

Who Should sit at the Lords Table?

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[0 : 0 0] let's turn back now to mark chapter 10 and as we go there we'll pray our heavenly father we thank you for this privilege again of opening your word and we thank you for jesus your son our savior the one who died upon the cross to give us a hope that we will find in no other place we read of a man here in this passage who came to jesus and who went away sad and we pray that there would be none this evening who would go away sad from jesus but we ask lord that as you meet with us in your word that lord jesus you would speak into our lives that you would show us clearly who we are and show us our great need of you and enable us we pray to come and to put our faith in you and to profess our faith in you with the lives that you have given us so hear our prayers and help us lord and speaking and listening and responding we pray for those who are not here tonight we think of some who are ill this evening some who are receiving chemotherapy some who have infections some who are struggling physically and who would desire to be with us but who are unable to be and we ask lord that you would minister to them both in their bodies and in their hearts and we ask that they would know your presence and that they would know your peace and lord we pray for others who are healthy and who have opportunity but who have no desire and we ask lord that you would stir that desire in their hearts some who have never known you lord that they would be awakened in order to come in faith to christ others who have known you and who have walked with you and yet who have grown cold of late and we ask lord that you would touch their hearts and bring revival where there is lethargy so hear our prayers and help us we ask in jesus name amen i want to begin this evening with a very pointed question which i kind of alluded to in the morning and uh the question is simply this who if we are spared until next sunday morning uh who here should be sitting at the lord's table the elements are set down here and as we gather uh there will be the opportunity to come and take the bread and take the wine and the question is who should be at the lord's table it's important that we do ask that question because uh we are not to come to the lord's table uh casually we're not to come to the lord's table thoughtlessly uh we're called to examine ourselves before we come and tonight this passage uh that uh we've settled on uh at this point in our studies i think is a helpful passage in guiding us and in self-examination it's a helpful passage in confirming uh who should come to the lord's table and uh who should not the first thing i want to note this evening as we glance at this rich young man is it's not just about how we look on the outside so we start with the negative the first thing to note here

is it's not just about how we look on the outside i think in many churches the rich young ruler would have been sitting at the lord's table in a flash without really a conversation he's exactly the kind of person that we would expect to see at the lord's table i mean when you look at him as we have him in portrait and in this gospel and also in two other gospels he seems to be a a clean-cut good living young man he's a man of some influence luke tells us in his account in chapter 18 that he was a certain ruler so he's a man who had some authority he had some status in his local community probably the kind of man some people looked up to he's a man with energy and drive the kind of energy and drive that comes from from having youth uh matthew tells us in his account that uh he was a young man and uh he's a man who's likely had some success in in business uh he appears to be a high earner he has great wealth it tells us that in verse 22 he's a man who who tries to do the right thing he says as jesus converses with him and we have uh no reason to think that he's he's trying to be deceitful here he says that he's been working away at trying to keep the commandments since he was a boy likely he he he went to to sunday school and he went to yf this is the kind of character who probably even went to su in school even though it wasn't the cool thing to do this is a man who shows some earnestness in his seeking it tells us in verse 17 he ran up to jesus now people in that day and age that culture they just didn't go running up to anybody yet such as the earnestness of this man and this seeking of eternal life he runs up to jesus not caring what other people are thinking of him he's a man who shows some reverence to jesus he he fell on his knees verse 17 tells us he call he calls jesus good teacher certainly it's respectful and he's a man who's interested in the things of eternity even though he has so much he doesn't seem to be absolutely consumed by materialism all the money in his bank account all the status all the respect that he had in his community doesn't seem to be enough to satisfy him he he seems to know deep down that he hasn't got eternal life and so he's interested he's anxious to to be able to to receive that eternal life and so he comes to jesus and from the outside as we look at this character and as we look at this encounter everything about it looks encouraging it looks like he's either a believer or he's just about to become a believer i think if he was on a christianity explored course we would have high hopes for him i think if he sat in the chairs here week by week we would be looking for him to come forward over the communion weekend

everything looks good on the outside but there was a battle going on in this man's heart disciples couldn't see it but jesus could see into this man's heart just like he can see into your heart and my heart man looks at the outward appearance man looks at the suit man looks at the the approach to jesus man listens to the words that the man says but um the lord looks on the heart and this man although his outward appearance uh looked good his heart wasn't right and if he was to be saved if he was to inherit the eternal life that is so thirsted for if he was to ever have a place at the lord's table there needed to be a change in this man's heart so the first thing we see is that it's not just about how we look on the outside needs to be more than that so what more is the question if it's not about how we look on the outside uh how can we inherit eternal life how can we be made ready to sit at the lord's table how can we be assured a place in heaven it's not just about how we look on the outside uh it's about seeing who jesus is that's the next point it's about seeing who jesus is look at verse 17 as jesus started on his way a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him good teacher he asked what must i do to inherit eternal life why do you call me good jesus answered no one is good except god alone now on first listen jesus answer seems a bit curt isn't it if we were eavesdropping in on this conversation and we see this man approaching jesus with such enthusiasm showing him reverence having a genuine interest appearing to be very sincere he comes to jesus and and he asks this this amazing question and jesus response just seems to cut him off why do you call me good this man he comes with such potential he's respectful he seems earnest and jesus in his response on first listen anyway just seems to be a bit dismissive doesn't it why do you call me good no one is good except god alone why does jesus say this is he being dismissive well he's not being dismissive jesus is showing this man that he's not just a good teacher he's much more than a good teacher jesus is trying to get through to this man that he's not just an instructor who's able to show him on a map or on a flow chart the way to inherit eternal life but he actually is the way and the truth and the life as john 3 16 puts it or john 14 6 puts it isn't it

jesus is showing this man in his response that he's not just good but that he's god that's why he addresses him in this way why do you call me good jesus answered no one is good except god alone now i have in my mind peter listening in on the side and peter has just recently seen in the last chapter or two and recently professed that jesus is indeed the messiah he is the son of god remember jesus looks peter in the eye and he says who do you say that i am you've walked with me you've talked with me you've listened to me you've told me what the crowds are saying but who do you say that i am peter and now jesus in a slightly more oblique way is asking this rich young ruler who do you say that i am why do you call me good no one is good except god alone and this is the point at which we we wish the man would say that's why i called you good because i can see that you are god this is the point where we would hope in response to to jesus words here that the man would would make a profession of faith and say i can see jesus that you are god you are good because you are god god the son you are the christ you are the messiah that's what we'd like to read in in verse 19 here but instead of that there's just silence it seems he doesn't really see who jesus is and until he sees who jesus really is he cannot inherit eternal life and the same goes for for each one of us here you know we can be rich we can be respectable we can be outwardly very religious but until we see that jesus is the christ he is the son of god until we believe in jesus that he is who he says he is we cannot be saved we can have all the religious badges on we can have all the right clothes on we can say all the right words we can make all these kind of reasonable respectable approaches and pay lip service but until we see who jesus is until we believe in our hearts that he is the son of god we can't be saved and we can't go to the lord's table we go to the table to profess that we see and we believe that he is god the son he is the savior he is the christ so it's not simply about how we look on the outside it's about seeing who jesus is next point it's about

seeing who we are back to the man we continue the conversation here Jesus when he fails to make a profession of faith when this man fails to make a profession of faith that he sees that Jesus is God the Son when nothing is forthcoming when there only seems to be silence when he just doesn't get who Jesus is Jesus doesn't say to the disciples well this is a waste of time let's move on he continues to preach to him but notice that Jesus he doesn't preach the gospel to him he teaches him the law one of the commentators Derek Thomas he says of this man he's not yet ready for the gospel because he's not yet ready to hear about Jesus as savior because he he doesn't yet understand his own need to be saved and that's all quite logical isn't it if you're walking along the street boys and girls if you're walking along the street in Tarbot later on this evening and someone says to you here take this life jacket put it on he'd say to them no thank you I don't think

[17 : 43] I need a life jacket I'm just walking along the pavement but if you fell off the pier and you were flapping around and you were sinking fast and somebody threw down a life jacket and said put that on hang on to that you take it in a second because you know that you need to be saved and this rich young man he doesn't yet know the danger he's in he doesn't yet see his sin he doesn't understand his need to be saved and so so Jesus he preaches not the gospel to him but he preaches the law to him he holds up the commandments like a mirror to him he puts them in front of his face man says I want to turn a life how do I receive a turn of life and Jesus says well you know the commandments verse 19 do not murder do not commit adultery do not steal do not give false testimony don't ever tell a lie do not defraud on your father and your mother and this would be the point you would think that the man would confess when as Jesus holds up the law to this man and shows him himself you would think that the man would say well if I look at all these commandments here do not give false testimony I mean is there anyone in this room who has never in their life spoken a false word anyone in this room who's never told a lie who ate these cookies not me who left half of a cookie on the table here not me

I think all of us at some point have given false testimony of some kind or another this would be the point even if we think about that one thing for the man to say I haven't done all this and I can't do all this I'm a law breaker I am guilty I confess it but he can't yet see who he is he can't or he won't yet see that he is a sinner he responds in this amazing verse 20 which is just so blind teacher he declared all these things I have kept since I was a boy and Jesus who knows his heart knows fine well but that's a little rubbish so how does

Jesus react to this does he walk away now stunned by this man's pride and spiritual blindness does he turn his back on the man and shake his head and say to his disciples this really is a waste of time no we're told in verse 21 that Jesus looked at him and loved him now that's a point of encouragement surely for us isn't it that even though Jesus sees our sin he looks at us and loves us and that should be a point of instruction for us as well when we see the reality of sin around us in the world when we sometimes feel the sting of sin as others may wrong us and as we suffer in this world which is broken the temptation is for us to lash out and be bitter be aggressive the reaction of Christ here when he sees such offensive sin in this man's life because it's an offense against

Jesus he looks at the man and he loves him and he loved him enough to take out the surgeon's knife and carve open his heart and show him his idol Jesus loved this man enough to reach into his heart and show to him the sin that was stopping him from receiving eternal life one thing you lack he said go sell everything you have and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven then come and follow me and in that moment the man's eyes are opened and he sees a sin he realizes his idol was the love of money he realizes that if he is to receive eternal life he has to drop this idol that he's hanging on to so tight that tragically he's not willing at this the man's face fell verse 22 he went away sad because he had great wealth we said it in the morning you know he still has great wealth he still has his reputation intact he still has power he still has the respect of the community he still has so much material stuff and yet he walks away sad there's a deep spiritual sadness and it's just one example in a million of what it looks like to walk away from Jesus you can have the whole world you can gain the whole world you can have everything in terms of what this world has to offer but when we walk away from

Jesus we walk away sad and when we hear the call of Jesus to come to his table and we walk out the door I've seen a good number of people even in this room tonight walking away they never have a smile on their face there's a deep spiritual sadness this man he sees his sin he hears the call of Jesus but he will not repent he will not follow and until that changes he will not receive eternal life he has no place at the

[25 : 03] Lord's table and that's true of all of us if we don't see our sin then we will not have any desire to have Christ as Lord and Saviour because we don't see any need of him but if we do see our sin because God has revealed it to us and yet we refuse to repent of it then we miss out on eternal life and we have no place at the Lord's table who should be there those who should be at the Lord's table are people who see Jesus for who he is as Lord and Saviour God the

Son and those who see themselves as the wretched sinners that we really are this man walks away sad and the disciples are all really troubled by this they see this man that they would have signed up in a flash walking away he seemed to be the ideal candidate for a salvation but he misses out so the disciples say to Jesus they said with the children this morning who can be saved I mean if he can't who can and they had that just about right they understood the impossibility of saving themselves and that all comes through in the conversation Jesus says to them how hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God the disciples were amazed at his words verse 24 but Jesus said again children how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God it's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle and for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God the disciples were even more amazed and said to each other who then can be saved and Jesus looked at them and said with man this is impossible salvation is impossible but not with God all things are possible with God and now the gospel is kicking in see the rich man didn't get this this far the rich young man he didn't get to the gospel he didn't get to the point where Jesus was able to say to him all things are possible with God the rich man walks away and he has nothing but bad news ringing in his ears he walks away before the good news could even be preached with his money full of his pockets full of cash but the disciples those who saw their sin those who were willing to leave behind their sin to repent of sin and believe in Jesus they now hear the gospel they now hear how they can be saved and it's not about them and what they're doing it's about

Jesus and all that he was going to do and the final thing we see here just as we finish is that our salvation our place at the Lord's table is dependent upon seeing why Jesus came and in the final section and time is gone so I haven't got time to deal with it Jesus says to them again once more he outlines the reason that he came he came to save verse 32 they were on their way up to Jerusalem with Jesus leading the way and the disciples were astonished while those who followed were afraid again he took the twelve aside and told them what was going to happen to him we're going to Jerusalem he said and the son of man will be betrayed to the chief priests and teachers of the law they will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the

Gentiles who will mock him and spit on him flog him and kill him three days later he will rise see what was impossible with man namely salvation namely receiving eternal life was made was made possible how in and through the death and the resurrection of Christ how can we be justified how can our hearts be made just as if we had never sinned how can we be saved from sin and Satan and death and hell how can we be assured of eternal life only through the death and resurrection of Christ only through what Jesus was telling them he was determinedly set to do and has now done it's through seeing why Jesus came and putting our faith in what

Jesus has done that we can be saved and the Lord's table is the place that we are called to go to remember that and profess that our faith is in him and what he has done so who should be at the Lord's table well not simply those who are wearing sharp suits and dark clothes it's not about that it's about seeing who Jesus is as Lord and Saviour and if you can see that it's because God the Holy

[32 : 13] Spirit is working in your life it's about seeing who we are as sinners who are in need of the grace of Christ and if we can see that it's because God the Holy Spirit is at work in our life and it's about seeing why Jesus came we take the bread we take the wine and we see and we remember why Christ came and as we partake of it we are saying he came for me and my faith is in him and if you can put your amen to that your place is at that table do this says Jesus to remember me don't disobey him don't walk away from him because if you do you will walk away sad sad in time and if there's no change sad for eternity let's pray our heavenly father we thank you for this encounter that's recorded for us and we see ourselves at so many junctures in this and we thank you that we see ourselves in this and we ask Lord that you would be at work in each one of our hearts we pray that we would see what

Mark the gospel writer intended for us to see in the writing of this gospel that Jesus Christ is the son of God we pray Lord that we would see as you you work in our hearts and shine your light into the dark places of our inner being we pray that we would see not that we have kept the commandments since we were boys and girls we know that we haven't help us Lord to see the depravity of our sin in order that we will run to Christ asking him to be our savior we thank you that he went to a cross that he did suffer that he did die and he did rise in order that we could be saved and we ask Lord that that salvation is something that we would each take hold of this evening that we would begin to taste the eternal life that comes through a saving relationship with Jesus and we ask this in

Jesus name Amen Amen Amen Amen