

The One Thing Is Christ!

Mark 10:17-22 NKJ ¹⁷ 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?"

¹⁸ So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one *is* good but One, *that is*, God.

¹⁹ "You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Do not defraud,' 'Honor your father and your mother.'"

²⁰ And he answered and said to Him, "Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth."

²¹ 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."

²² But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

"The man came running." He desperately eager wanted something from Jesus. Yet when Jesus offers him the very thing that he asked for he walks away dejected. Why? Because he was a man who wanted more, more riches, more of his own righteousness, more. And to him Jesus' offer looked like less.

Kaylee used to hate car rides. Now she loves them. The difference? We bribed her. She gets graham crackers when she gets in the car. But one is never enough. No matter how many we give her she always wants one more.

By nature, we are people who always want more. We often tell ourselves "just one more." Just one more graham cracker, just one more story before bed, just one more piece of chocolate, just another 15 minutes of sleep, just a little more money, just one more day etc. But when we get one more it is never enough.

What did our reading from Ecclesiastes say:

Ecclesiastes 5:10 ¹⁰ He who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver; Nor he who loves abundance, with increase.

When our hearts are set on earthly treasures they are never satisfied. No matter how much we have.

When we think of the word greed, or covetousness we think of people like scrooge. We tell ourselves I am not greedy I do not want a lot, I only want just one more, or just a little more. But greed is greed

whether we want one more or one million more. Greed is greed whenever we fail to be content with what God has given.

This is one reason why gambling is such a bad thing. It feeds that natural desire for more, more, more. Most people even when they win just keep on gambling hoping to win even more. Never satisfied.

The snickers bar commercials promise that snickers satisfies, but how many other snack commercials promise just the opposite. "You can't eat just one." And they are usually right, because it is junk food. It tastes good but it can't satisfy you because it doesn't have the nutrients that your body is truly craving.

This is the same problem we have. Our soul craves the water of life and the bread of life, but we try to fill the emptiness inside us with earthly treasures. These things never satisfy the true craving of our souls and so we just keep eating that same junk soul food.

Jesus offers us instead the true "snickers bar" for our soul, the only thing that can really satisfy.

As Jesus told the Samaritan women:

John 4:13-14 "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, ¹⁴ "but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life

Jesus is the one more thing we need the one who satisfies.

It is clear that this young man like us is too attached to his earthly riches. He has a problem wanting more and is unwilling to let go even after Jesus offers him eternal life in exchange. But that isn't what he came to Jesus looking for. At least it isn't what he asks for. Instead, what he asks for is more righteousness. But not more of Jesus righteousness but more of his own righteousness. "What can I do to be even better than I am?" "What more can I do so that I can prove that I am even more righteous?"

This young man was greedy not just for money but also for more commandments so that he could show off how righteous he really was.

We know that we can not be justified before God on the basis of our works. And yet in this also we often fall into this same trap of thinking "just one more."

If I can just be a little bit better at being a wife my husband will love me more. If I just had one more day I could get everything done. If I can just do a little bit better job with my sermon the congregation will think me a wonderful pastor. Always one more thing, if I can just do that one more thing people will think well me, love me, be my friend.

Greed isn't always about money, sometimes we are greedy for praise, for friends, for popularity. Just a little more

Even though God does not judge us on the basis of the law we often judge ourselves on that basis. But after Jesus lists all the commandments, he tells the young man, “just one more thing.” The law will always have just one more thing that we ought to do. Just one more step that must be reached.

We ought to measure ourselves against God’s law so that we learn to repent of our sins. But we dare not judge our worth on that basis because we are always short. Rather we are judged by the love of Christ which values us even as sinners and assures us of his love.

We not only use the law to judge ourselves but others as well. If my spouse simply did this one thing. If my children or my parents only changed this one thing about themselves. My friend, my neighbor, my brother, my pastor, my teacher, my governor, if they would just do this thing that way or that thing this way. They ought to do this like that of that like this.

The Law always demands one more thing. We always want one more thing. The only thing that satisfies is Jesus.

So why does Jesus tell this young man there is one thing you lack, “go and sell all.” If we aren’t careful we might have a tendency to read it that way. As though the one thing the young man lacks was selling all his possessions. Jesus says one thing but then he lists four things: 1. go your way. 2. sell all and give to the poor. 3. pick up your cross. 4. follow me.

Either Jesus is really bad at math or else it is only one of those four things that is the “one thing the young man lacks.”

The one thing the man lacks is not selling all his possessions or picking up his cross. When Jesus says one thing you lack, the one thing is “ME.” The one thing this young man lacked was Jesus himself.

We are right when we think, “I just need one more thing.” We’re right, we do need one more thing. The problem is that we attempt to fill that longing with earthly things, which can never satisfy. The one thing that can satisfy is Jesus.

Mark 10:21 ²¹ Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him,

How many people will look at us the way Jesus will? How many people will look past all our failures and love us anyway? How many people will look at us and ask nothing of us but simply love us? How many people will even give their lives for us?

Jesus doesn’t ask one more thing of us. He doesn’t demand just a little more. Jesus loves us as we are. He is the one thing we need.

We keep searching for one more thing, a little more money, a little more time, one more reason why others should think well of us. But earthly treasures, whether its money or praise or our works, are never the one thing we need.

Forget about all of that stuff and follow me. That is what Jesus is telling this young man. When he says sell all he isn't saying that selling everything will make the man a better person. Jesus is simply saying all that stuff is useless. It won't satisfy. Why keep it? Why hold on to it. Get rid of that stuff and follow me

The one thing we need is Jesus. Jesus is the only one who satisfies.