

The University Heights Messenger

January 23, 2010

“What Do I Still Lack?”

In Matthew 19:16 a wealthy young man approached our Lord and asked Him what he needed to do to have eternal life. Our Lord told the young man to keep the commandments. The young man’s answer is an important one and can be found in Matthew 19:20. **“All these I have kept. What do I still lack?”**

After this question Mark’s gospel reveals to us something the others do not. Mark 10:21 says, **“And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, ‘You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.’”**

As Jesus was confronted with this obviously earnest young man amidst the backdrop of spiritual hypocrisy and indifference so prevalent at the time, His heart reached out to this wealthy young man. That Mark tells us Jesus loved Him indicates the depth of our Lord’s concern for his soul.

The words used for “looked at” are the strengthened form of the normal word for “to see.” Thus the gaze that Jesus turned upon the young man was searching and intense. This gaze reached into the young man’s soul and laid him bare before Jesus. Let us never forget that our Lord knows exactly what rests within the hearts of men (**John 2:25; Revelation 2:23**).

Our Lord’s investigation of the young man’s heart indicated that there was but one thing he lacked before he could follow Jesus with total surrender to His will. He lacked the willingness to part with his beloved possessions to follow the Savior. **Mark 10:22** says that the young man was disheartened by Jesus’ words and seems to indicate that he walked away from Christ immediately upon hearing them. One can only imagine the sorrow in the eyes of the

Lord as He watched that young man walking away from the only source of salvation.

Yet the question the young man asked in Matthew 19:20 is perhaps the most important question that Christians can ask the Lord throughout their sojourn on this earth. What attitude of heart is not quite what it should be? Which of my thoughts or actions are still not like those of my Lord? In other words, **“What do I still lack?”**

The need to examine oneself to determine current relationship with the Lord is a constant theme of Scripture (Job 13:23; Psalm 17:3, 26:2, 139:23-24, Lam 3:40, Hag 1:5, 7, etc.). One New Testament example can be found in 2 Corinthians 13:5. **“Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!”**

The true marks of a genuinely Christ like life are perhaps a bit deeper than we sometimes consider. Because only the Christ like will be saved, it is very important that we spend significant time testing ourselves to make sure that we are holding up and being what we promised Christ that we would be.

Is ours a truly repentant heart? The purpose of our Lord’s great sacrifice was to take away sin and destroy the works of the devil (**1 John 3:4-8**). Our Lord hates wickedness as passionately as He loves righteousness (**Hebrews 1:9**). Can such with accuracy be said of us? When sin rears it’s head and we allow ourselves to fall victim to it’s enticements, are we filled with pain at having allowed evil to enter our lives? Do we find ourselves squirming with the shame of having disappointed our Lord and potentially damaging any influence we may have had with those who

saw our sin? In other words, does godly sorrow (**2 Corinthians 7:8-10**) overwhelm us and demand instant repentance? It should, for a repentant heart is an identifying mark of the genuine Christian.

The repentant heart is built upon the genuine Christian's insatiable appetite for righteousness. The famous beatitude says, "**Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied**" (Matthew 5:6). 1 Peter 1:14-16 says, "**As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am holy.'**" We've already noticed that our Lord loves righteousness. Is His desire that we love it as much as He does enough to make us seek it out with all of hearts? Is it enough to prompt us to give up whatever we must in order to be holy as He is holy?

The point is this: the heart that hungers and thirsts after righteousness is the heart that becomes characterized by repentance. The repentant heart is a heart that demands constant self-examination. It never rests on past accomplishments and is never satisfied with all the good it is currently doing if it can detect even a single area of weakness.

"What do I still lack?" What a great question! Unfortunately the one who first asked it did not consider the value of his soul enough to do anything about it. What of you and I? How often we ask the question and what we do with the answer will tell us precisely where we are as Christians.

AL

IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

Jeff Howerton is back home, though he continues to need our prayers.

Waylon Marples (family of Gina Seabolt) passed away after his struggle with H1N1.

Tabetha Lynn (niece of Gina Seabolt's sister-in-law) is in critical condition after a very serious car accident. Thus far both of her legs have had to be amputated.

Shelly Stewart (friend of the Wallace's) is scheduled to have very serious surgery on and around her spine January 28.

Our members: **Jim Edwards, Glenn Davis, Glenn Kimberlin.**

Others: **Vina Krassow, Glyon Hill, Tom Curtis, John Bennett, Dennis Brennan, Robert and Sarah Brundige, Donald Dawson, Jean Gartland, Wes Kidd, Gail Stein, Shannon Gilbert**

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Streaming Bible study every Tuesday at 7.

The congregational meeting will be today at 5.

BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

Sun: Mic 1-3, Ps 143, Rev 2-3

Mon: Mic 4-7, Ps 144, Rev 4-6

Tue: Nah, Ps 145:1-13, Rev 7-9

Wed: Hab, Ps 145:14-21, Rev 10-12

Thu: Zeph, Hag, Ps 146, Rev 13-15

Fri: Zech 1-5, Ps 147, Rev 16-17

Sat: Zech 6-9, Ps 148, Rev 18-19

SERMON TOPICS:

Sunday AM. "Unless you repent..."
(Luke 13:1-5)

Sunday PM. "If you confess with your mouth..."
(Romans 10:8-10)