

Influence Ministries

ALL IN

LESSON 1

TITLE: ASKING THE WRONG QUESTION.

A century ago, a band of brave souls became known as one-way missionaries.

They purchased single tickets to the mission field. Instead of suitcases, they placed their few belongings into coffins.

As they sailed out of port, they waved good-bye to everyone they loved, everything they knew.

They knew they'd never return home.

A.W. Mill-in was one of those missionaries. He set sail for New Hebrides in the South Pacific, knowing full well that the headhunters who lived there had martyred every missionary before him.

Mill-in did not fear for his life, because he had already died to himself.

For 35 years, he lived among that tribe and loved them. When he died, tribe members buried him in the middle of their village and inscribed this epitaph on his tombstone:

When he came there was no light.
When he left there was no darkness.

Matthew 19:16-22

16 And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?

17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

18 He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,

19 Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

20 The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?

21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.

22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

I see a trend that concerns me in the 21st century.

We try to remove some of the risk, minimize the sacrifice, and eliminate the element of danger.

It's as if the purpose of life is to arrive safely at death.

But the will of God is not an insurance plan, it is a dangerous plan.

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Jesus didn't die just to keep us safe. He died to make us dangerous.

When we close out this service and series, I would sure like to think that it scars the enemy!

I would like to think that we are sending dangerous people back into their natural habitat to wreak havoc on the enemy.

My mindset:

Faithfulness is not holding the fort, faithfulness is invading hellholes with the light and love of Jesus Christ.

Matthew 11:12 says that from the time of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing and forceful people have been seizing it.

-C.T. Studd 'Some want to live within the sound of church or chapel bells, but I want to run a rescue shop within a yard of hell. '

Here's what I'm getting at, I think that when this rich, young ruler, who was obeying all the commandments, was missing something.

I think what's missing is the risk, the danger, the sacrifice.

On paper, this guy has everything that we think we would want.

He was rich.

He was young.

He was a ruler.

What that means is he had wealth and he had youth and he had power. He had it all and yet he says, what am I still missing?

He was obeying the commandments, but he lacked the rush of holy adrenaline that you experience when you begin to follow in the footsteps of God.

Verse 16

Someone came up to Jesus and said, "Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?"

In other words, to have eternal life, to be saved, to be in this place where I'm right with God, where my sins are forgiven and my eternal future is secure, what good thing must I do?

What's interesting to me is that this question reveals a false assumption that eternal life is the by-product of something that we do, namely good deeds.

This is the wrong question. And if you ask the wrong question, you will not get the right answer.

There is a common misconception in our culture that is the same as this rich, young ruler had, that if you do more good things than bad things, that the scales of justice will tip in your favor, and you are ok.

Romans 3:23 says it this way: All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

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This is the wrong question, what good things must I do to gain eternal life.

You can't do enough good things. The problem is you've done enough wrong things, there is only one way and that is through Jesus Christ.

The good news is the cross is never closed. It is always open for business.

It doesn't matter how big your sin debt is, He is ready, willing, waiting to forgive you. Not just some of your sins, all of it.

John 10:10 says the thief comes to steal, kill and destroy but Jesus said that I came so that you might have life and have it more abundantly.

The word "abundantly" is a two-dimensional word. There is a qualitative and quantitative dimension.

By quantitative, it means never ending. It means eternal. It means I'm going to give you a life that will not, that cannot end.

By qualitative, I think what it means a life with more joy, more peace, more power and more purpose because you are in relationship with the One who created you.

What is interesting to me is that Jesus doesn't correct him.

If it is true that he has wholeheartedly obeyed all those commandments, then he hasn't done anything wrong.

Here's the problem, you can do nothing wrong and still do nothing right.

Goodness is not the absence of badness. One of the great mistakes I think we've made as the church is that we get so fixated on sins of commission, don't do this, and don't do that and you're ok.

But what about the sins of omission, what you would've, could've and should've done?

I just don't think that God's ultimate purpose for your life is to come to church twice a week and then you're good to go.

No. You can go to church your whole life and never go **ALL IN** with God.

Please hear me, your greatest asset becomes your greatest liability if you don't use it for God's purposes.

I think my question is this, in order to be **ALL IN**, there is something you need to let go of.

God is there anything in my life that I'm holding onto that is really holding me back?

I want it so bad but it's really trapping me. The good is keeping me from something that is even better. What is it that you need to let go of?

C.T. Studd, the guy who said he wanted to run a rescue shop within a yard of hell, also wrote a poem.

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I heard one day, traveling along life's busy way
Bringing conviction to my heart from my mind, would not depart

Only one life, will soon be past
Only what's done for Christ will last.

What are we throwing our money at?
What are we throwing our time after?
What are we throwing our talents after?
What are we throwing our lives after?

Your greatest regret when you stand before the judgment seat of God will be whatever time, talent and treasure you did not give back to the One who gave it to you in the first place.

Are we accumulating material possessions that won't last beyond the grave?

Are we investing ourselves in things that will someday go bankrupt?

God, give us the courage to be **ALL IN**