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Charity and The Ministry of Jesus
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Critical Engagement Essay: The Rich Ruler

The Rich and the Kingdom of God: All of God's followers struggle with staying on track and following the commandments, this case is not the difference. However, it shows how our mind and our heart want different things sometimes. The man had not conquered the control over his heart desires yet; he has made the conscious decision to follow God and has not struggled with following his ideals, for instance the ten commandments, because those actions were not appealing to him therefore it was easy for him to stay on track. When it came to his weakness, greed, his heart (internal desire) was to not let go of it. His mind wanted to follow God but his heart was still caught up on early things.

Language: Giving is the language used in this case, Jesus asked the rich young ruler to give all his wealth away. God knows us all so well that he always knows what is our weakness, what do we not let go of; the same question for a person with an altruist heart would have been different.

Relation with content: It is related to the introduction of chapter four of Anderson's Charity, material wealth and its deceptions. The first few pages Anderson talks about the concept of treasury in heaven: 'the concept of the treasury in heaven originates in a fundamental economic concern: how to prepare for the uncertainties of the future'. He explains that giving stuff/money does not count as a loss but rather it counts as a gain to the heavenly treasury.

Charity- giving: In the story, Jesus asked the man to give all his wealth to the poor. Jesus was asking him to follow one of the ten commandments 'you shall not

covet'. From this point of view, charity is a tool that can be used to achieve eternal life. However, in this situation evaluating the purity of the man's intentions is simple, because he refused to give all his wealth away; if he had given his wealth away, it would have been more of a dilemma: was he doing it from altruism or because he was told that he would get to heaven if he did.

The Ten Commandments: "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." (Matthew 22:37-40)

"There is none other commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:30-31)

Charity is connected to the commandments through love. The purest form of charity would be one in which love is the prime reason behind it. To love means to care, to selflessly put someone before ourselves, to attend to their needs. Based on this definition, charity could be looked as love for those we do not know. Charity is also seen from a perspective of 'managing God's money', money is a blessing from God, so the least we could do is to follow the commandments by not coveting and loving your neighbor, for instance through charity.

Consequences: Not giving has important spiritual and material consequences. Giving allows the person balance in their life. Personally, it keeps me grounded to give away something, to some foundation or even just a friend that needs it, it helps me maintain balance because I would do something not productive with the money and just go on a vicious cycle of spending. It could also affect people by feeling guilt. Giving

helps our physical existence by preventing and it helps our spirituality by giving calm, happiness, and well-being to the person.

Jesus' Ministry: It appears with most intensity in the middle of his mortal ministry. People experienced charity before as God commanded it but I think that it was not until Jesus was on earth that the essence of charity was grasped. From his mortal ministry comes the purity of giving, out of love and not out of duty. The Rich Young ruler story is emblematic of the topic of salvation, if it was for technicalities then a lot more people would have salvation secured, for example the rich man from the story that thought following the commandments was enough for salvation; this shows us that sometimes our ego gets in the way of acknowledging our flaws, sins, and therefore not 'repaying' them.