



HOME
LOVING THE CITY
LONG TERM

Home Campaign Core Group Study

Week 2: Center

READ: Luke 18:18-30

SERMON SUMMARY: A wealthy young man asks Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life. The man's encounter with Jesus highlights the ways that wealth can be spiritually dangerous. The larger context of Scripture shows us that wealth in itself is not bad – God uses rich and poor alike to do his work in the world. Jesus' challenge to the wealthy young man, however, exposes how this man's wealth led him to believe the lie of self-sufficiency. The man's material security so insulated him from any real need that he believed he didn't necessarily need God. The wealthy young man's question "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" also highlights several signs that we may be in danger of believing the same lie ourselves: he fails to recognize Jesus as the Son of God; he believes that he can do something to earn God's blessing; and finally he shows himself to be more interested in the things that God can give him rather than God himself.

Jesus' challenges the young man to submit himself to a life of total dependence on God and in so doing confronts each of these issues. But the young man leaves, unable to sacrifice his life of self-sufficiency. His life was centered on the idol of his own wealth and status, not on God. Here Jesus strikes at the heart of the Gospel – none of us can make the sacrifice necessary to assure our salvation, but we don't have to. Christ became poor for our sake, graciously sacrificing his own wealth, power, and dignity on the Cross to secure our redemption. We can therefore trust him more than anything else to be the center of our lives.

1. How do you find security or self-worth apart from God? What role does wealth play in this?
2. Do you recognize any signs that you may unintentionally believe in your own self-sufficiency? Do you see Jesus as someone who simply gives good advice? Are there ways you try to earn God's blessing? Are you more interested in God's gifts than God himself?

3. What idols of security and self-sufficiency is Jesus calling you to renounce? Having named these, what habits you can adopt to increasingly submit to and center your life on God?
4. Reflecting on Luke 18:24-27 and 2 Corinthians 8:9, how does Jesus' sacrifice on the Cross assure us of our salvation? How does it invite and enable us to submit our entire lives to God?
5. How do you feel about giving? Why? How does your view of giving intersect with your faith, and your understanding of the gospel?

PRAY: Pray that God would reveal the things that sit at the center of your life, the ways we seek security and worth apart from Him. Ask for the courage to renounce those things and turn to Him. Pray about the specific ways that God may be calling into deeper commitment to his mission to DC through Church of the Advent.

DO: Examine the influences and practices in your life that incline to believe a lie of self-sufficiency. Mediate on the depths of Christ's gracious sacrifice for us on the Cross and commit to new habits that cultivate a greater sense of your utter dependence on God.