



# The Voice of Truth



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## What Shall I Do to Inherit Eternal Life?

by Jimmy Pettigrew

In **Mark 10**, beginning at **verse 17**; here we have the story of the rich young ruler who came to Jesus to ask Him the question that is one of the deepest longings, yearnings of the human heart. He wanted to know: "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" The Bible is clear. There are two paths which may be chosen in life (**Matthew 7:13-14**); the narrow way is the way that leads to eternal life and is the most important because it determines the destiny for the soul of man, which is of more value than all the riches of the world (**Matthew 16:26**). Many in the world today desire to have the best of both worlds, but such is impossible, since man cannot serve two masters (**Matthew 6:19-24**); man must serve one or the other. The rich young ruler is an inspired example of one who faced the great decision. The choice of masters determines our eternal destiny. Therefore, it is life's greatest decision.

This young man ran to Jesus and knelt to Him; he worshiped the Christ. In kneeling to Him, he recognized Jesus as Divine and entitled to worship. He asked the Good Teacher, "What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" He was concerned about eternal life; he went to the right Person to ask this question. Notice, "Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life" (**John 6:68**). This young man realized that eternal life was not granted unconditionally, that there was something which he would have to do. And he realized that in spite of the fact that there was something for him to do, that eternal life would still be a matter of inheritance (**Mark 10:17**).

What shall I do to inherit eternal life? **Mark 10:19**, "Thou knowest the commandments." **Matthew 19:17** says "...if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Indeed, something does have to be done.

What is it? "Keep the commandments." Be obedient to God's word! The Law of Moses was still in effect at that time, and this man was responsible to the Mosaic Law. This young ruler replied in **Matthew 19:18**, "Which?" That is, which commandment? He seemed to think that there was one certain thing which he could do that would secure him for eternal life.

Many today feel the same way, but the Lord stresses that there is not one commandment to keep, but all. The Bible declares in **Hebrews 5:8-9**, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (**1 John 5:3**). "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (**John 14:15**). "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my saying" (**John 14:23-24**). "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven" (**Matthew 7:21**). Obedience to the will of God is expected if we are to enter the kingdom of heaven; there is simply no other way to show our love to God, the truth, His word, the Gospel, but to obey! God is pleased with obedience (**1 Samuel 15:22**); obedience is required of all! And if we refuse, then we have no right to call Jesus our Lord (**Luke 6:46**). "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (**Ecclesiastes 12:13**).

What shall I do to inherit eternal life? Deny self! In response, the young man

affirmed concerning the commandments of God, "All these things have I observed from my youth up" (**Mark 10:20**). The rich man asked in **Matthew 19**, "What lack I yet?" Jesus said one thing thou lackest, Go thy way and whatsoever thou hast, give to the poor and thou shall have treasure in heaven. One thing he lacked – the surrender of self, which involved the surrender of all. Sell all! Christ must be all! One of the most difficult things in life is denying self, living apart from selfish desires and ambitions. Jesus showed the rich young man just how selfish and how earthly his thoughts and aims were. He showed him how firmly his heart which he thought longed for heaven was chained to this earth and all its material values. Here we find the very essence of Christianity – total surrender of self; the young man could not rise to the sacrifice. But, if we were to question ourselves today with such a question as, "Who rules in our life – God or self?" What kind of answer would we give? If we were to ask ourselves, "Who gets the most of our time and our material possessions – God or self?" What kind of answer would we give? "And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (**2 Corinthians 5:15**). The love of Christ constrains us to leave the world of sin and self; we are not to please ourselves (**Romans 15:1**).

This young man's possessions happened to be that which prevented him from following Christ. He would probably have given up half his possessions, but he could not give up all for Christ. What is it that prevents you from becoming a purer, stronger, holier person for Christ?

What shall I do to inherit eternal life? "Take up the cross, and follow me," said Christ (**Mark 10:21**). To be perfect, as he as this young man claimed to be, he was going to have to give up wealth, power and position, and cast his lot with the despised Teacher of Nazareth. Eventually, this cost of discipleship was not what the young man had in mind, for **verse 22** says that when he "heard that saying, he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions."

To take up the cross and follow Him is life's greatest challenge. To be a disciple of Jesus we must love Him more than anything in this world; every disciple of Jesus must bear his own cross (**Luke 14:27**). It costs to have heaven as our home. It costs to be able to enjoy the feast in heaven! It demands the bearing of the cross! That cross is the willingness to give up everything, even one's own life.

Following Jesus would be most difficult and would take enormous self-denial and sacrifice. However, He has promised to be with us to help us, to walk before us, to show the way, to walk beside us to give us strength, and to walk behind us to give us encouragement, but, he never, never, promised being His disciple would be easy! It may cost a great deal to serve God. Of course, the reward is worth it! The prize is worth the price!

The Christian walk is one that follows the path of the Lord. Surely, we would trade this earth in for a place where there will be no more death, mourning, crying, pain, sorrow, disappointment, and separation. Thank God that we can have Heaven, if we will just count the cost. If the cross of Calvary ever meant anything to you, let us get our priorities right. Jesus went to one of those drab wooden crosses so that you and I would never have to taste eternal death in Hell. He didn't have to do it, but He did it because His priorities were right. The least you and I can do is give up our lives to Jesus Christ!

### **"He Who Believes and Is Baptized Will Be Saved"** By Kent E. Heaton, Sr.

When Jesus finished teaching the multitudes on the mountain, "the people were astonished at His doctrine, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (**Matthew 7:28,29**). The teaching of Jesus was simple and plain to understand. **Mark 12:37** tells us the "common people heard Him gladly." The scribes and Pharisees of Jesus' day taught their own doctrines and laid burdens upon the people not according to God's will. However, the plea of the Son of God was to hear the word spoken and obey

it. He said, "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say?" (**Luke 6:46**).

Today, men are burdened with many doctrines and teachings that are according to the will of man and not the will of the Father. The word of God is not a book impossible to understand. If it is, our heavenly Father has given us an impossible task. The message of salvation is not kept in a dark corner somewhere to be revealed by scholarly men. Certainly, if the Creator of this world cannot put together a book whereby man can read and understand the plan of salvation, then the Creator of this world is not very great.

The common people understood the words of Jesus when He spoke to them two thousand years ago. These words are written down so that we may read and understand what man must do to be saved. The apostle Paul wrote in **Ephesians 3:3-4**, "How that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)." You and I can read—you and I can understand—you and I can know the answer to salvation.

The Father gives the plan of salvation. In order to come to God, one must believe that He is (**Heb. 11:6**). Our faith is the result of two things—the evidence of the invisible attributes of God clearly seen (**Rom. 1:20**) and a measure of the word of God. "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (**Rom. 10:17**). The heart is turned toward God to believe in those things that are revealed to man. Belief is not merely an action of the mind and heart but the soul devoting itself to the will of God—whatever the will of the Father might be.

Belief is necessary to understand the need to change a life of sin to a life of victory. Repentance demands a change in thinking, a change in action, a change in purpose and a change in will. The will is no longer governed by the intents of the heart, but by the commands of God. Peter told those gathered in **Acts 2** to repent! Jesus emphasized that without repentance, salvation was impossible (**Luke 13:3**). Upon this threshold of humility, a willingness to

confess the name of Jesus Christ pours from the lips of the undeserving. "For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (**Rom. 10:9-10**).

The final act of cleansing takes place in the waters of baptism. Here belief is tested; here faith is established; it is here the action of repentance takes flight to move one to disregard the tenets of man and seek full salvation in the blood of Jesus Christ. With the words of confession fresh upon the lips of the dying sinner, the blood of Jesus Christ washes away all sins in water (**Acts 22:16**). "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned ... Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit ... Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life ... were saved through water. There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (**Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Romans 6:3, 4; 1 Peter 3:20-21**).

"But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say?" (**Luke 6:46**)! Credit: [www.moodychurchofchrist.com](http://www.moodychurchofchrist.com)

### The "One Faith" Of The Gospel By Jonathan L. Perz

"Of what faith are you?"

The very question contradicts its Biblical answer. The Bible plainly says there is only "one faith" and that we are to "all come in the unity of" it (**Ephesians 4:3-6,13**—please read it for yourself).

Paul admonished the Philippians to be of "one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel..." (**Philippians 1:27**). Jude exhorted that we "contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (**Jude 3**). Paul and Barnabas

exhorted the disciples “to continue in *the faith*” (Acts 14:22). The Corinthians were told to “stand fast in *the faith*” (**1 Corinthians 16:13**). This is “the mutual faith” that Paul shared with the Romans (**Romans 1:12**) and the “like precious faith” that Peter spoke of (**2 Peter 1:1**).

The Colossians who had received Jesus Christ, were to “walk ye in Him: rooted and built up in Him, and established in *the faith*, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.” Regarding the faith, Paul also warned them to “Beware lest any spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ” (**Colossians 2:6-8**).

The Spirit promised, “that in the latter times some shall depart from *the faith*” (**1 Timothy 4:1**). We can read of others who had already “erred concerning *the faith*” (**1 Timothy 6:10, 21**). This is why Titus was told to rebuke some sharply “that they be sound in *the faith*” (**Titus 1:13**).

All of this serves as evidence that there is only “one faith and emphasizes the importance of “the faith of the gospel” (**Philippians 1:27**). What is the source of this *one faith*? No writer on earth can better express the answer to this question than “the author and finisher of our faith”—Jesus Christ (**Hebrews 12:2**).

The source of this “one faith” is not the pulpit of your church (unfortunately, the Bible does not always agree with the preacher—note the wisdom of **Acts 17:11-12**). The source of this “one faith” is not what makes you feel good (sin is often pleasurable and continuing in the faith sometimes means trials and tribulations—read **Hebrews 11:25** and **Acts 14:22**). This “one faith” is not found within the creed books of denominations (these teach for doctrines the com-

mandments of men—read **Matthew 15:8-9**). Rather, it is written, “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God” (**Romans 10:17**).

Does your faith come from the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Paul stated that preaching any other gospel would result in being accursed (read **Galatians 1:6-9**)? Therefore, he preached “the faith” (**Galatians 1:23**)—the only authority he kept and lived by (read **Galatians 2:20** and **2 Timothy 4:7**). Which “modern-day denomination” (i.e., faith) was Paul describing? With many different churches teaching many different faiths (i.e., doctrines—**2 John 9-11**) regarding salvation, the church, worship practices, the second coming, etc., it is essential to “examine yourselves and see whether you are in *the faith*” (**2 Corinthians 13:5**).

Clearly, there is no other faith that saves besides the one found within the pages of God’s word. We all accept that there is only “one Lord” and “one Spirit” and “one God” (**Ephesians 4:3-6**). Why not also accept that there is only “one faith,” seek after it, and accept no substitutes for it (read **Matthew 6:33; 7:7-8**)?

### What Must I Do To Be Saved?

**Hear and Learn** - Rom. 10:17 m. 10:9-10 ; 1

Pet. 3:21 ; John 6:45; 17:3

**Believe** - Heb. 11:6; John 6:29; 8:24

**Repent** - Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30

**Confess the Lord** - Matt. 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:21

**Be Baptized** - Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27

**Continue in the Apostles' Teaching** - Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:14-17

### About the Hillcrest church of Christ

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#### Times of Assembly

Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am  
Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am  
Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm\*

\*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month

[www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com](http://www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com)