

“Why do you call me good?”

A. Sermon in a Sentence: *Following our good God leads to the richest life we could imagine.*

B. Overview

The account of the rich young ruler's life-changing interaction with Jesus is found in three Gospels (Matthew 19:16–30, Mark 10:17–31, Luke 18:18–30). Only in Mark is it noted that “Jesus, looking at him, **loved him...**” (Mk 10:21). Coupled with Mark's veiled reference to himself in Mk 14:51–52, “A young man, wearing nothing but a linen garment, was following Jesus. When they seized him, he fled naked, leaving his garment behind.” there is reason to believe that the rich young ruler is actually Mark. The linen garment is indicative of a wealthy person who has chosen to cast off their rich outer garb (and likely their riches) in favor of the simplicity of a finely-woven inner one. It is still speculation, but the subtle style of Mark's writing supports this view, adding great depth to the story below. In it, we see Jesus surprisingly uncovering Mark's sin of pride, and guiding him toward his eventual surrender to eternal life in Christ alone.

Each of us must one day come to a place of surprise and surrender. Surprised by the love, joy, and clarity of the Gospel Jesus. And a choice to surrender to that glorious gift.

That is the beginning, middle, and end of our story with Jesus. He will constantly surprise us with grace, and he will call us to choose to surrender, moment by moment. And on the other side of that moment is an adventure and experience of the love of God beyond our wildest dreams.

C. Mark 10:17-22 (ESV)

¹⁷ And as he was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” ¹⁸ And Jesus said to him, “**Why do you call me good?** No one is good except God alone. ¹⁹ You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and mother.’” ²⁰ And he said to him, “Teacher, all these I have kept from my youth.” ²¹ And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.” ²² Disheartened by the saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

D. LIFE APPLICATIONS:

1. God loves to **SURPRISE** His children with grace.
2. Our **SURRENDER** to God is the pathway to His richest blessings.

E. Small Group or Individual Study Questions

1. What was the best surprise you ever received?
2. What questions do you still have for God?
3. How is God answering your questions?
4. How has God surprised you this week? What did you do?
5. What action of surrender is He calling you to make in response?