

## CCC JESUS CAME TO REPLACE RULES

### WITH RELATIONSHIP PART 1

#### What Jesus Came To Do

Were going to begin a new series this morning that I want to call “What Jesus Came to Do.” What a better time to talk about this then right after celebrating Christmas. The season that Jesus Christ left His home in heaven to come to your home on earth so that we could get to know Him and so that God could say, “I love you and I want to forgive you.”

Did you know that over and over in the New Testament we’re told specifically “Here is what Jesus came to do.”? And when you and I discover what Jesus came to do... we will also discover what we’re supposed to do in our life here on earth.

I think you’re really going to enjoy what happens over the next couple of weeks because each weekend we’re going to have a front row seat as we observe Jesus having personal encounters with different men and women through His life. These stories are like snapshots. Were going to use the New Testament in God’s Word, the Bible like a photo album, and we’ll look at these snapshot encounters that Jesus had with people... I think what you will see is every time Jesus had an experience with somebody it was remarkable. Because He never left people the same way He found them.

Here’s my prayer for you that during this series that you will see what Jesus came to do for your life and for mine. I want to start by reading Hebrews 9:10 *“For the old system dealt only with certain rituals what foods to eat and drink, rules for washing themselves, rules about this*

*and that. The people had to keep these rules to tide them over until Christ came with God's new and better way."*

Underline "Christ came with God's new and better way."

What we're going to discover this morning is that one reason Jesus came was to replace rules with a relationship. Up until this time people thought that the way you rightly relate to God was by keeping a bunch of rules and Jesus came and said, "Oh, no! The way you rightly relate to God is by having a relationship with Him not by keeping a bunch of rules." There's a great example of this in the New Testament in Mark 10. It's the first encounter we're going to look at in this series. It's the experience where Jesus meets a man that's typically known as the rich young ruler.

[Read Mark 10: 17-22](#)

Let's look at more verse by verse... Mark 10:17 "*As Jesus went out into the street a man came running up and*

*greeted Jesus with reverence.* [Write in your notes that word reverence means that he literally knelt down before Jesus' feet.] *and he asked, 'Good Teacher, what must I do to get eternal life?'* [Now at this point the conversation is already headed south. This guy is traveling down a well-worn, an often very used road but it's the wrong road and why do I say that because His question is somewhat flawed that he asked. He said, "What must **I do** to inherit eternal life?" This has been the problem of many people trying to connect with God over the ages. Their thought pattern is, what must **I do**... It is this belief that people have to *do* something. It is this belief that I have to do *more* than what I am doing now. And that type of thinking just leads us to a feeling that I'm never quite sure how much I should do or if I have done enough.

For instance, those of you who have an athletic background or frame of reference you'd begin to think in terms of "How many righteousness points do I need to score in order to live forever with God in heaven?"

Or those of you who come from an academic background might ask, "I wonder what the entrance exam standard is. I wonder if I've answered the questions right and can gain admission to heaven." How much is enough? What do I have to do? Fundamentally, that's the wrong question and we'll see that in just a moment.

*"Jesus said to the man, 'Why are you calling Me a good teacher? No one is good, only God. You know the commandments. Don't murder, don't commit adultery, don't steal, don't lie, don't cheat, honor your father and mother.' He said, 'Teacher, I have from my youth kept all these rules.' Jesus looked him hard in the eye and loved*

*him...."* Jesus was from this moment trying to show this young rich ruler. You can't get there by your works no matter how much you have done. Jesus knew this man had not kept all the commandments. Even though it is obvious he has tried and he believed he had... The first commandment this man had already broke, "Don't have any other gods before God." And this guy had something in his life that was more important than God. So Jesus knew at this moment that this man really was not keeping all the rules. Even knowing that, the Bible says Jesus loved him.

This is one of the most extraordinary things about God that you will ever come to know. He loves you – the good, the bad, and the ugly. He loves you and He knows everything about you. *"Jesus said, 'There's one thing left. Go sell everything you own and give it to the poor and all your*

*wealth will then be heavenly wealth and come follow Me.'*  
*The man's face clouded over.* [That literally means his  
face just dropped. This was the last thing this young man  
was expecting to hear.] *He walked off with a heavy heart.*  
*He was holding on tight to a lot of things and not about to*  
*let go. Looking at His disciples, Jesus said, 'Do you have*  
*any idea how difficult it is for people who have it all to*  
*enter God's kingdom?''*

What we're going to discover as we just walk  
through these verses is that this rich young ruler was  
holding on to three beliefs about God... and how to relate  
to God... and how to have eternal life. And these three  
beliefs were wrong. The rich young ruler was mistaken and  
I don't want any of us to make the same mistakes. So what  
I want to do in the next few minutes is look at the three  
belief mistakes of the rich young ruler.

**Belief Mistake #1: What I have is probably enough to  
have a right relationship with God.**

If you read through the story you'll have to admit he did  
have a lot going for him. This story is told in three different  
books of the Bible and if you read all three of them  
together, you'll find these three words – he was rich, he  
was young, and he was a ruler. Those are three things we  
know about him right from the start.

**First, that he was rich.** He had material  
possessions often people will read this story in the Bible  
and come concluding: “all money is bad.” But, that's not  
what this story is saying at all. There are some problems  
with our attitude towards money that can be way wrong.  
But money, in and of itself, can actually have some great  
benefits for the Lord.

**We're also told he was young.** I'm not sure why we're told he was young. Maybe it was just to indicate to us that he had a lot of potential because he was young and had a lot of years ahead of him to give to the Lord. So he had financial resources and he had a bright future.

We're also told that he was a leader. He was a ruler in that community. We don't know if he was a religious leader, we don't know if that was a political leader. But this guy had financial resources, he had a bright future and he had a lot of influence.

Look at the scriptures we know from his actions that he was **humble**. The gospel of Mark says when he came up to Jesus he fell to His knees right in front of Jesus and he asked this question about eternal life. Many people in the Bible when they approached Jesus would try to trick Jesus or argue with Jesus or trap Him with what issues they

would bring before Him. One religious leader even came to Jesus at night so that nobody else would see him. But we see in this story the rich young ruler comes and right in front of everybody around him in broad daylight, drops to his knees and says, "I have some questions."

What this Rich young ruler asked Jesus tells us also something about this man... that **he was spiritually sensitive**. A lot of people who are rich and young they don't think about the future. But this guy wanted to know about life after death. He wanted to know how to have eternal life. He wanted to have a right relationship with God in heaven.

From the scriptures we also know that he was a moral man. Jesus names off four or five of the Ten Commandments and the rich young ruler says "I've kept all these since I was a little boy" this young man was a moral man. He had

a real good system in his mind of what was right and wrong, a system of morality.

We have to admit, this guy did have a lot going for him. He easily could have believed this might be enough to have a right relationship with God because of the moral life that he was living and this alone would be adequate for him. But Jesus looked at the man and the Bible says He told him “You’re still missing something. That’s not enough.” I think at that point the rich young ruler shifted to his second mistaken belief.

**Belief Mistake #2: If what I have isn’t enough, I can do more to earn my way into heaven.**

It’s clear from reading this story that this rich young leader suspected that his morality and money and religion wasn’t enough that it had its limitations and that he still might

need to do a little more. Because he asked the question, “*Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?*”

And he had already done a lot.

Isaiah 64:6 “*We are all infected and impure with sin when we proudly display our righteous deeds we find they’re all but filthy rags.*” Circle “all”. Then Romans 3:23 “*For we all have sinned and all fall short of God’s glorious standard.*” So we’d have to agree that we are all *in the same boat.* And Romans 3:23 says, “*We all fall short.*” We all are the same...

Let me illustrate what I mean by that. This rich young ruler had tried a variety of ways to get to God. It’s kind of like trying to jump the Grand Canyon. Some people can jump farther than others but the net result will always be the same. You’re not going to make it. This rich young ruler had done well.

He had tried to get to God by keeping a lot of rules. He had tried to get to God by following a lot of rituals. A ritual is something you do over and over again and finally hope it's enough to please God. He said, I've been keeping these rules since I was a little boy. He was very ritualistic. He'd also tried religion because when Jesus said, Have you followed these laws, the Ten Commandments, he obviously knew of the Ten Commandments. So he was a religious guy. But Jesus said that's not enough.

Ephesians 2:8-10 *“God saved you by His special favor when you believed and you can't take credit for this. It is a gift from God.”* It's a gift. *“Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done. [Why?] So none of us can boast about it. For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus so we can do the good things He planned for us long ago.”*

Since our rules, our rituals, our religion won't get us to God, God had to come to us and that's what Christmas is all about Jesus Christ left His home in heaven to come to your home on earth so that we could get to know Him and so that God could say, “I love you and I want to forgive you and have a relationship with you.”

When Jesus died on the cross He did not die for any sins that He had committed. He wasn't dying for His own sins because He was sinless, but guess whose sins He was dying for? Yours and mine. So when He died on the cross He paid the price for our sins. He took the punishment that you and I deserve for our sins. He canceled it. So now if you trust Jesus to forgive your sins when God looks at your life, He sees stamped across your life “Paid in full” and Jesus becomes our bridge.

This is the fundamental difference between religion and Christianity. Religion is about all you do. Christianity is about a relationship what Jesus did. It's about what God has already done in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 3:21-22 *“But not God has shown us a different way of being right in His sight, not by obeying the law.*

*That's rules, rituals and religion. But by the way promised in the Scriptures long ago. We are made right in God's sight when we trust in Jesus Christ to take away our sins and we all can be saved the same way no matter who we are or what we've done.”* Isn't that a great verse? You can be connected to God in a relationship through Jesus, no matter who you are or what you've done. You accept Jesus Christ and what He did on the cross as proof of God's love for you. And you receive that gift of forgiveness and eternal life as a gift just because He loves you. But this

rich young ruler believed that he could do it and he found out he was wrong. Which leads us to Belief Mistake #3.

**Belief Mistake #3: He believed, “I can trust Jesus with part of my life and still be completely right with God.”**

2 Chronicles 16:9 *“The eyes of the Lord search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him.”* The Bible tells us that when Jesus touched that one area of the rich young ruler's life that he was unwilling to give to Christ, the rich young ruler turned and walked away sad. When I look at this rich young ruler, his head is down and he's walking away from Jesus Christ, I can help but think – what might have been. What might have been is he might have become the best friend of Jesus. He might have been an eyewitness to the resurrection. He might have become a leader of the early church. He might

have had eternal life with God in heaven. But instead he walked away because he only wanted to give Jesus part of his life not all of his life.

**It all comes down to a battle of wills: What I want vs. what does God want?**

These words of Jesus that are found in Mark 10 at the end of the story of the rich young ruler and I have found them to be a source of comfort for me. *“Jesus said, ‘Mark My words. No one who sacrifices house, brothers, sisters, mother, father, children, land, whatever because of Me and the message will lose out. No one who sacrifices for Me will lose out.’”*

How do you know if you've surrendered everything to Jesus Christ? You will only know by how you react when He asks for it.

Your heavenly father is waiting for you to let go of things that eternally have very little value or worth to you. Your Heavenly Father is waiting for you to let go so that He can give you the treasure of eternal life.

Let me ask you. What are you holding on to? Maybe it's your past? Your future? Your finances? Your failures?

Can you pray today and say to God, “Father, I give You everything.” **It all comes down to a battle of wills: What**

**I want vs. what does God want?**

Prayer:

I wonder if you're ready right now to say, “God, I'll follow You anytime, anywhere doing anything with anyone at whatever cost. God, today, I'm not holding anything back. I give You my everything, my future, my finances, my failures, my relationships.” Maybe you're like me. Maybe what God is wanting from you, maybe what you've been holding back is some step of obedience. Maybe God is saying to you, “Take this step of obedience.” What do you need to let go of today and give completely to God? Jesus, I give You my everything. Amen