

Living For Eternity

Mark 10:17
Charlie Brackett

Jesus left the house in Judea where He had been teaching the disciples, and He walked out onto the road. As He walked, a man came running up to Him and asked the most important question any man could ask. He said, "Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"

In Luke's account of this encounter we learn that the man who came was a ruler. Matthew adds that he was young. And all three writers report at the end of their accounts that he was very rich. But, so as not to detract from the importance of what he asked, Mark introduces him as a man running.

In our more serious moments, we have all pondered the great questions of life. Where did I come from? Why am I here? What is death like, and what lies beyond? This young man had resolved some of these questions. He knew this life would come to an end, and that a life with no end would follow. He also knew that a man could enter into eternal life provided he met certain conditions. We can learn a number of worthwhile lessons from this young man.

First, he came in his youth. Youth is a time of great aspiration for this life, but this young man gave thought to the life after. A young person can use time no more profitably.

Second, though a ruler, this man recognized his limits: limits to his physical life and limits to his knowledge about what would follow. He sought divine help. There is no superior source of help. Only God can instruct in the nature of eternal life. Only divinity can help us enter in.

Third, though rich, this young ruler recognized the value of eternal life enough to cause him to come seeking. It is easy to become so entangled in values of this life, we lose sight of the tremendous value of life eternal. What a mistake that is!

B. J. Honeycutt, a character on the old T.V. series "M.A.S.H.," gave this reason why he didn't give in to temptation during the Korean conflict: "I live in an insane world where nothing makes sense. Everyone around me lives for the now, because there may not be tomorrow. But I have to live for tomorrow, because for me there is no now." B. J.'s hope for the future was in being with his family again. That hope determined how he would behave in the now. It removed him from and protected him from the now. How much more should our future hope of eternal life define how we will behave in this life.