

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### Mark: Jesus, The Perfect Servant Of God

#### Part II: The Perfect Service Of Jesus, The Perfect Servant Of God, Mark 1:1-10:52

#### NN. Christ's Teaching Of Salvation By Grace Versus Meritorious Works

#### (Mark 10:17-27)

### I. Introduction

- A. We learned in the first lesson in this series that Mark's Gospel presents the perfect service of God's Perfect Servant, Jesus, with Mark's focus of having rebounded unto upright Christian service from personal failure.
- B. Mark had abandoned Barnabas and Paul on their first missionary journey (Acts 13:13), but in his rebound, Mark did a service to the faith by countering an errant charge made in our day that Paul differed with Jesus on the way of salvation, that Paul taught justification by faith alone where Jesus taught it was by faith plus works.
- C. Mark 10:17-27 reveals that Jesus Himself taught justification by faith alone, and we view it for our insight:

### II. Christ's Teaching Of Salvation By Grace Versus Meritorious Works, Mark 10:17-27.

- A. After Jesus had left a house in the region of Perea, a man came running up to him, and kneeling down, asked, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" (Mark 10:17; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 150)
- B. Jesus' response in asking, "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God," (Mark 10:18) served two purposes: (1) it worked to introduce the man to the truth that Jesus was Himself God, for no one was good in "the absolute sense" but God (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Mark 10:18), and (2) it worked to correct the man's errant idea that good could be achieved by human works, Ibid., B. K. C., N. T.
- C. Addressing the latter issue extensively, Jesus began to expose the man's inability ever to become good enough to inherit eternal life by his own works, reminding him of some of the Ten Commandments in Mark 10:19.
- D. Some claim Jesus here taught that justification was obtained by works, by keeping the Law, but since He later said it was impossible with men to save themselves by their works (Mark 10:26-27), we know Christ was merely beginning to lead this man to realize the futility of his ever earning salvation by his own works.
- E. When the man replied that he had kept the commands Jesus named in Mark 10:19 since his childhood (Mark 10:20), Jesus looked at him, loving him, and added that he lacked one thing: he was to go, sell all that he had and give to the poor to have treasure in heaven, then come, take up his cross and follow Jesus, Mark 10:21. This directive exposed the man's idolatry, for wealth was his god (v. 22), a violation of the first commandment (Ex. 20:3; Ibid.), and Jesus was asking him to give up that false god to follow Him, a "turning from trust in self-attainments and earthly securities to trust in Jesus (cf. Mark 10:14-15)," Ibid., p. 151.
- F. The rich man was sad at this saying, so he went away grieved (Mark 10:22), and Jesus told His disciples how hard it was for the rich to enter God's kingdom, Mark 10:23. Indeed, it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a **sewing** needle (Ibid.) than for a rich man to enter the kingdom, Mark 10:24-25. [There was a small gate in the Jerusalem city wall called the eye of the needle, but the word here for "needle" is a common sewing needle, meaning Jesus was teaching that it was utterly impossible for a rich man to save himself, Ibid.]
- G. The disciples were "surprised" (*ethambounto*) by this statement by the Lord, so, concerned about their own eternal salvation, they asked Him, "Who then can be saved?" (Ibid.; Mark 10:26).
- H. Jesus looked on His disciples to imply that His answer was as applicable to them as it was to any rich man, and He said, "With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible," Mark 10:27.
- I. The application of the lesson on the rich man's plight was thus applicable to all human beings everywhere: Jesus taught that no one -- including each of His disciples -- could save himself, but with God, anyone could be saved by His work in one's behalf, a truth that perfectly harmonizes with Paul's words in Romans 3:20-28:
  - 1. Like Jesus, Paul taught that no man was justified by his trying to heed God's Law, for that Law only exposes the hopelessly sinful failure of all men before a perfectly righteous God, Romans 3:20, 23.
  - 2. However, as Jesus taught, Paul wrote that apart from the Law, God's salvation is available as a gift from God by grace to the sinner by the imputation of God's righteousness as one trusts in Christ, which salvation is available by the substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ on the cross, Romans 3:21-22, 24-25.
  - 3. When one then trusts in Christ, God pronounces him justified as a gift from God, Romans 3:24, 26-28.

***Lesson:*** *Jesus and the Apostle Paul both taught that salvation and justification was by grace through faith apart from meritorious human works, so the Christian faith is consistently true on the Gospel of salvation.*

***Application:*** *May we believe on Christ to be saved, and present the Gospel of justification by faith alone to the lost.*