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Passage: Mark 10:17 – 31 (The Rich Young Man)

What are the characteristics of the rich young man?

- Eager to learn
- Respectful
- Confused – does not know the true meaning of good
- Knows that eternal life is inherited
- Self-righteous – he thinks that he's good because he kept all the six commandments listed by Jesus. However, there are 10 commandments listed and the ones not included have to do with our relationship with God and how we should treat Him.

What was the assumption behind the rich young man's question about inheriting eternal life?

He assumed that he, an individual, has to do work or observe the law, i.e. to earn eternal life. Galatians 2:16 states 'know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.'

Why the rich young man failed to do what Jesus said?

He relied on his wealth and was unable to give it away (failing to 'love thy neighbor'). He may have faith, but not strong enough. In fact, he was unable to keep the very first commandment, because his love of money was stronger than his desire to know God.

What does wealth represent in our lives?

Anything that we hold on to that keeps us from God, e.g. school, work, money, idols etc.

Self-reflection and discussion points:

- What is the one thing I lack before God? (i.e. the rich young man, Jesus told him that he lack one thing.)
- Can we give up everything? What is stopping us from loving God? Why is it so hard to give up everything to enter the kingdom of God?
We are human and therefore not perfect. Jesus asks us to follow Him and His example. It is a process to grow in Christ. It is not easy but do not fear because "all things are possible through God" (Mark 10:27).
- Is it fair for God to ask us to give up everything?
Yes, because He has given us everything first. Nothing we can give up could ever amount to all that He has given up for us in His one and only Son, to redeem us from our sins. Everything we have today is from God's love and mercy. God only wants the best for us. Even when He disciplines, He does it in love.