

What shall I do to inherit eternal life

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[0 : 00] Let us turn now to consider words you will find in the Gospel according to Mark, chapter 10, reading at verse 17.

Mark's Gospel, chapter 10, reading at verse 17.

And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running and kneeled to him and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

Thank you.

And tonight we look at the story, as it is commonly known, of the rich young ruler. And without spending any time by way of introducing the subject, let us just look at it under the following heads.

[1 : 36] We have here a promising situation that came one running and kneeled to him. And we have this man asking a very disturbing question.

Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And to that question Jesus gives, thirdly, an unexpected answer.

Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God. Thou knowest the commandments. And so on.

And in reply to that answer we have a very revealing reply. He answers it unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth.

Then fifthly, we will read it, look at this shattering disclosure made to him by the Lord. Lord, one thing thou lackest, sell all that thou hast, and so on.

[2 : 39] And finally, we have this very sad scene of this young man who was sad at that saying, and departed as far as we know, never again to be interviewed by the Lord.

First of all, in this very promising situation, it has been said by a modern writer that here we have a picture of a very outstanding type of fellow who is begging to know how he can get to heaven.

Again, the type of person who has been referred to as the evangelist's dream. The kind of person who is ripe for conversion.

Easy to speak to. Easy to get through to. He is open and quite prepared to talk about religion. A lot of people aren't like that.

The moment you mention religion to them, they shut off. But here's a man who introduced the subject himself and who opened the interview by coming in this very promising way to the Lord.

[3 : 54] Now it seems as though this man was both anxious and enthusiastic because we read that he came running to the Lord. He was very concerned about his spiritual condition.

He was also a young man who was very mannerly. He kneeled before the Lord. He adopted the position that was applicable to himself and he gave the Lord the position that was due to him.

He kneeled before him. A lot of young people aren't like that. Today we live in a day when young people in many areas and in this area tend to defy authority.

This is the general impression that you have of a young life nowadays. But this man wasn't like that. He was sincere.

He was anxious. He was respectful. Good master. What shall I do or what good thing shall I do to inherit eternal life?

[5 : 04] And there are some who maintain that he was probably in his late teens, perhaps even in his early 20s. And as we understand this, he was quite religious.

Upright, moral, honest, hardworking. He was rich. He was probably a good type of, not only a good young fellow, but a good son.

Highly principled. He wasn't in any way cynical. Possessed a good character. Character would be very easy to give this man a good character reference.

He would, as some people say, have made a first class Christian. He was an excellent citizen. But notwithstanding all that, this young fellow was quite dissatisfied.

He had a disturbing question. And this is what we look at second. This very disturbing question. What shall I do to inherit eternal life?

[6 : 09] Now, he himself very clearly indicates that there was something missing in his life. He knew what was missing.

But he didn't know how to get it. The thing that was missing was eternal life. The missing link was the secret to obtaining it.

He knew what he lacked, in other words. So he thought. Eternal life. Now, as you know, this is a word, or these are two words which the Bible is full of.

Eternal life. I suppose that the best known verse in which the words are used is the third version, John 17, in our Lord's high priestly prayer.

He said, this is life eternal. He said, he himself defines it. That they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.

[7 : 16] Now, there is our Lord's definition of eternal life. But we have to break that down somewhat so that you and I will understand it better.

What is it to know God? I'm sure that in a sense every person here tonight has a knowledge of God. But yet every person here tonight does not have eternal life.

You can know God through studying the word. Studying the Bible. Learning passages from the Bible off by heart.

Learning the catechism. For example, the catechism that says, what is God? God is a spirit. Infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in his being. Wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.

You know that about God. You know that he is the creator of the world. He is the sustainer of this world. He is your creator and your sustainer. You know that God is holy.

[8 : 16] God is all wise. God is right. God is love. God is spirit. God is truth. You may know all these things about God and yet not know God.

You see, the word to know God is a word which indicates that here you have a relationship between an individual and God which is real.

Meaningful, personal. Eternal life is that relationship between an individual and God that brings him into living contact with God.

Brings him into fellowship and communion with God. He knows God in that way. He loves this God to him. He knows. His trust is in God.

His whole life revolves around God. This is life eternal. If you get your hands on a paper published some time ago, a few years ago by IVF, I think it was by James Packer on knowing God, you young people get your hands on that book and read it.

[9 : 24] It's well worth reading. In that book, he speaks of this, well of course the title being knowing God, he must and he says it, he speaks of this knowledge of God and he speaks of eternal life.

And he puts it like this, what makes life worth living, he said, is having a big enough objective. Something which catches your imagination and lays hold of your allegiance.

And that thing, he says, is what the Christian has in a way that no other person has. But what is higher?

What is more exalted? What is a more compelling goal than to know God?

It is to have this personal involvement with God. To know that my relationship with God is right. To know that the life and the favour and the fellowship and the blessing of God has become mine through faith in Jesus Christ.

[10 : 39] To know that I have been blessed with all spiritual blessings in Jesus Christ. That for us is life eternal.

Now here is a very religious young man. Very upright, very moral, respectful, unrespectable. Well brought up, highly principled, very knowledgeable.

As he himself was to say. And yet, this was missing in his life. There was no personal relationship. No personal contact.

Between himself and God. And he comes to Jesus. With this very disturbing question. And he says, what will I do?

Or as one translation has it. What one other thing can I do that I may obtain or inherit or merit or win or find this missing link in my life?

[11 : 45] How can I go about it? He asks the Lord. What can I do to receive it?

And the whole emphasis, the whole thrust of the question that he addresses to Jesus is placed here on his own doing. Good master, what one other thing can I do?

Where have I missed out on this? Where have I gone wrong? In all my searching, I have failed to find this.

What a picture this conjures up. A young man eager to do the right thing. Desireless of eternal life. Coming to Jesus for the answer.

And yet, how far this young fellow was on the wrong road. And I wouldn't be surprised if there may be people here tonight like that.

[12 : 51] I'm sure there are. Brought up as many of you are. And have been in a religious environment. Confronted as you have been.

All along life's way. With the claims of Christianity. Upon your life. And being the type of person you are.

As best. Living as best you can. And trying to be as good a citizen as you can. As highly principled as you can.

And that is a great objective in any person's life. To have a high ideal. And yet, you would be probably the very first to admit. That you've missed out on something that other people possess.

This soul relationship with God. This contentment. This contentment. This life that the Bible pictures. As a life that is lived.

[13 : 53] Resting. Upon the Lord Jesus Christ. Or the life that the psalmist summed up. We'll sing it later on tonight. Delighting thyself in God.

You've missed out. On that blessing. And the great question confronting you probably tonight is this. Why? Where have I gone wrong?

Where have I missed the mark? What have I missed out? What one thing. Have I failed to do so far. That leaves me destitute.

Of this most desirable. Of all. Blessings. Well to that question. Jesus gave. A most.

Unexpected. Answer. Why do you call me good? He says. Thou know. There is none good but one that is God. Thou knowest the commandments.

[14 : 52] Do not commit adultery. Do not kill. Do not steal. Do not bear false witness. Defraud not. Honor. Thy father. And. Thy mother.

Now what Jesus does here is this. He does two things. He focuses this man's attention. On first of all. The need.

As I've indicated already. The need. To know God. To know God. And secondly. The need. The need. To know. The law of God. And he introduces that.

By saying something very interesting. Young man. He says. Why do you call me good? There is none good. But God. Now some people. And some modern theologians. Have taken these words. And have used them.

As a platform. On which. To build their teaching. That Jesus was not divine at all. That he himself. Stated to this man. I'm not good. Meaning that.

[15 : 51] He wasn't God. I'm not God. You shouldn't deal with me. You should deal with God. I'm only a man. There are some people. Who believe. That Jesus was just a man.

He wasn't God. And the proof of that. Is that he said to this man. There is none good. But God. But of course. We know that. That is not what Jesus said. It meant at all.

Because over and over again. The Bible claims. Divinity for Jesus. And Jesus himself. Claimed it for himself. It was one of the reasons. Why he was put to death. This man.

Maked himself. Equal with God. And if Christianity. Means anything at all. It means this. That at the very heart. Of the Christian faith. Is this person. Who was.

None other than God. And who became man. God. What then does he mean. When he says. Why do you call me good. There is none good.

[16 : 47] But God. Well there are some. Who believe that. Jesus meant this. That this young fellow. Was of the opinion. That Jesus. Had found. The secret. Of eternal life.

And that this. Was what made him good. There are others. Of the opinion. That this. Young fellow. Didn't really. Recognize. That he was speaking.

To God. In our nature. And it is very probable. That he didn't know that. It is very probable. That this man. Considered Jesus.

As. Just. A man. Who had found. The secret. Of eternal life. Life. And so. Jesus. Directs him.

Immediately. To the person. That he has to deal with. If he wants life. So he was saying to him. If you really concern. About eternal life. If you really want.

[17 : 41] This thing. That you. Think is missing. In your life. You have to deal with. God. You have to deal. With God. God. And you know. And I know.

That this is a great teaching. Of the Bible. That it directs. You and me. In all our need. And in all our sinfulness. As we were hearing last week. To God.

The only one. Who can deal. With our sin. The Bible. Directs a sinner. To God. And to the God. Of the Bible. Not to the God.

Of your imagination. Not to the God. That you understand him. There's no doubt. Some of you here tonight. Who. Perhaps in the past.

Even yet. Still frequent meetings. Of AA. Alcoholics Anonymous. Whereas you know. Part of the. If not the constitution.

[18 : 36] Certainly of the. Of the. Some of the. The teaching there. That some people. Have to accept. Is that you. You believe. That you believe. God. That you understand him.

But my friend. That's not good enough. If you're going to be saved. It's not the God. Of your understanding. That you have to deal with. It's the God of the Bible. The God of the Bible.

And very often. The God of the Bible. Doesn't square. With the God of your. And mine understanding. And so Jesus. Directs this man. To God. And he says to him. If you want salvation.

You deal with God. Same applies to you tonight. And maybe you're missing out. On salvation. Just because. You fail to deal with God. In this matter.

You may be relying on the Bible. Relying on your prayer life. Relying on the church. Relying on your upbringing. Relying on your knowledge. Knowing that you're a sinner.

[19 : 33] None of these things will save you. These things together won't save you. You have to come. To God. And to the God.

Of the Bible. There is none other. And this is the message that Jesus was to give to the disciples. Later on after the interview ended. And he said to them. Rather startling fashion.

I tell you he says. It is almost. It is. Look at the difficulty that rich people have. He says. With the mouth of salvation. Easy for a camel to go through the eye of a needle.

Than for a rich man to be saved. And the disciples. Incredulously. Say to the Lord. Who then can be saved? And he answers. With men it is impossible.

But not with God. Because with God. All things are possible. And the only one who can save. Is God.

[20 : 29] And I believe that that is why the Lord addressed this man. Not this. He directs him. To the God of salvation. And he says to him. Secondly.

That God. Has given you his law. That God speaks to you. He says. You see there are some people who say. Ah well yes I know.

It's alright for you to tell me to come to God. But. What does God say? How do I know what God says? How can I find God?

Where is God? Well we know one thing about God. That he has revealed himself in the world. The Bible is God speaking to you and to me.

The law. That Jesus directs this person to the second table of the law. Don't commit adultery. Don't kill. Don't steal. Don't bear false witness. Don't defraud. Honor your father and your mother.

[21 : 25] The law was given by God. For life. You remember when Moses received the law in Sinai. And when he gave it to the children of Israel. He summed it up.

He concluded. The giving of the law in this way. I call heaven and earth. He says. To testify in your presence today. That I have set before you life for death. Therefore. I choose life.

The law is the expression of the mind of God. And in the law. God tells you what to do. And Jesus testing this man.

And he's wanting to find the answer to this question. He's wondering. Of course though he knew it. He wanted this young man to make this discovery.

He's wanting this young fellow to answer a question. And the question is this. If I keep the law to the best of my ability.

[22 : 26] Will that give me eternal life? And the young fellow failed the test.

As I saw he was sitting down. At an examination. He's got this paper in front of him. And there's this big question in the paper. If you need eternal life. Will keeping the law.

Give it to you. And he puts down two answers in the paper. A. I have kept the law. From the time that I can remember. B.

I haven't got eternal life as a result. And his failure lay here.

That he didn't recognize. That his inability to obtain salvation. Through obedience to the law.

[23 : 27] God. Was leading him. To the only one who could save him. And meet him. At the point of his inability. The problem with a lot of people lies just there.

They try to save themselves by their own doings. And they fail to recognize. That they cannot do it.

They fail to recognize that God alone can save. And do you know who the saved person is in this church night. Man and woman. Boy and girl.

I'll tell you. He and she is saved. Those who have come. And their hopeless and helpless inability. And have cried to God.

God. I've tried everything. Save me. By thy power. Here the Lord is putting this young man to the test.

[24 : 26] And he's asking him. Have you yet discovered your own inability? And he hadn't. He hadn't. He hadn't really recognized it.

He says in this very revealing reply. That we look at fourthly to the Lord. He says. Lord. I'm innocent. I have kept the law. From the time that I can remember.

I have observed all these things. From my youth. Ah well. In many ways. This is a very revealing answer.

It tells a lot about the young fellow. He was respectable and respectful. He had done this and he had done that. But he hadn't yet discovered himself as a sinner.

Who needed a saviour. His life as far as he could judge was outwardly blameless. A well turned out young fellow.

[25 : 27] Stronger religious. And no doubt moved in the best circles. If he had been living here. Or in other areas. There are some people who maintain.

That he would have been encouraged to have become a member of the church. You would expect to see him in the prayer meeting. If he was in school I have no doubt he would have been a member of SU.

Highly principled. As I said earlier. But there was this missing link. And the missing link in his life was this.

He hadn't yet discovered himself as a sinner. Who needed a saviour. How many of you may be present here tonight like that?

As far as one can judge as I have said earlier. Very, very respectable. May I speak particularly to the young people here tonight.

[26 : 29] How many of you. All that you have learnt and seen and known. Have not yet submitted yourselves.

In your own helpless inadequacy. In the presence of God and said. Lord. I am a sinner who cannot save myself.

Save me. I pray thee. Well. This young man. Hadn't yet. Made that discovery. So what does Jesus say to him?

Well he makes this shattering disclosure. Fifthly. Jesus beholding him. Loved him. And said unto him. One thing thou lackest.

Go thy way. Sell whatsoever thou hast. And give to the poor. Thou shalt have treasure in heaven. And come. Take up the cross. And follow me.

[27 : 27] Now there are three things here. That Jesus tells this man. He must do. He must first of all. Know himself as a sinner. He must then come as a penitent sinner.

And he must then come as a believing sinner. If he wants. To be saved. And this really comes across. What we had here. Last and next.

So I will go through it very briefly. Indeed. First of all notice. Jesus looked at him. And he loved him. What does this mean? Well I think it means this.

That Jesus. Dealt very very sympathetically. With this young fellow. And he dealt with the mothers. In the most. In the most.

In the most. Purposeful way. Jesus. Was prepared. To help. This. Man. And he. He was very. Sympathetic.

[28 : 22] Towards. And he had. Great compassion. He was very helpful. That's what it means. I believe. By loving him. And this is always the best way.

For the counsellor. To meet. The enquirer. If someone comes to you. On the matter of. Religion. Or salvation. You're a Christian.

See that you're trying to be as helpful. To that person. As you possibly can. Don't brush them off. And encourage them. And I believe that the Lord. Was doing this. He was encouraging.

He was sympathetic. He was compassionate. And what did he say? Well you see. He didn't deny the truth. Though he was sympathetic. And encouraging.

The problem very often. In evangelism is this. That you and I. In trying. We bend over backwards. To help people. And then we tend.

[29 : 16] To give them the wrong advice. We tend to show them. The wrong road. And we miss out. You've got to tell the truth.

No matter what it costs. And the truth is this. Says Jesus to the young man. There are three things. That you need. You really need to know. Yourself as a sinner. You see this man.

That missed the point of the law. The law of God. As we heard last week. Here. Exposes sin. When you read the Bible. There are times.

When you won't feel very comfortable. Reading the Bible. When you read through the law of God. You begin to feel uncomfortable. And you realize. You're not doing these things at all.

And you realize. That there's more to the law. Than the letter. The law is spiritual. Says Paul. It was so spiritual. He says in my life. I made a discovery one day.

[30 : 15] And the discovery was this. That I had not known sin. Except the law had said. Thou shalt not know sin. What is it? Thou shalt not sin. What did he mean? He meant this.

That for years. And years. And years. He was a Pharisee. Thinking he was keeping the law. And then. When the spirit of God. Came with power into his life.

He realized. That there was more to the law. Than he thought. Realized. Jesus said the same thing to them. On the same on the mount. The law says.

You must not commit murder. That doesn't mean to say. That you've got to knife someone deliberately. That you've got to take a gun. And shoot a person. Jesus says. There's more to murder than that.

It's as deep as this. If you harbor. Hate it in your brother. In your heart. Towards your brother. You're guilty of murder. Same with adultery. It isn't a case of physically going and taking a woman.

[31 : 15] And committing sin with her. It's as deep. See does this. It's looking after her. And lasting for her. That's adultery. In the spirit. Of the thing.

And so Jesus said to this young man. Do you think you've kept the law? No you haven't. And this is how you're going to know it. He says. Sell. Go thy way.

Sell whatsoever thou hast. And give to the poor. And then come. And thou shalt have treasure in heaven. Take up the cross. And follow. Me. Jesus takes a knife.

You see. To this man. And he opens up his heart to him. And he asks him. Have you really kept the law? What about the sin of covetousness in your life?

And nobody discovered why the man was so rich. Nothing mattered in his life. But his possessions. He was very religious.

[32 : 13] Very respectful. Very concerned about his soul. But you see. He wouldn't give up his life's work. And his life's work was to amass as much as he possibly could to himself.

And it didn't matter who suffered in the process. As long as he got what he was after. And Jesus asks him. Have you really kept the law as you thought you were keeping it?

And then he says something else to him. If you really want eternal life. You've got to get rid of this sin. That is in your life.

The sin is the sin of covetousness. Amassing all that you can for yourself. Having your life dominated by this one thing. Which is in your life.

Well he says to him. If you're going to have the life that you want. And the missing link in your life. You've got to give that up. The thing that is standing between you.

[33 : 20] And this very life that you want. One thing. You love. This is the missing element in your life. Giving that up.

That you may obtain what you want. And that's what we call repentance. It is being so sorry for your sins. That you are prepared to give them up.

And repentance is not easy. That is why. Repentance is always associated with tears. With tears. In the Bible. The tears. Of repentance.

The pain. And the agony. Of having to go through. This giving up process. That I may lay hold.

Of eternal life. But my friend. There's no other way in which you can do it. Not that repentance is the ground on which you are saved. But it's part of the process.

[34 : 18] Part of the process. No one has ever been saved. Without repenting. And repenting is that. Giving up.

What comes between you. And salvation. Whatever the sin may be. It may not be covetousness in your life. But I know that it is there.

Whatever it is. There is always something. Standing between. The unsaved sinner and Christ. Always something. And that sinner will never be saved.

Till he gives up. What stands between him. And the Savior. And again I speak to you here tonight. Lord. And again I ask you to answer the question for yourself.

Knowing as you do know. That you are a stranger to eternal life. That God is not in your life through faith in Christ. Knowing that there is this missing element in your life.

[35 : 22] You who are disturbed. And you who are dissatisfied. You who know. That this is missing. You. Know as well.

What it is that you find so difficult to give up. That you may obtain. Eternal life. And you have as I said last week.

To go through the pain barrier. Of us. Jesus said to this man. Sell. Whatsoever thou hast. Give it away.

Live. And thou shalt have treasure. In heaven. That. Is repentance. So. Here you are now. Confronted with you need. To abandon your sin. If you really want. Eternal life.

[36 : 20] And you know why some of you are finding it so easy to live tonight. Do you know why you are not a Christian. Because my friend. You are not prepared to accept the agony. Of giving up what the Lord's finger.

What the Lord puts his finger on. In your life. And then there is this third element. Faith. And come he says.

Take up the cross. And follow me. Now this is what I dealt with last week. And just no word. You see. If you are going to give up your sin. Don't think you are going to find yourself in a vacuum.

You see there are some people who are perplexed about this. I was. And I am sure some others are. As it was in the throes of conversion. I wonder now. Yes I know that I have got to give up this life.

I know really in my heart of hearts. That if I am to be a Christian. If I am to be a believer. I must give this up. I really must. Whatever it is.

[37 : 20] In one sense. Generalizing it is this. A life in which Christ is not. I must give that up. But my problem is this. It's not the difficulty I have in thinking of giving it up.

It's the problem of knowing what I am going to have. Is my life going to be lived in a vacuum?

Do you remember how Paul spoke and defined. Spoke of the revival that had hit Thessalonica?

Word he says has gone abroad throughout the world. What happened here. How he says you turned from idols. To serve the living God.

And to wait for a son from heaven. That's faith. You see faith brings you. To Jesus Christ. Come. Take up the cross and follow me.

[38 : 22] This is as it were the substitute. For that which stands between you and him. You give up. That you may receive something far far better.

And the thing you receive first of all is the cross of Christ himself. You identify yourself with Jesus. Who died on the cross.

And then you shoulder the cross that he gives you. And you follow him. Oh I know the way is difficult. I said last week. I know there's pain as so is it with this.

I know there's agony. I know that. I know it involves a painful agonizing decision. Yes. But look at the compensation.

Follow. Me. That's it. He takes over. The life. That was once dominated.

[39 : 23] By sin. And the challenge to you is this. Tonight. As he said to the young man. You give up. What comes between you and me. And you take me.

You accept me. And really. That isn't a comparison. It's a contrast.

A life of sin. Compared to a life of faith. In Jesus Christ. And here you have finally. This very sad party. And he was sad that that sin went away grieved.

For he had great possessions. Why was he sad? Because he couldn't practice the truth. Because he recognized that the demands were too great. And by his action he admitted that he was too much in love with his sin. To part with it.

[40 : 24] To receive a savior. He was sad because he wasn't prepared to accept the terms of salvation. He was sad because his mind, his will, his affections.

Were not won. From the service of sin to the service of Christ. He was sad. Because in his heart he really preferred treasures on earth.

To treasures on heaven. And perhaps the sadness in your life tonight lies just there. That you recognize.

And you know if this is the case with you. Use a sad state indeed. Because you recognize that notwithstanding the claims and the demands that are made upon you.

You are not prepared. To meet them. You just can't do it. And you go away once again.

[41 : 29] Sad. Well my friend before you go. Let me remind you of this. And you reminded of it.

Those of us who were here last Thursday as well. You may never again. Be challenged by Christ in the gospel.

There is a sense in which you tonight. Are being interviewed by him. As that rich young ruler was interviewed that night. And the thought that you may never again be interviewed.

Or to add to your sadness. But I can't leave you without saying this. What our Lord I think is telling this young man is this.

And he went on to tell this to the disciples. That what you may feel impossible. Is possible with God. And I say that to encourage you.

[42 : 37] I say that to encourage you. I know. Full well. That when you consider yourself and the things that you have to do. You sort of draw back.

You say no I just can't do it. I can't do it. Well I accept that my friend. And this is the teaching of Jesus. I believe to this young man. As he went on to say to the disciples. No he says.

He couldn't do it. But God did. Or God could. If he had only committed himself to God. With men it is impossible. But not with God.

I know. That no one of us. Can save himself or herself. But God can. And the teaching here is this. He's driving this young man. In his felt inability.

To the God. Who could save him. And he didn't do it. He went away. He went away. Why should you go away. When you can come to him.

[43 : 38] To save you. And there's one other thing here. Peter I think. Is almost. Trying to console his Lord.

When he says to him. Ah yes. He said. But. At least some of us. Have left. All to follow thee. And so he was putting his hand. On Jesus shoulder.

And saying to him. Don't be discouraged. You see. Here was an interview. And as far as we can judge. Speak with reverence. Jesus failed. Jesus failed to direct this man. To sad.

Or I'll put it another way. This man refused to respond. To the advice that Jesus gave. And you can well imagine. Jesus feeling. He was a man of sorrows. And acquainted with grief.

And those of us who are on the service of Christ. There are times when we feel discouragement. Times when we say with. I say of old. Is anyone at all. Believing what we're saying.

[44 : 33] And this is the kind of situation. Which Peter has to wear. Put his hand on his shoulder. And said. Lord. Don't be discouraged. At least. Some of us. Have followed you.

And Jesus answered. And he says. I tell you Peter. No one has given up. Home. Father. Mother. Brother. Sister.

For my sake. But has received. Far more than he gave up. In this life. And in the life to come. Everlasting life.

And there's a second element of encouragement for you tonight. Of course you can't do it yourself. But he can do it for you. That's the first thing. The second thing is this.

My friend. There is no comparison. With what you have to give up. And what he gives. No comparison at all.

[45 : 29] Put it another way. It's well worth giving up everything. For his sake. For his sake. And the third thing. That comes out here is this.

As the narrative ends. Have you noticed this? We read there tonight in Luke's gospel. These three stories are linked together. The Pharisee and the publican praying in the temple.

The rich young man coming to Jesus in his need. And Jesus taking up little babies in his arms and blessing them. And do you know what the connecting link between the three is?

It's the link of utter helplessness. The sinner cries. God I have nothing.

Have mercy on me. The baby is caught up in his arms. And has nothing unless he blesses. And he laid his hands on them and he blessed them.

[46 : 27] And the rich young man comes and he has nothing. After all he tried. And he comes with nothing. With a plea. To give him the remedy for his need.

And the remedy is given. And that's a connecting link. And this is the glory of the gospel. The gospel finds you and me tonight. With nothing. In the presence of God.

And this is glory. God meets us. In our utter helplessness. And is able to save us. Will you come and say tonight.

With Augustus Toplady. Remember the way that he put it. Not the labour of my hands. Can fulfil thy lost demands. Could my zeal no respite know.

Could my tears forever flow. All for sin could not atone. Thou must save. And thou alone. And in the well known words.

[47 : 29] He went on to say this. Nothing. In my hand I bring. Simply to thy cross I cling. Naked come to thee for dress. Helpless look to thee for grace.

Foul. I to the fountain fly. Wash me Savior. Or I die. Will you come.

Let us pray. O Lord. In thy mercy save us. Take us we pray thee to thyself. And help us tonight to come.

In all our sinful inadequacy. And hopelessness. And lostness. And cry to thee for salvation. Knowing.

That thou wilt save. Do it for thy name's sake. And the praise should be thine in Christ. Amen.