for he had great possessions notice it says he went away sorrowful he wasn't indignant he wasn't angry it seems that he actually believed what Jesus said but he was sorrowful why because he was unwilling to do what Jesus asked him to do he was unwilling to give up his wealth and his life and can you imagine that that would be a difficult decision if somebody were to ask you that well I want you to give up all of your wealth and your very life and then you can have eternal life that's not an easy thing to be willing to do but when you are a guilty sinner you know that if you stand before

God on judgment day that he's going to have a lot of things that he can raise up against you that he can look at in the record book that shows that you are not nearly as innocent as many people thought you were when you realize that you're a guilty sinner I think we ought to really be willing to do whatever it is that God asks us to do to inherit eternal life and we see throughout the ages in the Bible that God asked people to do different things to become justified to inherit eternal life to become his children sacrificing animals was one of them that's pretty gross sacrificing animals on an altar and doing all this stuff with the blood one man he asked to build a boat over the course of almost a hundred years in the middle of dry land that's embarrassing but that's what was required for

Noah's salvation to another man he said hey I'll make you special people if you remove the foreskin from your children cut it off that's also kind of bizarre it's weird but when God asks you to do something don't really ask questions when he offers you life and righteousness and a covenant with him and to be his his own people his own special people you do whatever he asks you to do or if he asks you to live by a very strict legal code following all these rituals and ceremonies and if you do these things then you can have life as the Lord taught to Moses or if he tells you to sell everything you have and follow him into the lion's den you should do it eternal life is that important this young man walked away

Jesus in verse 23 says this Jesus looked around and he said to his disciples how hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God disciples were astonished like oh my goodness this is this is difficult but Jesus answered again and said to them children how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God they're seeing someone here who's got some humility he's he's he's it looks like he's faithful to keeping the law Jesus says it's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God why would riches be an obstacle to entering into the kingdom remember a lot of times in our Christian culture we associate entering the kingdom with just becoming a Christian becoming a Christian and that's not the case at all Jesus came preaching that there would be a kingdom for Israel the people of Israel the land would be restored to the

Jewish people and that a king a messiah would come and rule over them with truth and justice but there were also some prophecies about what would be required before that kingdom would come there's this thing called the we call today the tribulation the bible calls the tribulation and Jesus he's going to be describing this when we look in Mark chapter 13 at the all of it discourse Jesus describes in detail what's going to happen during that tribulation period that is planned for the Jewish nation for the people of Israel it's going to be a time of testing and trial for the Jewish people to test their faithfulness it's going to be a time really to weed out the faithful and the unfaithful the fakes the hypocrites

[34 : 25] Malachi calls it a refiner's fire there's going to be a time where there's going to be a fire that will refine out that will burn up the dross and the gold will be left over in that passage in the all of it discourse Jesus is going to warn his disciples about being arrested and put in prison about violence about being killed about being betrayed by your own family about being hated by all the rest of the world this is what is at hand this is what is about to happen and so riches will be an obstacle during this time this is why Jesus said in the Beatitudes blessed are the poor for theirs is the kingdom of God if you hold on to your riches during this time you're not going to make it into the kingdom he says the meek shall inherit the earth why he brought a child before him as we saw in chapter nine and said hey if you want to enter the kingdom you have to lower yourself if you have a high rank or position jettison that you need to lower yourself because coming up here is a time in which there will be persecution that has never been seen since the beginning of time and this is intended to purify my people this is not a time to hoard on to your wealth to hold on to your position to hold on to your rank it's time to humble yourself and be willing to die in

Jeremiah chapter 30 verse 7 it speaks of this tribulation it uses a different word it says this alas for that day is great so that none is like it and it is the time of Jacob's trouble this is what the prophet Jeremiah called that day the time of Jacob's trouble but it continues on and Jeremiah says this but he shall be saved out of it so there's coming a time that will be and Jeremiah says this there will be no day like this day in which Jacob the people of Israel will be troubled but they will be saved out of it there will be a separation of the sheep and the goats but those who endure through it shall be saved Jeremiah 30 verse 8 continues on for it shall come to pass in that day says the Lord of hosts that I will break his yoke from your neck and will burst your bonds foreigners shall no more enslave them but they shall serve the Lord their God and David their king whom I will raise up for them the kingdom is coming somebody from the line of

David a Messiah is coming he's going to sit on the throne and all these people who have conquered you and who are ruling over you that yoke is going to be broken from your neck and you will be the top dogs again but before that is coming trouble called the time of Jacob's trouble I think that's what the important context that's going on here with this rich young ruler hey this is what's coming up I mean this is right around the corner and your riches are going to get in the way because you're going to go we're going to have seven years of tribulation here and I want you would you come and follow me be one of my disciples preach the kingdom God with us and if you do you're guaranteed eternal life you're guaranteed to enter into that kingdom if you're willing to do that he walked away he wasn't willing but if he would have been willing he could have guaranteed himself both eternal life and entrance into that kingdom his disciples were astonished and they said among themselves who can possibly be saved but

Jesus looked at them and said with men it is impossible but not with God for with God all things are possible to his disciples this all sounds too difficult but I don't think they really have an idea of just how difficult it's going to be Jesus says here with God all things are possible and like Jesus had said this I think in chapter nine as well and a lot of people will pull this out of context and remember context is important here he's saying it's impossible humanly speaking to go through this I think tribulation period unscathed and be faithful but God does not expect his people to endure through through this without his help he's going to be there to uphold them and is that any different from the rest of the history of the

Bible has God ever asked his people to do hard things that seemed absolutely impossible humanly speaking I think about Moses taking all these slaves out of Egypt into the promised land was that impossible absolutely you have the mightiest nation in the area enslaving all these people and Moses just goes up to the Pharaoh and says hey God wants you to let the people go could you do that no but God comes through and he makes the impossible possible because Moses depended on him I think about the taking of the promised land remember they sent spies in these people are huge there's no way we could defeat these people and I'm sure they were right God wasn't happy with that but there were two men remember

[40 : 54] Joshua and Caleb said we can do it with God's help because God is the one who makes impossible things possible if we'll trust in him I I also think I remember Gideon God wanted him to fight was it the Philistines I can't remember huge number of people and Gideon got as many people as he could it was a pretty small group but he got as many as he could he said all right God I got all these people and God said that's too many God wanted his people to depend on him and so that's God's design for this tribulation period hey yes what I'm asking you to do is humanly speaking impossible if you'll trust in me if you'll just set your face like Flint to do it to go through trusting in me

I'll get you through it I'll do it Peter responds and he says to Jesus I think with eyes wide from all of this that he's hearing he said well hey Jesus I don't know if you noticed but we left everything and we followed you actually I think in Matthew he actually asked the question so what do we get out of this and Jesus answered him he says does Jesus say stop thinking about yourself and what you're going to get out of this I just want you to do this for my sake no he actually says I'm going to tell you what your reward will be Jesus answered and said assuredly I say to you there is no one who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or land for my sake and the gospels who will not receive a hundred fold now in this time and then he repeats the same things that they gave up but he adds in with persecutions and in the age to come you'll receive eternal life

Jesus confirms to them that their willingness to follow him into the lion's den and to the jaws of death will be rewarded they'll be rewarded with entrance into the kingdom and with eternal life in the next age we'll talk about that in a second but first he mentions a hundred fold return wherever you're willing to give up you'll get a hundred fold now I don't know that mathematically he's just saying hey listen you'll be rewarded greatly for what you are willing to give up here in the kingdom houses lands remember that the kingdom is going to be a physical kingdom on the earth it will have land there will be homes now he says you'll also get mothers and sisters and I'm actually not sure what that means but I think he's maybe that's being metaphorical you'll have lots of friends maybe right because he warns we'll look at this in

Mark chapter 13 he warns some of you are going to be betrayed by your own family you have to be willing to make that separation between your family in order to follow me but in the kingdom you'll receive another family in a way of speaking but he says this you'll receive a hundred fold in this time and he says along with persecutions and that seems to well in this time I'll get a hundred fold and I'll rewards and suffering at the same time like in this time what does that mean well I think this time he's talking about this age of the earthly age if you will which I don't know if that's the right way to put it but I think he's combining the current age with the thousand year reign of Christ on the earth and when he says the age to come he's talking about the new heaven and if we look at the passage in

Matthew the parallel passage in Matthew Jesus also promises something else that you don't see here in Matthew chapter 19 verse 28 which is the same account says Jesus said to them assuredly I say to you that in the regeneration when the son of man sits on the throne of his glory you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones judging the not only will you receive houses and lands and a new family but I'm going to make you twelve specifically because of your willingness from the very beginning the twelve were with him because of your willingness early on to dedicate your life to this ministry of the gospel of the kingdom I am going to sit you on thrones when I come back to take over and each of you will be allowed to rule over one of the tribes of Israel in that kingdom so part of this reward would be a level of authority in this new kingdom that is coming to the earth and he finishes with this which is similar to what he said in the last chapter in

[46 : 37] Mark chapter nine but many who are first will be last and the last first what does he mean by the last first and the first last well the same thing he meant before if you're willing to lower yourself and in the kingdom you will be given a place of high honor but if you're going to hold on to your riches if you're going to hold on to your rank if you're going to hold on to your power now during this important time in which God is going to judge and refine Israel if you want that first position now you will be lowered to the last position when that kingdom comes so now I want to just contrast this with how are we to live today how do we gain eternal life you know the reason this rich young ruler came to Jesus was because he wasn't sure if he had the eternal life that he so wanted he wasn't sure that he had it he was under the law of

Moses the law of Moses says if you do these things then you will live what was required was faith plus works you have to have faith in God but part of that faith in God is doing all these things but there was a change that happened the great transition from law to grace that we have to understand sometime there in the book of Acts Paul he's going around preaching to both Jew and Gentile remember Paul would go to the synagogues first but he says something very important when he's I can't remember where this is this is Acts chapter 13 but he goes to the Jewish synagogue and the Jews there reject his message that Jesus is their Messiah it says this in Acts 13 46 then

Paul and Barnabas grew bold and they said it was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first but since you reject it and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life behold we turn to the Gentiles everlasting life is made available to you through your Messiah Jesus Christ but you have rejected him and so what we're doing now is we're turning to the Gentiles we see in Romans chapter 9 10 and 11 Paul describes in detail what happened God at some point there in the Acts period says he cut off the people of Israel from the promise and the covenant that they had with their God and he grafted in a group of people called the Gentiles not forever but for a season we call that season today the age of grace it's the age of grace in which we live and so we can look later on in

Acts chapter 16 we actually looked at that verse this morning in Sunday school class and we see this message of grace that's different we see the same question a man comes to Paul with the same question as the rich young ruler but Paul answers differently it's a Philippian jailer this Philippian jailer there's an earthquake I believe and Paul and Silas are freed from prison and this jailer he realizes these guys what they're saying is true and so he ultimately he comes to Paul and Silas and he asks this question what must I do to be saved what must I do to inherit eternal life I need salvation I need to live forever in Acts chapter 16 verse 30 says this and he brought them out and said sirs what must I do to be saved so they said believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved you and your household did he say to keep the law nope you don't have to do that not now not anymore not in this season of grace for the

Gentile people God wants to make the Jews jealous he's going to give them even more grace a gift greater than even the Jewish people ever received through their law that all you have to do is trust in Christ what he accomplished for you and you can live forever right now for God's people or to become God's people in this age you don't have to build a boat thank God my building skills aren't that great you don't have to slaughter animals you don't have to perform religious rituals you don't have to cut off foreskins or do endless ceremonial rituals now in this age salvation is completely free requiring nothing but a humble confession of faith in what Jesus accomplished on that cross we'll go back to this verse

[52 : 15] I think we looked at this last week Romans 10 5 says this for Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law the man who does these things shall live by them that's what Moses said if you want to have life you gotta live by all these laws you gotta do all these laws but verse 6 says this but the righteousness of faith speaks in this way there's a contrast it's different now speaks in this way do not say in your heart who will ascend into heaven that is to bring Christ down from above or who will descend into the abyss that is to bring Christ up from the dead but what does it say the word is near you in your mouth and in your heart that is the word of faith which we preach that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead you will be saved Jesus died on a cross he was raised up again and if we'll just trust in what he accomplished and that he is Lord of all he's the resurrected

Lord we can be saved we can have eternal life not something that we question like that rich young ruler when you have to do something when you have to keep obeying laws there's always a question am I doing enough but when it's faith alone you can have confidence and so Paul tells us in Ephesians chapter 1 verse 13 Ron just mentioned that in him you also trusted after you heard the word of truth so you heard the word that Jesus died for your sins and you trusted in that word you put your faith in it the gospel of your salvation in whom also having believed you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise God says if you'll trust in that word I'll seal you you don't have to worry I'm going to preserve you because of your trust in Christ sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise who is the guarantee of our inheritance the rich young ruler what must I do to inherit eternal life his inheritance was not guaranteed but for us who are willing to humble ourselves trust and confess

Jesus Christ our inheritance of eternal life is guaranteed it says here in Ephesians who is the guarantee of our inheritance into the redemption of the purchased possession to the praise of his glory for those of us who have trusted in Christ we are a purchased possession guaranteed that he will hold us tightly he will hold us and keep us safe through anything so we look to the cross and what Jesus said on the cross remember what he said it is finished the finished work of what Jesus accomplished on the cross and that is where we find eternal life you know we could have you know lived in a different age when the requirements were different but are you glad that we live in the age of grace is there any better time to live let's end with a word of prayer father we love you thank you for the grace that you have poured out on us though you could have required anything of us for sinners who are lost who are not innocent we need mercy we need grace and you could have required anything in order to receive that you didn't even have to offer us anything at all but over the ages you have offered men different ways to receive eternal life to become members of your family to find reconciliation with you but today as we read in your word you guarantee us that if we just trust in what Jesus accomplished on that cross that we can have confidence we don't have to question anymore we can have confidence in having eternal life with you forever and we thank you so much for that we pray this in Jesus name thank you for this in his name amen