

A Ticket to Heaven ... Priceless

by Mark Cahill

One of the most thought-provoking stories in the Bible is the account of the rich, young ruler. Here is a young man who has everything that any teenager, or adult for that matter, could want: youth, vitality, wealth, and power. Who doesn't long for those things? Let's take a closer look at his encounter with Jesus.

As recorded in Matthew 19:16, the rich, young ruler asked Jesus what he must do to have eternal life. Jesus told him that he had to keep the Ten Commandments—all of them. The young man went on to tell Jesus that he had kept the commandments since his youth. Jesus

responded with just one more “command”: he had to sell all he had and give it to the poor.

We know what happened next. The young man left Christ's presence with sorrow because he had great possessions. The cost of eternal life was too high.

From the world's standpoint, this young man seemingly had everything. In today's terms, he had a new iPod, a new car, a beautiful house, all the right relationships, and so on. But without truly knowing the Lord Jesus Christ, he had nothing.

He was banking on his good works to get him into heaven. He knew that if there was a God, surely He would accept him because he had kept God's Law.

The other day I stopped at a gas station. Two police cars were parked in front with their lights flashing. As I walked into the store, a young man was sitting on a stool. I went up to talk

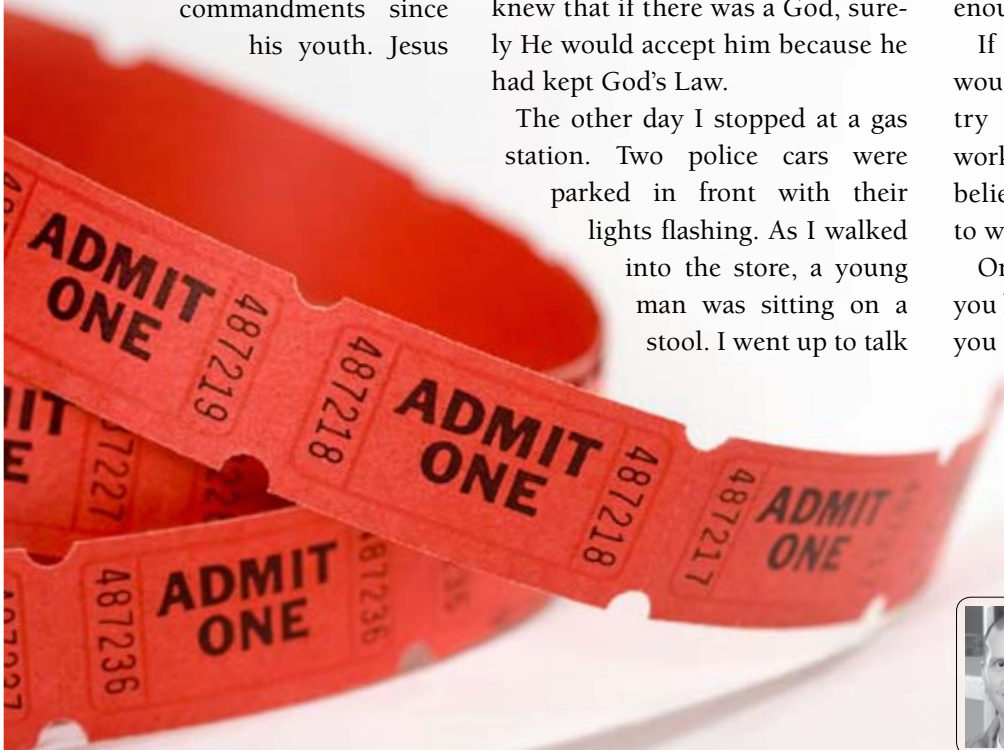
with him. He was shaking. I asked him what was up. He told me that he had just been carjacked.

I asked him if the carjacker would have killed him, what would have happened. He said he thought there was a heaven. I then asked what he thought it would take to get there. He said being a good person. He was just like the rich, young ruler—keeping the commandments of God and doing good. Sadly, many think this is the ticket to enter the front gates of heaven.

As the rich, young ruler stood in front of God Himself, he didn't even realize that He is the only One good enough to keep the whole Law.

If you were the young ruler, what would you say to Jesus? Would you try to give Him all of your good works, or would you say to Him, “I believe You are the only one worthy to wash me clean of my sins”?

Only one answer is right. Make sure you have the right answer long before you ever take your last breath. ■



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Mark Cahill is a popular speaker and author of the books *One Thing You Can't Do in Heaven* and *One Heartbeat Away*. Through his ministry (markcahill.org), Mark equips others to reach the lost. He shares his love for the Lord with everyone he encounters.