

# May 31, 2026

Opening Prayer –

May the Lord rejoice with us as we rejoice in Him

As we enjoy the day he has given us

And may we bless one another as He blesses us

With friendship and fellowship and Love.

Amen

# May 31, 2026

**Matt 19:16-27**

## **The Rich and the Kingdom of God**

<sup>16</sup> Just then a man came up to Jesus and asked, “Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?”

<sup>17</sup> “Why do you ask me about what is good?” Jesus replied. “There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, keep the commandments.”

<sup>18</sup> “Which ones?” he inquired.

Jesus replied, “‘You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, <sup>19</sup> honor your father and mother,’<sup>[a]</sup> and ‘love your neighbor as yourself.’<sup>[b]</sup>”

<sup>20</sup> “All these I have kept,” the young man said. “What do I still lack?”

<sup>21</sup> Jesus answered, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

<sup>22</sup> When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.

<sup>23</sup> Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Truly I tell you, it is hard for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. <sup>24</sup> Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”

<sup>25</sup> When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished and asked, “Who then can be saved?”

<sup>26</sup> Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

<sup>27</sup> Peter answered him, “We have left everything to follow you! What then will there be for us?”

# May 31, 2026

What good thing must I do?

Man is obsessed with what they have to do.

My young workers - when they are really new - ask me to write down instructions of how to negotiate a deal - it's impossible, that's not how it works.

It's not science, it is an art - there are no right or wrong ways of engaging.

Often the right thing to do is only discernible by having the instinct of a deal doer. No books prepare you, just an innate knowledge of how far from each others home territory both parties are willing to stray and so an understanding of where they can meet in the middle.

That is impossible to teach, impossible to write down, but possible for the gifted individual that can watch carefully, listen to the important things whilst at the same time respectfully and gently being obedient to what the moment is telling them.

It is not one extra skill to add to their CV, but a fundamental character trait

# May 31, 2026

My young muslim friend – who is now attending church and searching Jesus very diligently

He is very keen to know about what we need to DO

How to pray – what position – what time of day – what words?

How to fast – in what season – what hours? What clothes to wear?

What to eat – any foods that are frowned upon

Tell me what we need to DO!!!

# May 31, 2026

All other religions - generally - include a whole load of rules for you to study and master - why wouldn't they, they are man's attempt to reach up to God - how to get to him, how to appease him (or them) how to follow him. But Jesus says all of that is impossible.

In all other religions, if you study hard and put in the years, one day you might become a high priest or guru of another religion. But only further away from Jesus and heaven.

What makes what Jesus says different, is whether we believe he is God! If he is, then he is God spanning the difference to man, not the other way around. He does the work, not us.

# May 31, 2026

What good thing must I do?

This guy believes he is well on the way to getting there, he just wants Jesus to tell him that one good thing extra that he needs to get over the hump!

But Jesus is not one more book for the shelf

Or

One more rung of the ladder

Or

One more trick up the sleeve

Or

One more string to your bow

He's a whole rewrite – you have to be born again – you have to give everything up and start afresh! (for the rich young ruler – literally!)

# May 31, 2026

It's no coincidence that, that immediately before this passage, Jesus has to step in and stop the disciples from shooing away the little children. The Kingdom of God belongs to such as these!

In fact, in Luke's version he goes further and says: anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a child will never enter it!

All the learning in the world can take you further from heaven if it tempts you to lean on your own understanding! There is nothing wrong with the learning, but if it becomes more authoritative and important than the still calm voice that guides you in the moment, it can turn into your God.

# May 31, 2026

Science is one of God's gift to mankind : proverb 25:2 it is the glory of God to conceal a matter; to search out a matter is the glory of kings.

Christians have won 72% of the nobel chemistry

65% of physics

62% in medicine

But today the gift of science has been perverted out of shape by some people - people who know a lot about science - and whose knowledge makes them feel more important than God.

Richard Dawkins had a Christian background but the more he studied and learned - and he is brilliant! The more he became convinced that science was not a gift of God, but the rival to God.

# May 31, 2026

For comparison, there is a man called Alistair McGrath. He was a science student - the more he studied science, the more he became convinced that there must be a creator God. The same year he got his Oxford phd for molecular biophysics, he also received first class honours in theology.

Reflecting on his time as an undergraduate at Wadham, McGrath has written, "I was discovering that Christianity was far more intellectually robust than I had ever imagined. I had some major rethinking to do, and by the end of November [1971], my decision was made: I turned my back on one faith and embraced another."[\[26\]](#)

# May 31, 2026

He put down his need for one more good thing – but the rich young ruler is still asking - what good thing must I do!

Let's consider this chap - he is rich in two ways. He's rich in material wealth, he's also rich in moral wealth - he's sure he's never dropped a clanger with any of the commandments.

Remember the song in the sound of music - Maria is about to marry a rich man - somewhere in my youth or childhood, I must have done something good!

Remember what Job's friends told him - somewhere in your youth or childhood, you must have done something bad!

So here's this guy, rich in possessions, rich in morals, rich in reputation.

Everyone looks at him with stars in their eyes - maybe envying him, maybe desiring him, maybe hating him for his success.

# May 31, 2026

But that's not how Jesus looks at him. In Marks account we are told the answer to this, Mark tells us - he looked at him - and loved him.

He looked at him and saw the real cancer in his life, the thing that was keeping him from the kingdom - his love of money.

If Richard Dawkins had asked the same question, he would have looked at him and loved him and told him to give up his worship of science.

It's important to say, because as I mentioned, people are always searching for a set of universal rules- that giving all of your money is not a set rule for Christians, nowhere else is it found, but it was the nub of this guys problems!

# May 31, 2026

I apologise for mentioning Dawkins again, but if you offered him a book that proved positive there is no god but science, even though he is also very wealthy, he would happily give every penny he owns for that book.

His wealth is not his god, his belief in science is.

Consider again the people looking on, they see this magnificent man rich in everything he does - he looks perfect.

If you look at a needle with the naked eye, it looks shiny and smooth and perfect.

But if you look at it under a microscope, it is all pocked and misshapen - our hearts are like this - the rich young mans heart was like this - and Jesus was the only one with a microscope.

# May 31, 2026

And the man squirms as Jesus picks at one of those pocks. He goes away sad - we don't know if he ever changed his mind, in fact, the legend has it that this man may have been Mark himself - how else would he know that Jesus looked at him and loved him.

The man came searching for that one more good thing he needed but Jesus knows that our real problem is not that we lack just one small piece of the jigsaw, but that we know deep in our heart that on our own, as we stand, we are in no way good at all.

He tells exactly the same thing to Nicodemus - you have to be born again - start afresh! Whatever is already written down on your jotter, put it in the bin and come sit at my knee like a little child - or you can't come in! Not because I won't let you - but because you will not be willing to give up your other gods.

# May 31, 2026

Our problem is not that we need a little bit more goodness, but that we know down deep that we're not good!

TV Program, House - brilliant dr - mostly because of his deep understanding of the cunningness of the human heart. His catchphrase to his students - everybody lies.

The patients give their stories, he puts the puzzle together based on what they probably haven't told him - he's immensely naughty too, he sends his students to break into the patient's houses so he can get clues about their lifestyle and normally pieces together the most complex health issues using his encyclopaedic knowledge of the human body but most of all the most faithful outworking of the fact that - everybody lies!

# May 31, 2026

I know what House would make of this young chap claiming never to have broken a commandment – and he'd be right. And we are told that he goes away sad.

Because he met the real Jesus.

It's easy to read the bible and learn all about it.

It's even possible to make your knowledge of the bible a rival to God himself

To become proud and reliant on your knowledge of the bible rather than having the real Jesus as your focus.

When you meet the real Jesus, he demands more than you ever would have thought but he also offers more than you ever could have expected.

If anyone is indifferent about Jesus, they cannot have met the real Jesus.

If anyone imagines Jesus to be just a crutch to lean on in hard times, they cannot have met the real Jesus.

If anyone believes that Jesus was just a good philosophical teacher, they cannot have met the real Jesus.

# May 31, 2026

CS Lewis said that because of the things Jesus said - his claims about himself, his willingness to die for the crime of claiming to be equal with God - he cannot be described as a good teacher.

The Russian preacher - conman

The only three explanations - says CS Lewis - for Jesus words and actions are:

He was a liar

He was crazy

He was the son of God.

Mad, bad or God!

When you meet the real Jesus, these are the only three choices you have.

Mad, bad or God

# May 31, 2026

And if we conclude that Jesus must be God - reaching down, offering us his forgiveness, acceptance, friendship and brotherhood,

Then its a short leap to know that if we have nothing else, just him, then we are rich.

My dad says he's the richest man alive (though he is financially poor) - and means it.

Treasure in heaven - is having Jesus. It's more valuable than anything else - providing he is God.

Mad, bad or God. That is the stark choice - no other choice.

Only God is good - Jesus says.

Everything else you have - outside of God, no matter how shiny, is not good.

# May 31, 2026

And if this doesn't satisfy you, if you are still insistent on knowing what good thing you must do to be accepted into God's kingdom, then meditate on this one verse:

I've referenced Matt mark and Luke, I leave you with John 😊

John 6:28-29

Then they asked him “what must we do to do the work that God requires”

Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one He has sent”