

Saint Timothy Lutheran – Edmonds, WA

October 11, 2009 – Rev. Craig A. Patterson

“No One Is Good But God Alone.”

(Text: Mark 10:17-22)

Context: Jesus, consistently, confronts people with their expectations and standards. He, continually, surprises them, and us, with His view of things. Just before our text, Jesus corrected His disciples when they wanted to keep the children back from Him so as not to bother Jesus and Jesus told them, “Let the little children come unto to Me for of such is the kingdom of God” (Mk. 10:14). Now, He shines a light on someone that most people would perceive to be the finest example of a good, upstanding, and religious young man, a young man that any parent would be pleased to have as a suitor for his/her daughter. This young man was rich, bright, well thought of, and an, outwardly, fine example of goodness and success. What could be wrong with him?

I. People, Commonly, Admire Those Who Are Rich, Educated, Upstanding In The Community, And Successful – The Goodness Of Such A One Seems Apparent.

- A. By all comparisons (among people) this young man was a real leader in the race to be good.
- B. Yet, the young man, himself, sensed something lacking within himself.
 1. The young man asked Jesus, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” (Mk. 10:17).
 - a. He had so much, but he wanted more. (“eternal life”)
- C. Jesus revealed to this young man what he truly lacked.
 1. A heart that clung to all of his belongings, a love for money, dwelt within this young man.
 2. Blindly, the young man felt that he had kept God’s commandments, “Teacher, I have kept all these things from my youth up” (Mk. 10:20).
 3. In verse 23, Jesus remarks to His disciples, “How hard it will be for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God!”

II. In His Person, Jesus Brings Into The Human Community The Very Goodness Of God By Which People Are Made Clean.

- A. Jesus loved this young man.
 1. Jesus approached this young man with the Law, first, in order to lead him to the Gospel. (“ For God so loved the world that He gave...”)
 - a. If a person is not aware of his/her sins, then why would they think that they have need of a Savior?
 - b. This young man’s self-righteousness came crumbling down as he walked away, “... grieved for he was one who owned much property” (10:22). We don’t know if after awhile he repented and then believed in Jesus.
 2. Jesus invited this young man to “follow” Him, that is, to “be attached” to the one true goodness that can redeem men from their lost condition.
- B. Jesus went to the cross for this young man (as He did for all sinners).
 1. He does not give up easily in His pursuit of the sinning soul.
 - a. We gain only a glimpse of the Savior reaching out to this young man and to all of us as we ponder this encounter.
- C. Jesus finds us where we are, exposes our sin, leads us to repentance and then faith in Him. (And we live in this repentance and faith.)
 1. Seeing our own lack of goodness and inability to attain goodness without Jesus is a beginning for us as God rescues us from the darkness that sin has caused. (We grow in our awareness of His goodness.)
- D. The “Good” that God is, is given to sinners through Christ who is “God with us.”