



Repentance Tabernacle Church

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What shall You do to Inherit Eternal Life?

Scripture: Matthew 19:16-26; (Mark 10:17-27; Luke 18:18-27)

Everyone desires to have eternal life. Luke 10:25 tells us also that, “a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, **Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?**” Throughout history mankind has sought a way to extend life forever. He has continually sought some kind of “**fountain of youth.**” What many do not realize is that all people already are destined to live forever, whether in the torment of hell or in the great joys of heaven. Though all human life eventually ends, in the spiritual realm every person, saint or a sinner, will have an unending existence.

Our lives really begin with God! However, it is our choice whether or not we include God in our lives; He is available, but He does not automatically enter into our lives. Since God gave mankind human life and the free will to choose how that life is lived, man can choose to live without acknowledging or serving God. However, the joy of living life to its fullest is experienced only by knowing Jesus Christ through the power of salvation.

The rich young ruler’s first question revealed a common misconception: “*What good thing shall I do?*” **Many people have wrongly believed that they could merit God’s favor by living good lives.** One cannot do anything to merit eternal life, but all may have it by confession of sin and simple faith in Christ (John 3:16-20; Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 10:9-10). The only good thing we can do is to respond to the grace of God and receive His act of mercy. We are saved only by faith and obedience to the Scriptures. Faith causes us to turn to God in repentance of our sins and reliance upon His grace. In obedience to the Scriptures, we would obey “**Acts 2:38**” – we are baptized in water in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of our sins, and we receive the Holy Ghost, with the initial evidence of speaking with other tongues.

The rich young man’s wealth was his idol, his “graven image,” and he would not give it up. Thus, he violated the first and greatest commandment (Exodus 20:3; Matthew 22:36-40). Should all believers sell everything they own? **No.** We should, however, be willing to give up anything if God asks us to do so. This kind of attitude allows nothing to come between us and God and keeps us from using our God-given wealth selfishly.

Jesus explained that to enter into life we must keep the commandments (Matthew 19:17). This is not to suggest that we can affect our own salvation by our works, but it does reveal the edifying positive, life-giving virtue of God’s Word. Moreover, one can only experience the salvation of Jesus Christ through obedience to the Scriptures. The way to eternal life has always been through obedience to His commands and guidelines. Jesus said, “*If ye love me, keep my commandments*” (John 14:15). God has always connected our love for Him with our obedience to His commandments.

In the **Gospel of John**, Jesus defines eternal life (John 17:3), the promise for eternal life (John 3:16), who qualifies for eternal life (John 5:24) and what is required to have eternal life (John 6:51). However, **Paul stated** to the church at Corinth (1 Corinthians 6:9-10) and the church at Galatia (Galatians 5:19-21) who will not inherit eternal life.

In our quest for eternal life, we must be constantly aware of pleasing the Master. He alone has the words to eternal life (John 6:68). We must seek to fulfill His will for our lives and forsake the things that are not according to His plan and purpose for us. We must obey His commandments by loving God with all our hearts and loving our neighbor as we would love ourselves.

We cannot earn salvation by our works of righteousness, but it is according to His mercy that we are saved (Titus 3:5). With many religions confusing salvation with works, we must keep our focus on the grace and mercy of God. Works are important and even commendable, but our only source of salvation is by the grace of the Almighty! There is no work that we can do that could possibly earn our salvation from God; however, we also should realize that our faith is demonstrated by our works (James 2:18). Further, “*faith without works is dead*” (James 2:20). We serve Him with good works (Ephesians 2:8-10).

Love must be the motivation of our faith. Self-denial based upon anything but love will fail. We should base our commitment to God on our love for Him and what He did for us on Calvary. **No one who truly loves Him will choose the world and the things it offers and turn away from this great Savior.** Whatever Jesus Christ requires of us, we should serve Him faithfully by our love for Him and our commitment to please Him. May our lives exhibit a faith that works by love!