

# The Right Posture

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Speaker: **Jason Thomas**

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Jason Thomas: Success is about what you do for you, but significance is always about what you do for other people.

Female: You are listening to brothersoftheword.com. This is the message titled, "The Right Posture" by Jason Thomas. This message is number 6568.

(Music Playing: 00:00:13 - 00:00:25)

And now for "The Right Posture".

Jason Thomas: Welcome to Brothers of the Word because brothers and sisters, we all need the Word. I don't want to waste any time. I love for us to jump in to the scripture tonight. We are going to be in the Gospel of Mark Chapter 10 and I'm going to be sharing what's likely a familiar story to most of us, but I really trust and pray that God will give us fresh eyes to see it. Some of you all may be wondering, you know, man, you look a little slimmer since the last time we saw you and that would be justified. My wife and I went on this vegan journey for the month of January. I made it to about February the 4th or 5th, until I have to have a piece of chicken, but I feel great. I feel better than I have probably in 20 years and I think what's amazing and it is I believe God wants to speak to us from this familiar passage that I think most of us have probably heard a lot, but I believe there's fresh revelation in it if we will tune our hearts to heaven.

So everybody, in Mark 10. Right. I was trying to make sure we were all there. We're going to start in Verse 17, a story this rich young ruler. Beginning in Verse 17, the scripture says, "And as He was setting out on his journey, being Jesus, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. You know the Commandments. Do not murder. Do not commit adultery. Do not steal. Do not bear false witness. Do not defraud. Honor your father and mother." And he said to Him, "Teacher, all these I have kept from my youth." And Jesus, looking at him loved him and said to him, "You lack one thing." Everybody say, "One thing"

Crowd: One thing.

Jason Thomas: He said, "Go, sell all that you have and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven and come follow me." Disheartened by the saying, he went away sorrowful for he had great possessions. And Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How difficult it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God." And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said to them again, "Children, how difficult it is to enter the kingdom of God. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God." And they were exceedingly astonished and said to Him, "Then who can be saved?" And Jesus looked at them and said, "With man, it is impossible but not with God for all things are possible with God."

And Peter began to say to Him, "See? We have left everything and followed you." And Jesus said, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left his house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands for my sake and for the gospel who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time. Houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands with persecutions and in the age to come, eternal life, but many who are first will be last and the last, first."

Let's pray together. Jesus, thank you so much for the power of your word that continues to reverberate throughout the generations. God, I thank you that there is absolutely nothing, no power that is lost from your word is still as powerful as it was spoken thousands of years ago as it is today. And so I thank you that here in 2021, we get to be able to behold your word and learn about your life and learn about your truth. And God, I pray that by your spirit, you will give us discernment and boldness and courage to be able to strip away the things that keep us from living the fullness of what you've called us to live. And God, for every person that's in this space, every person that's joining us online, God I pray that you would meet us all where we are and draw us to the place that you would have us to be. So Lord, we thank you and we love you and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

So, I love the fact that kids often time have a mindset of what do I need to do to be able to receive X? So, as a kid for me, it's like, "Mama, tell me what I need to do to be able to, you know, get a new video game or get a new pair of Jays(ph) or get a car or

whatever it is. And that's like this performance-based, "Hey, I got to do something to be able to receive something."

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Right? And a lot of us, if we're honest, sometimes approach God with that same type of mindset, that same type of mentality. Man, if I'm just here every Thursday and Sunday, I know that guy's going to smile down on me in a different way than, you know, just the ordinary average Christians who just come on Sunday morning. You know what I mean? Everybody do that, but it takes a special person to get out in this nasty, ugly Atlanta weather on a Thursday night to get closer to Jesus, or maybe you have a mindset, maybe if I just increase my giving there, "Hey, God will take notice of me and he'll love me a little bit more." It might be, "You know, I'm just going to commit more time in prayer and I'm going to commit more time serving and I'm going to do all these things." And Jesus is like, "I appreciate it, but I love you because you're made in my image. You're created after my likeness."

And I know for me, that's not really the mentality, like I didn't get to bring home good grades in order to get some. I got to bring home good grades because my mama was a teacher, my daddy was a lawyer, my grandparents were teachers and they expected it. So, the motto was, in the Thomas house was, "Hey, we care more about who you're becoming than what you have. We love you and if it's possible, we'll get you stuff, but that's not really our motivation." And so, we land tonight at the story of this rich young ruler. And I love it because he's honest and he's real and Jesus, we're getting close to the end of his life and he's in this season of having these discipleship kind of dialogues that are going on. And as he's on his journey, he's on a mission, he's doing what God has called him to do and he's like, "Hey, Jesus, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

Now, let's just think about this for a second. It's an honest question. How does an inheritance work? How does an inheritance work? Don't talk back to me. I don't know if that's not allowed. Say it again? Somebody got to die. Somebody got to die in order for you to get an inheritance. So, he's coming up and saying, "Good teacher, hey, thank you for your time. What must I do to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus like, "I don't know if you really understand what you're asking me for because you--

when you say inherit, I hope you know that somebody has got to die.” Okay? So, that’s clue number one. But he says, “Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” and Jesus understood, he discerned, he could tell by the way that this kid approached him that this kid, instead of having childlike faith and trust and complete surrender to God, he’s been depending on what he could pull out of here to be like, how can I get ahead based on what’s in my wallet? How can I get ahead based on my status? How can I get ahead on leveraging relationships that I have? And Jesus is like, “Man, I know the cross is awaiting me soon, but I love that God ordained this kind of moments.” For this young man to say, “Hey, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

So, that’s where we start. That’s where it starts to get good and I love off the rip. Jesus is like, “Why do you call me good because nobody is good except God. So, if you young man are telling me that I’m a good teacher, I just want you to understand what you’re saying. When you’re saying good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life, you’re saying that you subscribe with the notion that Jesus is God.” Jesus said nobody is good but God. So, if you’re saying good teacher, you’re just acknowledging that there’s something different about you. All right? Nobody is good except for God. Now, what I want us to see in our time together tonight is just this process. Everybody say “process”.

Crowd: Process.

Jason Thomas: Life is a process. And this young man, this rich young ruler is going through a process and he’s being vulnerable and he doesn’t even realize that we are learning from his life over 2,000 years later. So, this is what I want us to see. All right? As he was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him. All right? So, Jesus is rolling through town and this rich young ruler who has status, he’s got power, he’s got influence, he runs up to Jesus. And the first thing he does is he gets down because he understands that his posture has to be right. Whenever you come into the presence of Jesus, it’s about having the right posture. So, he took the posture of humility. He got in Jesus’ presence. He had all the money, he had all the wealth, he had all the possessions, he had all the stuff, but his first thing was just to kneel in the King’s presence.

Somebody say “humility”.

Male: Humility.

Jason Thomas: It’s not thinking less of yourself. It’s is thinking of yourself less. It’s acknowledging that God, I don’t have it all. God, I don’t know it all. But I’m going to humble myself in your presence. So, the first thing he had was the right posture. Everybody say “right posture”.

Crowd: Right posture.

Jason Thomas: All right? So, he starts off and then he says to him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” Now, just quick survey. Is that a good question to ask? I mean, if you had Jesus, you know, right in front of Jesus, help a brother out.

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Tell me what I got to do to inherit eternal life, right? So, he starts off with the right posture. He’s humble in God’s presence, but then we see secondly that he’s smart enough to ask the right questions. Right? So we got humility. He understands that if I ever want to thrive, if ever I want to lead, if ever I want to exist at the highest level, I got to be willing to follow Jesus’ lead and take the humble form of a servant. So, humility and servanthood in the kingdom of God are synonymous. We see it time and time again in the gospel. The greatest among you shall be servant of all. The first will be last. And so we got the humility thing. He’s got the posture right. Then he asked the right questions because if we are honest, is our questions that get us to the place that we need to be.

Now, I know nobody did this but me, but you know, there was this temptation in school to have a question in class and you’d be sitting there too scared to ask because you don’t want to look stupid or lame or somebody call you. Look at him, oh, question ask himself. Said, look at him asking questions and everybody else in the class got the same question, but this rich young ruler understood that asking the right questions help to point you in the right direction. So he’s got the right posture. He’s got the right questions. Jesus isn’t offended by our questions. He’s not turned off like who are you to doubt me? He said, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, your mind, your soul, and

your strength.” He’s given us the ability to process and analyze and he’ll throw stuff in your life and you’re like, “God, I don’t know what this means” and he’s like, “Good. Keep asking questions.” Keep the right posture, keep the right question and then he’s feeling kind of good and then we get to this point, Jesus says, “Why do you call me good? Nobody is good, but God.”

And what’s the next thing he tells him? “You know the Commandments. Don’t steal. Don’t murder. Don’t commit adultery. Don’t defraud. Honor your father and your mother. You know these things.” And what was his response? He said, “Teacher, I’ve been doing that my whole life. Since I was a young boy, since I was coming up, since I was this little, I’ve known what I’m supposed to do.”

So, the rich young ruler shows up in Jesus’ life with the right posture, the posture of humility. He moves, he begins to ask the right question. What must I do to inherit eternal life? That’s the game-winning question right there. And then, he has this engagement with Jesus and he’s like, “Jesus, I got the right actions. I know what to do.” But how many of you all will be honest because God will see it anyway if you put your hand up or not. But how many all know we can be obedient in our actions, but disconnected and disengaged in our hearts?

And so he goes to Jesus. He’s like, Jesus, I know that stuff. That’s the first thing I learned in Sunday school. I remember songs, all of it. I know the right stuff to do. And Jesus is like, well Jesus looked at him and he loved him and he said to him, “You lack one thing. Go sell all that you have and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven and come follow me.” Everybody say, “uh-oh”.

Crowd: Uh-oh.

Jason Thomas: We got the posture. Pastor Elijah, we’re good. We got the posture. We got the humility thing going on. We got the right questions. We got the right actions. We know what to do and Jesus says, “Good job. Good job.” But let me just slow you down one second. I love even before he took the time to shift everything for this rich young ruler. I want you to notice what he did. Scripture says, Jesus Verse 21, looking at him. He looked him in the eye balls. He acknowledged him. He affirmed

his worth and his value. He looked at him because he knew that there was about to be some hard truths and this kid's world was about to be rocked, but he looked at him. He acknowledged him. And then scripture says he loved him and my Bible right here, I circled it, loved him. Because how many all know that sometimes even with people you love, you got to share some hard truth?

And so, Jesus loved this young man because he was willing to have a tough conversation. He was willing to engage with him. He was willing to listen to him. He was willing to listen to not merely the words that came out of his mouth, but he was willing to listen to the real issues that came out of his heart. Yes, this young man was really interested and concerned and wanted to know about how to inherit eternal life, but the bigger question that this young man had was I think this whole wealth and possessions and accumulation of stuff, I've used this as a barricade from dealing with some of the real stuff and the real issues that are in my heart.

It was a cover-up. It was a way for him to not have to deal with the stuff that he needed to deal with, but Jesus started by making sure that he looked at him.

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And then he loved him and from that place, then he was able to speak the truth in love to him. Because it's very difficult for people to receive when they know that there's no love there. My boys, I can discipline them and love to correct a behavior, but they know at the heart of it is daddy loves me. Daddy has my best interest at heart. My friends, my family, my wife, they know even at times where there has to be difficult conversation, it's from a seedbed of love. And so that's where this young man is. So, Jesus is like thank you. God bless you. Right posture. Keep living a life of humility. Right questions. Keep asking. Keep analyzing. Keep digging. Keep going. Right actions.

I want you to do the right thing, but I want you to do it for the right reasons. So, he says you can do all that stuff., but there's one thing that you're missing and this is what affects it. Go, sell everything you got, give the money to the poor and then after that, come follow me. Everybody say, "wrong affection". He had the right posture. He knew the right questions. He knew the

right actions, but he had wrong affections. Because the saddest part about this is not merely that this dude had stuff, but we see and we understand that stuff had him. Stuff consumed him. This man had replaced his trust in Jesus with earthly riches. So, what was Jesus attempting to get them to realize, to get us to realize?

Here are a few things I want us to take away. The first thing is that our focus must be on Jesus. He's like, it's about having your focus in the right place. Because our lives, if we are honest, and we are authentic and we're vulnerable and we're transparent, our lives get off track when we take our focus off of him. When we start to pursue our own way and chasing after our own desires instead of, "God, what are you calling me to do?" So, our focus must be on Jesus.

The second thing is that we must learn to maintain proper priorities. We've got to maintain proper priorities. All right? The third thing is that our possessions have to be yielded to God. It takes us making a daily confession and a daily declaration to say, "God, you own everything and I own nothing. God, it is all yours and you've been gracious to give to me to be able to steward." So, our possessions have to be yielded to him. We have to live life with loose hands, to say, "God, you have blessed me so much" and I will tell you, oh man, as honest as I can, like that just changes everything for you. My wife and I, we've developed a rhythm that every Friday, we just connect and we pray and we're like, who's on your heart? And we'll just shoot them a Venmo or cash and we'll like, "Hey, go get yourself a taco. Go get yourself a cup of coffee."

We're thinking about. We just want to encourage you and let you know that you're on God's radar and I can't tell you how many times that has turned into some people who were very far away from God. They'll say, "Man, I don't know what you did that for and there isn't a whole lot of money. They're like LeBron money, you know, I mean, it's just enough to get a little, you know, sandwich and fries or something. But they're like man, that most of my married guy friends I say, "Hey that's for a coffee date for you and your wife." They're like, "Man, I need to talk to you about what's going on with me and my wife." But it's just I love it because I'm like, "God, this doesn't belong to me."

I want to be faithful. I want to be sensitive that when you say move, move. When you say give, I want to give. When you say serve, I want to serve. So, we have to yield those things to him. And I – man, time flies. Jesus looked at him, loved him and said these things to him. And what was the guy's response? Did he say, "Jesus, you know what? You right." You got a change for a dinero(ph), you got change for a denarius. No. No, he was disheartened. He was heartbroken. He was -- he was crushed because he couldn't bring himself to separate from what he had chosen to define his life. Mind you, this man is having an interaction with Jesus Christ himself, the one who is able to change everything about his present and his future.

And he said, can't do it. He didn't repent. He was just heartbroken and he just walked away. He walked that walk of shame, just head hung low, can't do it. We don't have time to really dig into the second half of that, but what I want to remind us is that success is about what you do for you, but significance is always about what you do for other people. And I believe Jesus invades our lives not merely to make us successful. He changes our lives. He puts a burden and a passion for things in our hearts, so that we have no other choice but to run after that thing.

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That we're not satisfied, we're at peace until we're operating in a place where we're completely yielded, where we are completely open handed, where we're living a generous and a compassionate and other focus life where it's like, God, I've got to focus on you. I've got to fulfill what you put me here in the earth to do. And this is my prayer. It is my heartfelt prayer that none of us take this posture of this rich young ruler. Our responsibility is to be faithful to him who has called us. Our responsibility is to walk uprightly before him because we love him, not because we're trying to twist his arm, not because we're trying to negotiate something, but we do it just because we love him. We can care for others. We can serve our spouses. We can love our children. We can challenge our friends from a place of love. But brothers and sisters, I just truly believe that as it landed, just all things truly are possible.

And Jesus after this interaction, I think this young man missed that because he had this warped perception that I've got stuff,

I've got people, I got connections. I've got really independence from God. I'm good by all earthly standards. People look at me and they sing my praises and they cheer me on, but there's more to it. This guy and a lot of guys like him and a lot of ladies like him, are asking these same kind of questions. It might sound like, Jesus what must I do to inherit eternal life, but the real question that we're saying is, Jesus., can you help me find my significance? Can you help me not be defined by worldly standards or the opinions of people because I'm sure you all have heard, there are only three opinions that matter. Our opinion of God, God's opinion of us, and our opinion of ourselves. And God is saying, "Baby boy, I need you to grow up. Baby girl, I need you to mature and become the woman that I've destined you to be" because he reminds us, any sacrifice that we make for Jesus is never in vain. That's how he landed those verses that we read, but I want us to continue to fix our eyes. I want us to continue to maintain our gaze towards the one that called us. He's faithful, he doesn't change. He's the same. He desires good for his children.

And so Lord, I just want to say thank you. God, I want to thank you for just your loving kindness. Thank you for your patience towards us. Thank you for being full of mercy. Thank you for being full of grace. Thank you for being full of truth. And God, I pray for every person in this place tonight, every person that's joining us online, that we would come to gain our worth, that we will understand our value that is rooted in you and you alone And so God, I pray that you would give us the courage to strip away and bust up warped mindsets. I pray that you would give us the courage to walk boldly and confidently in the ways that you've shaped us and you've made us God. I thank you that you give us new mercies every single day. Great is your faithfulness. And God, I pray that you would help us to follow your example, to imitate you, to follow your lead, to be faithful as you are faithful, to be honest as you are honest, to be forgiving as you have forgiven us.

God, I pray that you would help us to be more gracious. Help us to be more loving. Help us to be more kind. Help us to be those who help to reconcile people back to you. God, I pray that you would help us to die(ph) ourselves, to help us to die to our selfish ways and our selfish Ambitions. God, that your spirit can flow through us. That when people see us, that they'll be drawn to your light, that they'll be attracted by your warmth God.

Father, whether we've been walking you for all of our days or whether we're still figuring out exactly who you are, God I pray that each and every one of us will just have the boldness and the courage to just take one step, to take one step God. And God, day by day, decision by decision, moment by moment, that you would begin to shift something in our hearts. And I pray that we are not so discouraged that we walk away from you, but we understand that pruning is a part of your love towards us. So God, I pray that we'll continue to maintain a posture of humility. God, I pray that we will continue to seek you with all of our minds God.

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Help us to behold your wonder and your majesty and your beauty and your glory and your splendor God. May we never grow comfortable that we fail to be amazed by the beauty of a sunrise and that you hang a sun in the sky, you hang a moon and you hang stars and you know each and every one of them by name. God, I pray that out of our love for you that it'll continue to lead us in the right way, in the right path. God, I pray that our affections will be for you. God, help us to love you more. Help us to, as my sister reminded us so beautifully during worship, help us to abide, help us to remain, help us to be rooted in, that you would sow something in our hearts that will grow fruit that will continue to feed generations to come. So God, we love you with all that we have. We're grateful for this time that you've given us God. God, I pray that the word that's been spoken will take root and bear much fruit in our hearts and in our lives. And we pray these things in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ. And every heart in agreement, say Amen, amen and amen. God bless your heart.

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