

WEEK 18: JESUS COUNSELS THE RICH YOUNG RULER

HIGH SCHOOL

GOALS

What are the 10 Commandments and how do they apply to me?
What is Christian discipleship and how does it apply to me?

LESSON

Materials Needed: Bible

Extended Learning Opportunity for Teachers:

The Gospel of Matthew: Torah for the Church by Fr. Lawrence Farley, pgs 250-261

The Explanation of the Holy Gospel According to Matthew by Blessed Theophylact, pgs 161-168

The Ten Commandments <http://www1.antiochian.org/ten-commandments>

The Ten Commandments <https://www.goarch.org/-/the-ten-commandments>

JESUS COUNSELS THE RICH YOUNG RULER

Read Matthew 19:16-22

Behold! This characteristic “behold!” in Matthew’s gospel is once again letting us know that this was an unexpected or surprising event. This rich, young ruler showed up and wanted to ask Jesus directly if there was something specific he could do to guarantee he would have eternal life.

Jesus replies to this rich man, “*Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.*” Fr. Lawrence Farley explains, “If the young man is to find his way, he must recognize that true goodness is transcendent and otherworldly, and not be so quick to think that goodness can be easily attained.”

What are the commandments that Jesus is talking about here? He is referring to the 10 Commandments that Moses received on Mt. Sinai. Holy Tradition has taught us that these commandments were given to Moses on two tablets: 4 on the first and 6 on the second. The first four commandments instruct us about our devotion to God, while the next six commandments instruct us on how we should act towards each other.

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1. I am the Lord thy God...Thou shalt not have any other gods before me.
 2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven images...Thou shalt not bow down before them.
 3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord they God in vain.
 4. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.
 5. Honor thy father and mother
 6. Thou shalt not kill.
 7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
 8. Thou shalt not steal.
 9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
 10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house.
(nor anything or anyone within their home)

The rich man asks Jesus specifically which commandments he needs to keep because the Pharisees liked to emphasize the tradition of the elders. Jesus responds to him and lists the six commandments from the Law pertaining to our love of neighbor (each other). Why these six instead of all ten? Jesus said this because our “love of God can be measured in love of neighbor.” (Farley, pg 258)

Before going to confession, we can reflect on the ten commandments. Did we keep all of them? How do these commandments pertain to us in our daily life today?

But the rich man has assured Jesus that he has kept all of these commandments, but he still feels something is lacking. Why would he feel that way? He has plenty of money to take care of all of his needs. He is an overall “nice” guy because he follows the commandments. What could possibly leave this rich man feeling like something is still missing in his life? The rich man is hoping Jesus will tell him to do something heroic and thereby provide both fulfillment in his heart and also secure him a place in heaven.

“Jesus does not contradict the man, nor say that he has not kept the commandments. But He realizes that the man’s perception of something lacking is a sign that God is calling him to perfection, to Christian discipleship...He therefore invites him to become perfect (Gr. *teleios* - ‘mature, whole’) to reach the goal for which he was made. He should go from where he is, sell his possessions, and give the money to the poor. Then he will have treasure in the heavens. He should break the mold of his past life and come, follow Jesus in a new life. In that new life, the void of his heart will be gloriously filled.” (Farley, 258)

But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

This rich man turned down the opportunity to fill the void in his heart and have a new life in Christ. Each one of us has the opportunity to be a disciple of Christ, even today. How do we do this? The lives of the saints provide us with numerous examples. Some of them were deacons, priests, bishops, monks, or nuns. Others took care of the poor and sick. While still others seized any opportunity in their lives to show love and mercy to the people around them, just as Christ would do. These moments occur in our every day life and provide us the opportunity to become disciples of Christ as well.

Matthew 19:23-26

Then Jesus said to His disciples, "Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say to you, 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. When the disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?" But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Jesus provides us with a compelling visual. Most of us have seen a sewing needle. The small space at the tip of the needle where the thread is sent through is called, "the eye of the needle." Most of us have either seen a camel at the zoo or at least seen video of one next to a person. They are not a small animal and they certainly wouldn't be able to fit through the eye of a needle. Jesus is explaining that money can have such an enormous hold on us that we are unwilling to let go of it and become His disciple, just as the rich man who walked away from him.

As further illustration to the point, there is a gate in Jerusalem that is called, "The Eye of the Needle." The merchants' camels could not fit through this doorway into the city with everything loaded onto them. The merchants had to painstakingly unload everything off of the camel and carry it through the gate by hand. They could not get through the gate with all of their possessions.

St. Theophylact explains, "As long as a man is rich and he has in excess while others do not have even the necessities, he can in no way enter the kingdom of heaven. But when all riches have been shed, then he is not rich and so he can enter."

The disciples were "astonished" at this because many believed that wealth was a sign of reward from God. Who could be saved then? ... *With God all things are possible.*

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MIDDLE SCHOOL

GOALS

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LESSON

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JESUS COUNSELS THE RICH YOUNG RULER

VOCABULARY

- **commandment:** a rule; to direct with specific authority
- **The 10 Commandments:** ten rules given by God to us (Exodus 20)
- **Where is the book of Exodus found in the Bible?** (Old Testament; after Genesis; Exodus means - a departure, usually a large number of people)

Find and read Matthew 19:16-26

There was a rich, young ruler who traveled probably a long distance to find Jesus. Matthew lets us know that this was an unexpected visit from the rich man as he starts this story with, “Now behold!”

This rich man comes straight out and asks Jesus what he could do to ensure he will have eternal life. Jesus responds back to him saying that he must keep the commandments. The rich man wasn't positive which commandments Jesus was talking about because the Pharisees liked to stress the tradition of the elders in addition to the Law, so the rich man asks Jesus to be more specific.

Jesus tells the rich man:

- You shall not murder
- You shall not commit adultery
- You shall not steal
- You shall not bear false witness
- Honor your father and your mother
- You shall love your neighbor as yourself

These six commandments (above) pertain to how we treat each other. The rich man tells Jesus that he keeps all of these commandments.

Jesus continues and tells him that he needs to give away all of his money and possessions and then follow Him. This proves to be more than the rich man was willing to do. He had become extremely attached to his money, land, and possessions so he turns away from Jesus and sadly walks off.

How can we be disciples of Christ today in our own lives? We can read examples of how to do this by reading the lives of the saints. Some of them were deacons, priests, bishops, monks, or nuns. Others helped the poor and sick, while still others helped in whatever ways presented themselves in their daily lives. What are some more examples?

Why did Jesus only list the commandments pertaining to how we treat one another and left off the other four pertaining to God? Because our “love of God can be measured in love of neighbor.” (Farley, pg 258)

The first four of the commandments pertain to our obligations to God:

- I am the Lord thy God...Thou shalt not have any other gods before me.
- Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven images...Thou shalt not bow down before them.
- Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
- Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Jesus then explains to the disciples that it is extremely difficult for the rich to enter the kingdom of heaven - *...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.* This is difficult for the disciples to understand because many believed that the rich were blessed and rewarded by God, but they had misunderstood wealth's value.

MOSES RECEIVING THE 10 COMMANDMENTS



WEEK 18: JESUS COUNSELS THE RICH YOUNG RULER

3RD & 4TH GRADE

GOALS

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JESUS COUNSELS THE RICH YOUNG RULER

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Jesus tells the rich man:

- You shall not murder
- You shall not commit adultery
- You shall not steal
- You shall not bear false witness
- Honor your father and your mother
- You shall love your neighbor as yourself

These six commandments of the ten commandments. They tell us how we should treat one another. The rich man explains to Jesus that he keeps all of these commandments.

Jesus continues and says that the rich man needs to give away all of his wealth and then follow Him. This proves to be much more than the rich man was expecting or willing to do. The rich man had become extremely attached to his money, land, and possessions so he turned away from Jesus and sadly walked off.

How can we follow Jesus today in our own lives? We can read examples of how to do this by learning the lives of the saints. Some of them were deacons, priests, bishops, monks, or nuns. Others helped the poor and sick, while still others helped in whatever ways presented themselves in their daily lives. What are some more examples?

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MOSES RECEIVING THE 10 COMMANDMENTS



WEEK 18: JESUS COUNSELS THE RICH YOUNG RULER

1ST & 2ND GRADE

GOALS

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CLASS ROUTINE

Continue routine - move photo, light candle, venerate icon, prayer

VOCABULARY

- **commandment:** a rule; to direct with specific authority
- **The 10 Commandments:** ten rules given by God to us (Exodus 20)

JESUS COUNSELS THE RICH YOUNG RULER

Summarize Matthew 19:16-26

Now behold, there once was a rich man who traveled a great distance to find Jesus. He had everything he wanted but he knew he was missing something. What could it be? He decided to ask Jesus what he needed to do in order to make sure he went to heaven.

Jesus tells the rich man that he needs to follow the commandments given by God. The rich man wanted to make sure he knew exactly what Jesus was talking about so he asks Jesus to tell him which commandments he should follow.

Jesus says, “Do not murder. Do not commit adultery. Do not steal. Do not lie to others. Honor your father and mother. Love your neighbor as yourself.” These commandments were given to us by God and are rules for how we treat one another.

(There are also four more commandments that apply to God: There is only one, true God. Do not make stuff as important as God, and certainly do not worship these things. Never say God’s name in a mean way. Go to church on Sundays and on major feast days.)

The rich man told Jesus that he already does all of those commandments. So then Jesus tells him the next step is to give away everything he has and follow Him. The rich man extremely sad about this. He did not want to give away his stuff. He liked having all of it! Unfortunately, the rich man walked away from Jesus instead.

We have to be careful that we don’t let anything, including money, get in the way of God or how we treat others.

LORD, HAVE MERCY

Continue practice singing, “Lord, have mercy” in multiple languages

MOSES RECEIVING THE 10 COMMANDMENTS



WEEK 18: JESUS COUNSELS THE RICH YOUNG RULER

PRE-K AND KINDERGARTEN

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Jesus tells the rich man that he needs to follow the 10 commandments given to us by God.

LORD, HAVE MERCY

Continue practice singing, "Lord, have mercy" in multiple languages

MOSES RECEIVING THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

