

QUESTION: Is God just looking for GOOD BEHAVIOUR? And RIGHT THINKING?

Matthew 22:37–38 (ESV) ³⁷ And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment.

Deuteronomy 6:4–6 (ESV) ⁴ “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ⁵ You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. ⁶ And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.

A. What God Wants Most (The Rich Young Ruler)

Mark 10:17–31 (ESV) ¹⁷ And as he was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

- **FIRST:** great question! How do we gain salvation? What matters most to You, oh God?

¹⁹ You know the commandments (KNOWLEDGE) ‘Do not murder, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and mother.’ (PRACTICES) ”

- **SECOND:** Jesus starts with KNOWLEDGE → then highlights PRACTICES

²⁰ And he said to him, “Teacher, all these I have kept from my youth.”

- **THIRD:** He had right KNOWLEDGE (orthodoxy) and right PRACTICE (orthopraxy)
- **What happens next?** Surely, Jesus said, “**GOOD JOB! KEEP GOING! Or, JUST BELIEVE**”?

CAVEAT: At this point in the story... we usually give a caveat saying, “what Jesus asked him to do next, he’s not asking you to do.”

- We focus so much on NOT doing something rash that we easily miss the HEART OF THE MATTER.

²¹ And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.” ²² Disheartened by the saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. ²³ And Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How difficult it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!”

- **PAUSE:** Jesus instructed us how to LIVE (**Luke 6**) COME → LISTEN → PRACTICE.
- **QUESTION:** If a young person came and asked you what else they need to do for eternal life? Or to grow in their faith? And you saw they were acing the doctrinal exam and living a moral life. How would you respond? “**Go and SELL ALL YOU OWN → THEN follow Jesus**”?!?!?
 - Wait. Jesus. This is NOT the A... B... C... to Z model we use! You are jumping the gun!
- **QUESTION: What matters MOST – MONEY or HEART?**
- **FOURTH:** Jesus “LOVES HIM” by saying, “you are still missing ONE thing – go and SELL all you own”

JESUS is getting to the HEART OF THE MATTER – More than just right beliefs & practices – more than ability, money, & resources → He wants our HEARTS!

²⁴ And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said to them again, “Children, how difficult it is to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.” ²⁶ And they were exceedingly astonished, and said to him, “Then who can be saved?”

DECEPTION WARNING: “Comfort Culture” allows us to check the boxes of “Right belief & practices” without ever truly addressing our own **HEARTS** → **who sits on the THRONE of our HEARTS?** This is the most important question we ask ourselves!

- **The rich young ruler is not about giving away all your money** (although it may be for YOU, up to Jesus not me) **it IS about Lordship and what you LOVE most!** Jesus directly addresses the IDOL in his life – WEALTH.

JESUS’ WORDS: “It is easier for a CAMEL to go through the EYE OF A NEEDLE than for a rich person to enter heaven.” **WHY?** **Because He asks for the MOST important thing we have! Our HEART! Our LOVE & AFFECTION! Our WORSHIP!**

The Warning of the Pharisees (Right Beliefs & Practices, Wrong Heart): Matthew 15:8 NIV “These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.”

Matthew 23:23 (ESV) ²³ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe spices but you have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.”

GOD WANTS YOUR HEART – your WHOLE HEART – and NOTHING else will do.

²⁷ Jesus looked at them and said, “With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God.”

POSSIBLE with God! BE ENCOURAGED! The GOD who created ALL things – died for us – reigns sovereignly – YES – that GOD → stands ready to HELP – IF we SURRENDER our HEARTS to Him...

B. Wholehearted Devotion – Giving God our “YES”

Jeremiah 29:13–14 (ESV) ¹³ You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart. ¹⁴ I will be found by you, declares the Lord...

Acts 17:27–28 (NIV) ²⁷ God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. ²⁸ ‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’ As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’

1 Samuel 16:7 (NIV) ⁷ But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

LISTEN: If you fail at everything in life – money, relationships, struggle, stress, etc. BUT major in SEEKING GOD WITH YOUR WHOLE HEART – You will have been more successful than many Kings, celebrities, and influencers that have walked the earth!

Matthew 13:14–23 (ESV) ¹⁹ *When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path.* ²⁰ *As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, ²¹ yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away.* ²² *As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.* ²³ *As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.*”

Four Types of HEARTS:

1. Hears & does not understand → Rejects the Gospel
2. Hears & walks away when trouble comes → Blessings > Blesser
 - E.g. sickness, sin struggle you can't overcome, broken relationships, persecution, etc.
3. Hears & tries to add Jesus to their life → Heart belongs to another
 - E.g. Salvation a “get out of jail free” card; continues to live wholeheartedly for SELF
4. Hears & surrenders to Jesus – loving Him with their whole heart!
 - NOT PERFECT → But LOVES JESUS

RIGHT beliefs → Surrender → RIGHT practices → Becomes more like Jesus

Joel 2:12–13 (NIV) ¹² *“Even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.”* ¹³ *Rend your heart and not your garments (outward ACTIONS). Return to the Lord your God, ...*

IF you: never get healed, free from _____, restored relationships, lose all your popularity, and get rejected by those around you, get asked to sell your possessions, to give up your time, resources, etc.
would you still FOLLOW JESUS?

QUESTION: What do you LOVE most? What or who is sitting on the THRONE of your HEART? Say “YES”!

(As they ponder) The EXCHANGE: Wholehearted Surrender for Knowing Christ → Philippians 3:8 (NIV) *“I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ.”*

IF all you get from this life is JESUS – is that enough for you? REND YOUR HEART – “YES”

C. Right Practice: Engage IN the Body of Christ (Church)

1 Corinthians 12:12–13 (NIV) ¹² *Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.* ¹³ *For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—...*

Romans 12:5 (NIV) ⁵ *so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.*

Ephesians 4:14–16 (NIV) ¹⁴ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵ Instead, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶ From him the whole body, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. (you & I)

1 Peter 4:10; 1 Thes 5:11; Heb 10:24-25; Acts 2:42-46

QUESTION: IF Jesus says we were made to become His Body (church), and we are to meet regularly, confess to one another, encourage each other, serve each other, and grow in Christ TOGETHER → Why is it that so many Christians find things like serving or committing to a small group OPTIONAL?

Sunday morning sets the direction (GPS/Knowledge), but small groups & serving are where the habits are practiced together (practice grounds) so that we BECOME like CHRIST – our part? BEING his BODY.

Small groups → SHOW UP – be vulnerable – come to GIVE, not just RECEIVE

Serving → Serve IN the church, or serve the people IN your small group, or _____

BECOME the Body of Christ – BECOME like JESUS.

QUESTION: Will you join us in... *“BECOMING a community of fully devoted followers of Jesus who join His mission, strengthen His church, and renew our region and beyond – ALL for the glory of God?*