

Does He, Or Doesn't He

Email:

[In Reference to For The Jews]

So, Matthew 19:23 says it's hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. So how can this man have eternal life by keeping the Torah? He was sad and didn't follow Jesus, even though he kept Torah, so does he, or doesn't he have eternal life?

Answer:

Does He, Or Doesn't He?

Good question, and Matthew 19:1-23 demands a more in-depth explanation.

Matthew 19:1-23 Just then a man came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?" "Why do you ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied, "There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, keep the commandments." "Which ones?" he inquired. Jesus replied, "You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, honor your father and mother, and 'love your neighbor as yourself.'" "All these I have kept," the young man said. "What do I still lack?" Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth. Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly I tell you; it is hard for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again, I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."

Jesus is speaking to a Jewish man and for a Jewish man to get eternal life God has already provided the way through Torah. The Torah is the Word of God and the Word of God created life. The Word of God is life. And the Word of God given to the Jews through Moses as the Torah will provide eternal life if it is followed.

Leviticus 18:5 Keep my decrees and laws, for the person who obeys them will live by them. I am the Lord.

God promised eternal life by following Torah and God cannot go back on His Word. So when the Jewish man asks Jesus what he must do to get eternal life, Jesus answers, 'keep the commandments.' The man inquires, "Which ones?" Now he is not asking which specific commandments are to be followed, but he is asking which set of commandments because he has been raised with two sets of commandments. The Law of Moses as God handed down on Mt. Sinai, and the additions to the Law of Moses that the Pharisees and Sanhedrin have added and is also called the Law of Moses.

So, Jesus quotes a few of the commandments which identify the ones that Jesus is talking about as the Law of Moses as handed down from God to Moses on Mt. Sinai. At this point both Jesus and the young man know that he will enter eternal life. But what is bothering the young man is that something is still missing on the inside. The personal relationship with God. So, Jesus invites him to sell his possessions and follow him. The young man goes away sad because he has great wealth.

And so, as Jesus points out to his disciples, he will not enter the kingdom of God. Because the kingdom of God that Jesus is talking about is not eternal life it is the kingdom of God on earth and not all who have eternal life will be invited to rule with Christ in the kingdom of God on earth for a thousand years. Only those who follow Jesus and have a personal relationship with him.

The young man was "saved" and will see eternal life by following Torah. But the young man will not enter the kingdom of God on earth with Jesus because he did not follow Jesus when he had his chance.

A Voice in The Wilderness