

passers-by. He thus showed that he was really in anxiety about eternal life ; because he was willing to forfeit the esteem of the Jews and to incur the ridicule and odium of his fellow-rulers by thus humiliating himself and the class to which he belonged by kneeling in the street before this despised Galilean, by paying public respect to this poor itinerant preacher from the obscure and ill-reputed village of Nazareth. Though intensely earnest, he was yet deceiving himself. Like many honest people of our own day both in the church and outside of it, he thought he would be willing to do anything, to make any sacrifice or endure any hardship, for the sake of eternal life ; but when our Lord put him to the test by demanding *himself*, all that he had and all that he was, he went away sorrowful for he had great possessions ; sorrowful to lose eternal life and yet reluctant to part with this world ; unwilling to give up the much-loved treasures of earth for the unfading and unfailing treasures of heaven ; unwilling to lose his life here, although by so doing he should find it, a far higher life, hereafter.

What did our Saviour mean by applying to this inquirer the touch-stone of our text ? What lessons stand out most prominently for you and for me in this incident ? Briefly stated, I think they are as follows :

I. The insufficiency of mere morality

to secure eternal life. "One thing thou lackest."

II. The fact that morality, although insufficient to salvation, is not in itself to be despised. "Jesus looking upon him loved him," admired his good qualities although He could not receive him.

III. The necessity of conversion. "Go, sell whatsoever thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven ; and come, follow me."

I. This ruler in all outward respects was a model young man. Although he was rich, yet he had never allowed the temptations of his wealth to lead him into luxury and excessive indulgence. He was not, and never had been, an adulterer. He was constant in his care for and obedience to his father and mother. He would not defraud a neighbor in a business transaction. He despised theft ; he shrank from the very thought of murder ; lying was an abomination unto him. In fact he felt able to say, with regard to all those commandments which refer to our duties to our fellow-men,—and this, I think, not in the spirit of pharisaism but with perfect frankness and honesty,—"All these have I kept from my youth up." Surely a young man with such an unblemished career, truthful, honest, upright, is fit for the kingdom of heaven ? But no. He felt in his own inner consciousness that something was wanting, that there was a great void in his religious life ; and har-