

for the disclosure of Christ as divine. "If your address is a sincere one you have answered your own question. Bending with the heart of a child at the feet of the 'Good Master,' and pledging your all to him, will lead you to the heavenly life (ver. 21). Do you know who I am? (ch. 8: 27; John 4: 10; 20: 15). God is the only one who is good; submit yourself to him. You want eternal life. God alone can give you that. Will you obey him?" (Buell.) Eternal life, the one good thing to be gained, is to be found only in obedience to God, the supremely Good. Not in doing some one great thing, but in keeping perfectly all the commandments. Jesus, however, does not say that anyone would obtain eternal life in that way, but it was the only other way besides that which he lays down in verse 21. On the impossibility of being saved by our good works read Rom. 3: 20, 28; 4: 6; Gal. 2: 16; Eph. 2: 9; 2 Tim. 1: 9. In the R. V. of Matthew 19: 17, the words of Jesus are "Why askest thou me concerning that which is good?" This connects our Saviour's words with "good thing" rather than with "good Master."

19. Defraud not—Either a reference to Lev. 19: 13, (see also Deut. 24: 14); or a brief version of the tenth commandment; or it is a more general way of expressing, as in Matthew's account, "thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Jesus selects the simplest moral laws in order to suggest that perhaps he does not fully know what keeping them, as God wants them to be kept, means.

20. All these things have I observed.—Such a statement shows how little the ruler perceived the deeper meaning of the laws. Compare Matt. 5: 21, 22, 27, 28; Luke 10: 27. He believed that he was blameless, but still felt that he lacked something (Matt. 40: 20). "God requires more than irreplicable outward conduct. Paul was blameless as touching the righteousness which is in the law; and was content to lose that for Christ's sake (Phil. 3: 6)." (Lindsay.)

II. A SEVERE TEST. 21. Beholding him—giving him that significant and searching look which the evangelists so often noticed in our Saviour's eye (John 1: 42; Luke 22: 61; Mark 10: 27). Loved him—"He read in his countenance genuine anxiety and effort for everlasting salvation, and at the same time fervid confidence in himself." (Meyer.) "Christ loves not only virtues, but also the seeds of virtues, in their degree, however." (Grotius.) One thing thou lackest—Suggested by his own question, as in Matthew, "What lack I yet?" Compare James 2: 10. "One link wanted, breaks the chain." He had not surrendered his whole heart to God. Thorns grew amongst the good grain. He tried to serve God and mammon. Sell whatsoever thou hast—Matthew adds "If thou wilt be perfect," i. e. complete, lacking in nothing. This was a special test for a special case. By enjoining this special act of self-

denial, Christ would open the young man's eyes to perceive how much he loved his wealth, and how it stood between him and the highest kind of obedience. "Hence these words of Jesus cannot be twisted to mean that the highest Christian life implies monastic renunciation of property, or the practice of Christian Socialism. The command is not a specific rule of life for all Christians in all ages. It is rather a particular application of the great general principle, that we should test our love to God by willingness to give up that which ties us most to the world." (Lindsay.) Treasure in heaven—the eternal life he sought (Matt. 6: 19-21; Luke 12: 33). Take up the cross—Referring to the Roman custom of making the person about to be crucified carry his own cross (Matt. 27: 32; John 19: 17). Jesus means to say, "Be willing to bear any shame and suffering for my sake." Read Matt. 10: 38; 16: 24. What a much more solemn meaning these words now have to us since Christ himself was crucified.

22. His countenance fell (R. V.)—His disappointment shewed itself in his face (Matt. 13: 45, 46).

23—Another glance of the wonderful eyes of Jesus, a sad and loving one. A sigh mingles with his words. How hardly—"with what difficulty," "at what a sacrifice of their inclinations." They don't easily overcome their covetousness, their pride, their love of the world, their self-indulgence, etc. "The phrase has reference not to the sufficiency of God's grace, which is equal in all cases, because infinite, but to the hindrances with which the man himself must struggle, and which nothing but that grace can overcome." (Alexander.) Job 31: 24; Ps. 52: 7; 62: 10; 1 Tim. 6: 17.

III. OUR ONLY HOPE. 24. The disciples were astonished—They had been accustomed to regard worldly prosperity as a mark of divine favor. Children—"The heart of our Lord, yearning after the young ruler who had made the refusal, opens to the disciples, who had chosen to follow him and bear his cross, and he addresses them in words which express, not only affection, but fellowship of the most intimate kind. They had faith in him; they had gained that higher spiritual life which could only be reached by loving fellowship with him." (Lindsay.) John 13: 33; 21: 5. Them that trust in riches—"It is not the having, but the trusting, that creates the difficulty. It is not the kind or quantity of the wealth possessed, but the kind or quantity of the attachment that is lavished upon it. The love of the penny may create as great an impediment as the love of the pound." (Hanna.) The margin of the R. V. omits the words, and makes the verse read simply "how hard it is to enter into the kingdom of God." This is a more general truth of which the young man was an illustration.

25. Easier for a camel—An oriental proverb, meaning something extremely difficult or