

WHAT DID HE REALLY ASK?

Luke 10:25-37
Yeshua §106

During my illness I have been reading a book titled *Final Destiny*. In my opinion it is one of the most important books I will ever read. In it, the author is challenging 500 years of theological thought that has prevented us from rightly interpreting significant portions of God's Word and as a result prevented us from understanding God's Story aright.

Part 1.	The Coming of the King
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Part 4.	The Training of the Twelve by the King
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I am excited by what I'm learning and looking forward to sharing these things with you. In fact, as we continue our Yeshua series, our study will reflect the influence of *Final Destiny*.

Please turn to Luke 10:25. Jesus is in His final six months of ministry. He is traveling to the towns and villages His disciples found receptive on their survey tour.

In one of those towns, Jesus has a conversation with a man in which He tells one of His most well-known parables; the parable of the Good Samaritan.

JESUS AND THE LAWYER

LUKE 10:25-37 (ESV)

25 And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" 26 He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?" 27 And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." 28 And he said to him, "You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live."

29 But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" 30 Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. 31 Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. 32 So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and

saw him, passed by on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. 34 He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. 35 And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.' 36 Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" 37 He said, "The one who showed him mercy." And Jesus said to him, "You go, and do likewise."

WHAT WAS THE LAWYER ASKING?

The lawyer in this story was an expert in the Law of Moses. He questioned Jesus in order to test Jesus' commitment to the Law of Moses.

"Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

The usual understanding of this passage is that the lawyer was one of Jesus' opponents and was an unsaved man. It is also usually assumed that the lawyer is asking Jesus how to be saved.

Jesus directed him to the Mosaic Law and not to faith in Himself. Jesus said,

"What is written in the Law? How do you read it?"

The lawyer answered by saying one must love the Lord with all one's heart, soul, strength, and mind, and love his neighbor as himself. Jesus agreed with the lawyer's answer and commended him!

"You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live."

If the lawyer is asking Jesus what he needs to do to go to heaven when he dies, Jesus just told him to keep these two commandments and he will go to heaven.

Do you see the problem? It seems Jesus contradicts Himself. On one hand He teaches the lawyer he can be saved by keeping the Law of Moses; on the other hand, He teaches Nicodemus the only way to be saved is to believe in God's only Son Whom God gave to be lifted up (John 3:14-16). To Nicodemus, Jesus said:

JOHN 3:14-16 (ESV)

14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

The problem is not with Jesus, but with us and the way we interpret Scripture. We create the problem when we assume the phrase “inherit eternal life” always means “go to heaven when I die” or “get saved”. There are passages where “inherit eternal life” refers to salvation and going to heaven. Context determines the correct interpretation. In this context, Jesus’ answer clearly indicates the lawyer is not asking what he needs to do to go to heaven. If he were, Jesus would have given the lawyer the same answer He gave Nicodemus; he must believe in God’s Son.

What then is the lawyer asking Jesus?

He is asking Jesus what he must do to more fully experience the blessed life God gives to those who faithfully serve Him in righteousness.

In other words, he’s asking what he must do to become an Enoch who walked with God. He’s asking what he must do to become a David who was a man after God’s own heart. He’s asking what he must do to become a Daniel who was greatly loved by God. He is asking what he must do to be more sold out for God and to receive the physical and spiritual blessings God promises to those who faithfully serve Him both in this life and the next.

According to Jesus this rich, abundant life comes to those who obey the Law and the two great commands to love God and to love neighbor. This rich, full life is the reward for obedience.

In this, Jesus is reflecting what was written in the Law of Moses:

LEVITICUS 18:4-5 (ESV)

4 You shall follow my rules and keep my statutes and walk in them. I am the Lord your God. 5 You shall therefore keep my statutes and my rules; if a person does them, he shall live by them: I am the Lord.

DEUTERONOMY 30:15-16 (ESV)

15 “See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. 16 If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you today, by loving the Lord your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules, then you shall live and multiply, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it.

Rather than an antagonistic confrontation, this was an encouraging affirmation. This lawyer is a good man, probably a saved man. After a lifetime of studying the 613 commands of the Mosaic Law, he rightly discerned that the heart of God's Law is love. That is amazing given the historical context of Pharisaic Judaism with its emphasis on external compliance to the Law. Not only did this lawyer correctly discern the heart of God's Law, his question revealed his heart's desire to possess the rich quality of life God promises to all who obey.

Jesus affirmed everything the lawyer said and assured him that as he continued to love God and his neighbor, he would continue to experience the abundant, blessed life God promises to those who faithfully serve Him.

But the lawyer's conscience was pricked. From what he knew about Jesus, Jesus had a broader definition of "neighbor" than he. For the lawyer, a neighbor was a fellow Jew. But for Jesus, a neighbor included not only a fellow Jew, but Gentiles (non-Jews), and even Samaritans.

To his credit, the lawyer brought it up sensing he was not righteous in this regard and therefore not obeying the Law of Moses to love one's neighbor.

Through the parable of the good Samaritan, Jesus confirmed the lawyer's guilt. But again, to his credit, the lawyer received Jesus' correction as we see in his response:

LUKE 10:36-37 (ESV)

36 Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" 37 He said, "The one who showed him mercy." And Jesus said to him, "You go, and do likewise."

Far from being a villain, the lawyer is a man we should emulate.

He was asking the right question. His desire to live for God and to receive God's blessings is what we should desire.

The idea that once I've trusted in Jesus and I know I'm going to heaven, it doesn't matter much how I live is a lie. It matters greatly how we live because we are going to give account to Jesus for our Christian lives and as John the Apostle anticipates, many are going to shrink from Jesus in shame.

1 JOHN 2:28 (ESV)

And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming.

Not only are we going to give account, but if we are not living for God, we forfeit blessings now and rewards in the future. Here is but one warning given to Christians by the Apostle Paul in Galatians:

GALATIANS 5:16-25 (ESV)

16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. 19 Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, 21 envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. 24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

We have much more to say on this matter, but for now, meditate on Jesus' answer to the lawyer. It applies to us today. If you want to inherit eternal life, to live for God and receive His blessing for faithful service, then continue to love Him with your whole being and love (do good to) others.

In your home groups this week, I encourage you to think together deeply what it looks like to love God with your whole being and what it looks like to love others – and then do it!