

1. Read — Read the verses slowly and prayerfully several times. Write down any words or phrases that seem to stand out:

2. Meditate — Now begin to reflect on the verses and ask God what it means and how he wants to speak to you through the passage. **God what are you saying to me through this?**

3. Pray — Respond from your heart to what God has been saying to you. **What do you want me to know?** Write down your prayer to him or record whatever he says to you.

4. Contemplate — Be quiet before the Lord enjoying His presence.
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**How is God calling you to act in response to what he has shown you?**

# Quick Connect

**What is the Gospel saying? Mark 10:17-30 — Pg. 1**  
**What is the Church saying Past and Present? Pages 1-3**  
**What is God saying to you through this passage? Page 4**

## Gospel Reading – Mark 10:17-30 – Roman Missal

As Jesus was setting out on a journey, a man ran up, knelt down before him, and asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus answered him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: *You shall not kill; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; you shall not defraud; honor your father and your mother.*" He replied and said to him, "Teacher, all of these I have observed from my youth." Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said to him, "You are lacking in one thing. Go, sell what you have, and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." At that statement his face fell, and he went away sad, for he had many possessions. Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!" The disciples were amazed at his words. So Jesus again said to them in reply, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God." They were exceedingly astonished and said among themselves, "Then who can be saved?" Jesus looked at them and said, "For human beings it is impossible, but not for God. All things are possible for God." Peter began to say to him, "We have given up everything and followed you." Jesus said, "Amen, I say to you, there is no one who has given up house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands for my sake and for the sake of the gospel who will not receive a hundred times more now in this present age: houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and eternal life in the age to come."

## Spiritual Reading – Office of Readings

*From a commentary on Haggai by Cyril of Alexandria, bishop*

When our Savior came, he appeared as a divine temple, glorious beyond any comparison, far more splendid and excellent than the older temple. He exceeded the old as much as worship in Christ and the gospels exceeds the cult of the laws, as much as truth exceeds its shadows. Furthermore, I might point out that originally there was just one temple at Jerusalem, in which one people, the Israelites, offered their sacrifices. Since the only-begotten Son became like us, and as Scripture says, though *he was Lord and God, he has shone upon us*, the rest of the world has been filled with places of worship. Now there are countless worshipers who honor the universal God with spiritual offerings and fragrant sacrifices. This, surely, is what Malachi foretold, speaking, as if in the person of God: *I am a great king, says the Lord; my name is honored among the nations, and everywhere there is offered to my name the*



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*fragrance of a pure sacrifice.* With justice, therefore, do we say that the final temple, the Church, will be more glorious. To those who are so solicitous for the Church and labor for its construction, Haggai declares that a gift will be made, a gift from heaven given by the Savior. That gift is Christ himself, the peace of all men; *through him we have access in the one Spirit to the Father.* The prophet goes on to say: *I will give peace to this place and peace of soul to save all who lay the foundation to rebuild the temple.* Christ too says somewhere: *My peace I give you.* Paul will teach how profitable this is for those who love: *The peace of Christ, he says, which surpasses all understanding will keep your minds and hearts.* Isaiah, the seer, made the same prayer: *O Lord our God, give us peace, for you have given us everything.* Once a man has been found worthy of Christ's peace, he can easily save his soul and guide his mind to carry out exactly the demands of virtue. Haggai, therefore, declares that peace will be given to all who build. One builds the Church either as a teacher of the sacred mysteries, as one set over the house of God, or as one who works for his own good by setting himself forth as a living and spiritual stone *in the holy temple, God's dwelling place in the Spirit.* The results of these efforts will profit such men so that each will be able to gain his own salvation without difficulty.

#### **Sacraments or Holiness – Lesson and Discussion** *“he went away sad”*

**How did the young ruler see Jesus?** The rich young ruler only sees Jesus as a teacher, a human. Jesus tries to correct his thinking by responding, “Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone.” “It is not that Christ rejects the praise he is offered: he wants to show the depth of the young man's words: he is good, not because he is a good man but because he is God, who is goodness itself.”[1] We are not called to embrace part of Christ, but the whole Christ. People have said that they receive Christ first as their savior and then later as their Lord. To embrace part of Christ is to embrace all of Christ. In other words Christ cannot be our “savior” if He is not our “Lord”. The Blessed Virgin Mary gives us the example of embracing “the whole Christ” in her Magnificat, “My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my savior.”[2] Mary gives praise to Jesus, both Lord and savior.

**What does the ruler want?** “...what good must I do to gain eternal life?”

**What does Jesus call him to?** “If you wish to be perfect...Then come, follow me”

**What is the result?** “When the young man heard this statement, he went away sad.”

**Did Jesus treat this man too harshly?** No, not at all. In fact Jesus is showing how much he loves this young man. “Our Lord knows that this young man has a generous heart. This is why he treats him so affectionately and invites him to greater intimacy with God. But he explains that this means renunciation – leaving his wealth behind so as to give his heart whole and entire to Jesus. God calls everyone to holiness, but holiness is reached by many different routes. It is up to every individual to take the necessary steps to discover which route God wants him to

follow.”[3] While there are different paths of holiness there is only one path, one way and that is Jesus Christ. “I am the way, the truth, and the life”[4]

**What question would we ask Jesus?** We also ask what is necessary for salvation. The rich young ruler was under the assumption that the Commandments were necessary and he was correct, but Jesus wanted to take things deeper. The Commandments are the means to following God, to holiness. Today we might say The Sacraments are necessary and for a Catholic this is true, but Jesus uses the Sacraments as a means to take us deeper, they are the means of sanctification, of holiness.

**Which of the 10 Commandments did Jesus ask the young man if he followed?** “You know the commandments: *You shall not kill; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; you shall not defraud; honor your father and your mother.*” These commandments are 5<sup>th</sup> (shall not kill), 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> (shall not covet neighbors wife and adultery), 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> (shall not steal, covet neighbors goods), 8<sup>th</sup> (shall not lie), and 4<sup>th</sup> (shall not dishonor mother and father). It is clear that the rich young ruler is following the 4<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> commandments (love of neighbor), but has failed to follow the 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> (love of God). We are called to the love of God as our primary vocation, the call of holiness. We are also called therefore to love neighbor for the sake of God.

**Do we want the Sacraments or Salvation? Do we want Heaven or Holiness?** Sacraments are the ordinary [means] of salvation [end]. They are the “good” we do to “gain eternal life” If we are just preparing to receive a Sacrament, for the sake of the Sacrament alone, but have no desire for holiness, the Sacrament will have little effect in our life. Yes, the Sacrament is valid and real, but our disposition is necessary for the Sacrament to be effective in our life. If Heaven is our goal, but not holiness, we have missed the point of a Life in Christ. Yes, Christ came to open heaven, but He also came that we might become holy. Jesus says, “If you wish to be perfect...Then come, follow me.” We are called to heaven, because of our call to holiness. Let us no go away sad, but dignified and hopeful that holiness is attainable through the grace of God.

**What would we say if a parent bought a teenager a brand new car, and then after buying it told the teenager that it must be parked in the garage and never be driven?** Many times, parents work hard to prepare their child for First Holy Communion. They are so proud on day their child receives Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. After this holy day, however, the parents never attend Mass again, and therefore their child is deprived of receiving their 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> (and so on) Holy Communion. What a deprivation! If we seek only the Sacraments, but not what the Sacraments give us, we like the rich young ruler walk away from Christ.

#### **“The End” Notes**

[1] Navarre Bible Commentary St. Mark, pg. 138 [2] Luke 1:46-47

[3] Navarre Bible Commentary St. Mark, pg. 139 [4] Jn. 14:6