

Think with me this morning of all the questions we have all asked during our lifetime  
.....questions related especially to the topic of LIFE

- The numerous questions of childhood / of adolescence / of adulthood.

We heard earlier in our Gospel lesson a marvelous question from a young man to Jesus...

WHAT GOOD THING SHALL I DO, TO INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE?

What a powerful question! And coming from a young adult person to boot!

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This question today presented in our bible pericope IS perhaps, life's greatest question, one that we should also ask if we have not already done so!

FIRST OFF – in asking this question.....we manifest that we believe that there is a heaven, life after death and that this other life....is a .... *forever life* (eternal life).

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Jesus had to have been very pleased by the question....and answers

KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS!

What we see here is that Jesus (and of course He would)  
stresses obedience to the 10 commandments as essential to the quest  
for righteousness and eternal life.

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Jesus then outlines 5 of the 10 commandments given to Moses on Mt Sinai....

The basic common rules of right behavior.

Do not, steal, kill, commit sexual misconduct /// honor your father & mother ///

love your neighbor!

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Then the young man says..... lying to Jesus....

**I HAVE OBSERVED ALL THESE – what do I still lack?**

**HERE NOW IS THE MEAT OF THE STORY**

**It is 2-fold.**

1<sup>st</sup> = Jesus knew this man was not being truthful. The young man made the same mistake we all often make....we convince ourselves that we are “pretty good” and that we are much better in not sinning, than others, SO OUR isolated “minor sins” are okay and aren’t even considered.

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The 2<sup>nd</sup> point here that we should note is:

...that the formal observance of the commandments does NOT ALWAYS equal fulfillment of the commandments as an entire grouping (or body of the law).

**The Orthodox Study Bible noted the following on this point of how the young man answered Jesus....**

*“Saying that one has kept the “letter” of the law, can create a false satisfaction about virtue.*

*Salvation does not depend upon external things, whether they be many or few, great or small, but more importantly - on the virtues of the soul ... faith, hope and love.”*

THIS IS WHY Jesus then said to the young man.....IF YOU WANT TO BE **PERFECT** – SELL WHAT YOU HAVE AND GIVE TO THE POOR... AND FOLLOW ME.

Meaning...really follow me, not just lip service,  
not just to get by, not perfunctory – not on the externals,  
but with your very being = your heart & soul.

So in essence, Jesus tests this man at his greatest vulnerability....the area that he needs to repent the most....which is “how he uses his money...for what he uses it” for Jesus being all knowing, knew he was not helping the poor, he was not loving his neighbor.

**St John Chrysostom writes that Jesus loved this young man  
and that was why he was being extra hard on him.**

IF YOU NOTICE HOWEVER – the young man, departs from Jesus “very sorrowful” as the text stated. We are left hanging!!! We don’t know what happened later on.....say a day or two after or a month or two.

But we can say and rightly assume - that at some point he did do so.

WHY DO I SAY THIS?

Because the young man ***initiated*** the conversation...he sought, he was seeking direction.

As happens to many of us at times...we are overwhelmed with an answer we get, a suggestion for improvement (be it medical, academic, finically, spiritually) and.... it knocks us off our feet ... correct?

But ultimately.... It sinks in and we begin to do what is needed towards improvement.

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I wish to emphasize this morning, that **seeking** as the young man did, IS THE BEST!

Far too many people today and especially young adults think they know it all and have

NO NEED to change and don't even consider it.

They are deeply influenced by today's atmosphere in our society that sin isn't sin no more (especially as concerns the commandment on sexual issues).

Everything is re-evaluated and re-defined, thus everything is possible to be done

.... from abortion, to euthanasia, to gender reapportionment ....

and there should be no consequences placed upon us,

by the law and even by God,

for there is no God anyway (is the assumption of some people.)

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My Beloved please listen carefully and don't be swayed.

Various national surveys state that MORE believe then those who refute

and endeavor to honor the Commandments.

Do you know in fact that only 3% of Americans are atheists and 4% agnostics?

Yet they get all the attention in the news reporting and the courts.

So - let us NOT despair!

The larger number believe and endeavor to practice.

*(But we do need to be more publicly vocal for Christ – that's another sermon theme however.)*

*The scriptures are clear when it says.....*

SEEK AND YOU SHALL LIVE (eternally in heaven) – Amos 5:4 .... (many more examples)

SEEK AND YOU SHALL FIND – Matthew 7:7 .... (Are very common verses)

Every Christian should take the opportunity as much as possible to acquaint themselves with strengthening their faith therein, refuting the wrong ideologies of our day and age and keeping ourselves pure of falsehood and trickery.

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Today's example of a rich young man, who lived well as concerns comforts, adhered in a respectable manner to the basic commandments...

**....and he wanted to improve.**

He is worth emulation! / Let us do likewise beloved.