



Christ and the Modern Church

Matt 19:16-22 (KJV)

- 16 And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?
17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.
18 He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,
19 Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.
20 The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?
21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.
22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

In the Gospel of St. Luke, the Scriptures refer to this man as a ruler – a man of wealth and of no mean social condition. Many modern Laodicean churches teach an opposite condition in a man's life than is illustrated here when he comes to Christ. What is the proper understanding of this passage and many others of the same nature in Holy Writ? There are a number of inconsistencies related which need careful consideration:

First, the young man did not address Christ as Lord, but as Good Master (or teacher). He clearly did not know the Personage to whom he addressed his inquiry. Christ tested his understanding when He inquired of him, "Why callest thou me good? There is none good one, that is God." He was fathoming the depths of the man's soul to see if he recognized Christ, Himself, as God.

Secondly, his question reveals a further misunderstanding of the Will of God. He asked what 'good thing may I do to inherit eternal life?' His premise was wrong and his knowledge of God lacking, for there is no way by which we may attain eternal life through the works of the Law. The young ruler probably surmised that there was some good endeavor that he could accomplish which would justify him in the sight of the Law. In actuality, like the thief on the cross, there is no good work we can do to be saved. Salvation is by Grace and not of works. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

Thirdly, the young man was not cognizant of his own sinful depravity before God. When Christ reminded him of the Commandments, he boasted that he had kept these from his youth. He probably sincerely believed that he had done so, but, if so, he was sincerely WRONG. As Jesus would reveal through a further questioning, the young man had not even kept the very first Commandment: "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me."

Now the young man had allowed the "cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches" to separate him from God. He had not kept the first Commandment... "I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt have none other gods before me."

The young man valued his riches more than he valued God Himself, so he went away sorrowful. How greatly this contrasts with the modern "name-it-and-claim-it" brand of deceivers who will tell you that God wants you to be rich and, if you are not, you are out of His Will. The devotee of Christ must surrender those things that eclipse His Creator, regardless of what that is, so that God can provide that which is needful in blessing us with a more abundant life in Him.

P. O. Box 128
Statesville, N.C. 28687

Phone: 704-873-8365
E-mail: aocusa@unitedenergy.net
Church: standrews@alaweb.com

The modern deceivers would have us believe that we must speak in some mysterious babbling hysteria in order to demonstrate that we are endowed with the Holy Spirit. They do this in spite of the admonition to neither add to, or take away, from the Word of God. They presume that God is giving them a 'revelation' outside His pure Word and, perhaps, superior to it. They claim that we must be RICH, that we must enjoy the sensual pleasures of this evil order in which we live; but the Christian must be the 'salt of the earth' and the 'light of the world'. The modern Laodicean church prefers ease of life to sacrifice and commitment, a casual regard to Holy Scripture rather than a serious and solemn view thereof, and a false gospel of good works over that of free Grace. They rush out to buy the latest sensational book written by men rather than God.

The modernizers may be compared to the lowly snail that avoids conscientiously the light of the day and the salts of the earth. They labor not in agriculture, but they emerge from under their rocks after the onset of darkness to devour the labors of the gardener. As the Day Star begins to ascend the sky, they flee to their dark places beneath the rocks. They despise light for it will cause them to melt away. They despise salt for the same reason. Take note of the words of the Psalmist: in Ps 58:7-8 –“ 7 Let them melt away as waters which run continually: when he bendeth his bow to shoot his arrows, let them be as cut in pieces.
8 As a snail which melteth, let every one of them pass away: like the untimely birth of a woman, that they may not see the sun. “

Let us not be so. Let us be People of the Book who live by every Word that proceedeth from the mouth of God and take note of the counsel given by the preacher in Ecclesiastes 12: “ And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh.

13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.”

The Most Rev. Jerry L. Ogles