

**What do you think it means to declare Jesus as Lord?**

(Opening Question for discussion)

**Matthew 19:16** (NASB)

And someone came to Him and said, “Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?”

**If someone asked you this question, how would you answer?**

(Allow for any responses)

**Ephesians 2:8-10** (NKJV)

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

**Notice in Matthew that he asked what “good thing” shall I do. He was asking how he can obtain eternal life based on his own works. In regards to obtaining eternal life, is there anything we can do to add to all that Jesus has done?**

No. There is nothing we can do. Jesus has done it all. To add our works for salvation, though it may seem godly, is a step by our strength and not by faith alone. God has called us to trust His finished work on the cross as completely sufficient.

**In verse 10, who’s work is prepared for us?**

It is not our work but God’s work that was prepared for us. All we are to do is to “walk” in it by faith.

**Romans 10:9-10,13** (NKJV)

9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 13 For “whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

**So what do you think is needed for someone to obtain eternal life?**

Confess with your mouth and believe in your heart that Jesus is Lord.

**Matthew 19:17-18 (NKJV)**

17 So He said to him, “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.”

18 He said to Him, “Which ones?”

**Why do you think Jesus answered this man’s question by saying, “There is only One who is good”?**

The man believed that if he was good enough he would get to heaven. Jesus immediately corrects this assumption by saying that there is no one who is good except God alone. In other words, if he is hoping to get to heaven based on being good, he has already fallen short.

***Psalms 14:3 (NKJV)***

*All have turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.*

Jesus, to make his point, says that someone would need to be able to keep the commands of God in order to live a holy life. The man asks which ones which seems to indicate there are some commands that he perceives are negotiable or less important than others. So Jesus lists some of the Ten Commandments from Exodus 20.

**Matthew 19:18-22 (NKJV)**

18 Jesus said, “‘You shall not murder,’ ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ ‘You shall not steal,’ ‘You shall not bear false witness,’

19 ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ ”

20 The young man said to Him, “All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?”

21 Jesus said to him, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”

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

**Which commands did Jesus leave out?**

Review and list the 10 commandments found in Exodus 20.

1. You will have no other gods before Me
2. You will not make for yourself any idol
3. You will not misuse the name of the Lord your God
4. You will remember and keep the Sabbath day holy
5. Honor your father and your mother
6. You will not murder
7. You will not commit adultery
8. You will not steal
9. You will not bear false witness
10. You will not covet

The first four commands relate to: LOVING GOD

The last six commands relate to: LOVING OTHERS

Jesus left out the commands directly related to loving God above everything else.

**Why do you think Jesus left out these specific commands?**

The man would have known the Ten Commandments. They would have been taught and embedded into him as he grew up going to the Jewish synagogue. He should have become very suspicious then when Jesus left these very important ones out. But, because he was so eager to be declared “righteous” and worthy of heaven he focused solely on what he did do versus what he did not do. By leaving them out, Jesus is revealing the very area that the man is neglecting in his life.

**Why does Jesus respond by telling him to give away everything that he has to the poor and follow him?**

Jesus knew that this man's god was his wealth. As long as his money remained the most important thing to him, God could never be God in his life and God will not take second place in our lives. Whatever we value the most is what we declare to be our God. This is why the greatest commandment is to LOVE GOD with ALL your HEART, ALL your SOUL, and ALL your MIND.

**Why did the young man walk away sad?**

The young man's wealth gave him earthly success, significance, independence, comfort, and status. People in that culture were considered blessed by God if they had material wealth. For him to give up his wealth would be to forfeit everything he relied on to give his life meaning. His wealth had such a grip on him that when it came to choosing between following Jesus and his money, his money won. The reason he went away sad was because he knew that even with all the money he had, his life was empty and unfulfilled. He knew that there was some disconnect between him and God but taking a step of faith and trusting God with his life was a step he was not willing to take. His money was his God and he was not willing to let it go.

**Does this mean we need to give away our all our money to the poor in order to go to heaven?**

No. However, Jesus knew that money was this man's idol and that it was a barrier between him and God, so he challenged him on this point. Each of us has different things we give priority to in our lives. The question is, "Is there anything in our lives that takes a higher priority than God himself?" If there is, then Jesus would come to us and ask us to surrender that issue to him.

**What might be some things we might be tempted to value more than God?**

Relationship, Money, Family, Career, Hobby, Fame

**What might Jesus want to say to us in each of those examples?**

**If the man had been told simply to pray a prayer, asking for forgiveness for his sins, he would have likely done that and then walked away feeling he was now secure and going heaven.**

**Would his assumption have been correct?**

His repentance would have been superficial and incomplete. In his heart he was not willing to let God be God; he was not willing to let Jesus be Lord. There was still a rebellion in his spirit that did not trust God and he valued what his money offered him more than Jesus. He would have walked away deceived, believing he was a child of God, but in for a major disappointment on the day of judgment.

**Does this passage create any tension for you?**

How many people believe they are “in” God’s family because they prayed a “prayer”, but perhaps have not allowed Jesus to be Lord?

**How can we be sure we trust Jesus as Lord?**

Jesus has called us to obey Him. Confessing Jesus as Lord is the first step, and now we must live daily in obedience to God. We must do His will daily so we know we are trusting Him as Lord of our life.

**Matthew 7:21 (NKJV)**

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.”

**Read the following scenarios and consider how Jesus challenges their perception of his Lordship.**

**Matthew 8:19-20 (NASB)**

19 Then a scribe came and said to Him, “Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go.”  
20 Jesus \*said to him, “The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.”

**Why do you think the teacher might have been motivated to follow Jesus?**

Teachers love listening to good teachers. In this case, the teacher was obviously enthralled with Jesus’ teaching and expressed he would be willing to become his disciple and follow him everywhere. Surely, to train under a great teacher like Jesus would assure this teacher a position of honour and prestige among the people.

**How might Jesus’ response have made him think otherwise?**

Jesus never declared that life would be easy for his followers. Following him was never a guaranteed passage to a comfortable, wealthy, or even respected life. This man’s claim was a rash decision that was made without really considering the cost or what he would be called to surrender. Jesus was ultimately asking him if he felt it was still worth it to follow him even if it meant having to live by faith for a place to lay his head.

**What are some of the costs we might face if we truly choose to call Jesus, Lord?**

**Matthew 8:21-22 (NASB)**

21 Another of the disciples said to Him, “Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father.”  
22 But Jesus said to him, “Follow Me, and allow the dead to bury their own dead.”

### **What would have been so wrong with Jesus letting the man go and bury his father?**

Again, this is a situation where Jesus is challenging the priorities of the man.

**Let the dead bury their own dead:** Jesus describes those who are separated from God as being spiritually dead. Their spiritual death ultimately culminates in physical death and eternal judgment. Jesus is not in the “death” business, he is in the “life-giving” business. He is challenging this man to consider whether he is more interested in dealing with death, or is he more interested in giving life?

True, it is the man’s father, and Jesus calls us to honor our parents, but when Jesus calls us to follow him we have to make a decision as to whether our life centers on our earthly family or whether it centers on Jesus and his mission to rescue people from death. As important as burying family members is, obeying Jesus and giving life to others takes a higher priority. When God calls us to follow him and obey it is not always convenient, but if he is truly Lord, we obey.

### **Matthew 10:32-39 (NKJV)**

*32 “Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven.*

*33 But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.*

*34 “Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword.*

*35 For I have come to ‘set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law’;*

*36 and ‘a man’s enemies will be those of his own household.’*

*37 He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.*

*38 And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.*

*39 He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.*

**Which phrases in this passage do you find hard to accept?**

### **What point is Jesus stressing in the above passage?**

Jesus is saying that we need to understand our relationship with him is to come before any other relationship. The greatest command is to LOVE GOD first, then LOVING OTHERS follows from that. If those two are reversed then God is not God, your family or friends are your god.

When members of a family choose to set Jesus as their priority it will often create tensions within a family. Suddenly your values are different, your priorities are different, where and how you spend your time and money, who you enjoy being with all change. Not everyone will be thrilled that you have chosen to follow Jesus and it may create divisions within a family.

### **Have any of you had to pay a price in your relationships because you chose to follow Jesus?**

### **What does Jesus mean when he says to pick up your cross and follow him?**

When Jesus picked up his cross he was saying to the Father, "Not my will, but yours be done." Jesus did not want to die a painful, tortuous death on a cross, but he knew that it was the Father's will for him to do so in order to rescue all mankind. Jesus put to death his own will and preferences and chose to embrace the will of the Father despite the great suffering it would bring him. When he tells us to pick up our cross, he is calling us to follow his example of dying to self and embracing the will of God, whatever the cost.

### **Why do we find it hard to surrender our lives to the rule of Jesus?**

#### **Two common reasons:**

#### **1) Pride**

We like to be in control. We like to think we are self sufficient and that we are capable of doing everything on our own. Pride was the driving force behind **Satan's rebellion** as he desired to be equal with God. Pride was the driving force behind Adam and Eve's sin of eating the fruit, believing they would become like God, not needing him to tell them what to do. Pride is the driving force whenever we sit on the throne and declare ourselves god of our lives. Pride says I can do a better job with my life than God can. Pride keeps us from humbling ourselves before God.

#### **2) Fear**

A distrust that Jesus will meet all my needs. A fear of where he will lead me and what he might call me to do. It is ultimately rooted in a questioning of God's true love for me.

**1 John 4:18 (NKJV)**

*There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.*

**How does trusting God's love drive out all fear?**

If I trust that God loves me fully and will take care of my every need as I rely on him, then what is there to fear? There is no problem that is too great for him to solve, no enemy that is too strong for him to defeat, no need that is too desperate for him to meet. If I truly believe this, then I can hand all my fears and anxieties over to him with confidence.

**Philippians 4:6-7 (NKJV)**

*6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;  
7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

**In all of the above scriptures the question is raised, "What role will Jesus play in your life?"**

**To declare Jesus is Lord is to say that he is now the Owner of your life; he can do with it whatever he wishes. It is HIS! To declare Jesus is Lord requires a huge step of faith, trusting that he is HOLY, JUST, and that he LOVES you fully.**

**Philippians 2:9-11 (NASB)**

*9 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,  
10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

**Everyone will eventually declare Jesus is Lord. The only decision we have to make is whether we will do it as his child or as one who has been in constant rebellion against him, forced to bow as his defeated enemy.**