



The Journey
Week of 11.15.09

RE-Jesus: The Un-Religious One

By Michael Maybee

“Jesus looked at him and loved him.” Jesus looked at the young man as only he could. He peered into the deepest recesses of the man’s heart. There in the dark, secret places, Jesus saw the man’s pride; his self-righteousness and self-satisfaction. He looked past the lifestyle carefully managed to obey every rule and every tradition of his religion, and saw that the man’s heart was far from God.

If you read Mark 10 with us last week, you read this account of Jesus’ encounter with the rich young man in verses [17 – 31](#). The scripture does not explicitly say the young man was a Pharisee, but he certainly could have been.

The Pharisees were considered, especially by themselves, the personification of “good people.” They knew the existing scriptures and were meticulous in their adherence to the rules therein. The rich young man in Mark 10 may have shared with them their belief that their wealth was a blessing bestowed upon them by God in direct proportion to their religious fervor.

In reality, they had become legalistic, arrogant and unprincipled. They held themselves separate from (and in their own minds, above) the rest of the world. They believed their piety had earned them special favor from God. However, their superior knowledge of the Scriptures was superficial and missed the true meaning of God’s word. These self-satisfied religious folk had made idols even out of the teachings in the Scriptures. Jesus repeatedly cried to them, “Woe to you.” ([Matthew 23:13-16](#); [Luke 11:39-52](#))

The point the Pharisees and the young man in Mark 10 missed is that we must hold fast to the living God himself. Every commandment, every precept, every principle he gave us is a reflection of his character. They are not just a list of rules we can check off and assume that we have our ticket to heaven fully punched. They are ways in which we can imitate him.

Jesus is the full and perfect revelation of God. He came to show us what a human life totally surrendered to the will of God should look like. However, we must acknowledge that our grasp of Jesus is imperfect. The Apostle Paul wrote that we “see but a poor reflection as in a mirror” ([1 Corinthians 13:12](#)) and must depend upon God’s Holy Spirit to reveal the truth to us ([1 Corinthians 2:6-16](#)). Even Paul, who was well versed in the Scriptures, had to rethink things when he came face to face with the Risen Christ. Paul’s devotion shifted from following a list of rules to following a man, Jesus Christ, the God-man.

Jesus loved the rich young man. He even loved the self-righteous, hyper-religious Pharisees, though he hated what they were doing. Jesus looks at me and he loves me, but not because I show up in church and try to follow a bunch of rules. He loves me because he is love. Now that is a man I want to follow.

“Discipleship is based on devotion to Jesus Christ, not on adherence to a belief or a creed.”

~ Oswald Chambers

(You are encouraged to use the SOAP – Scripture, Observation, Application and Prayer Method for a guide. Example available at <http://www.heartlandchurch.org/index.php/grow/journey>. Page numbers refer to "The Story of God" Bible available for free at the Welcome Center in our atrium.)

monday, 11.16.09

Read: [Mark 11](#) (pg. 693)

tuesday, 11.17.09

Read: [Mark 12](#) (pg. 694)

wednesday, 11.18.09

Read: [Mark 13](#) (pg. 695)

thursday, 11.19.09

Read: [Mark 14](#) (pg. 696)

friday, 11.20.09

Read: [Mark 15](#) (pg. 697)

saturday, 11.21.09

Read: [Mark 16](#) (pg. 698)

Additional Resources:

- **Sunday's Sermon:** Click [here](#) for podcast, or here for [video](#)
- **Sign up to serve:** email Lisa Zulke by clicking [here](#)
- **Sign up to grow in a small group or 1:1 spiritual mentorship:** click [here](#) to email Britton Gregory
- [Re-Jesus](#), by Alan Hirsch and David Frost
- [The Jesus I Never Knew](#), by Philip Yancey

Small Group/ 1:1 Question Samplers:

1. Have you ever had a sour religious experience? When did it occur? What made it bad? What made you consider coming back?
2. What are some ways that you now look at Jesus differently after hearing the messages of this series?
3. If your life was a tootsie pop, how has your faith journey been like the wrapper (more concerned with outer appearances), the hard candy shell (more concerned with rigidly following the rules), and the center (soft, pliable and responsive to God's leading)?
4. How could you befriend a person who has been burned by the church or by a sour experience?