

INTRODUCTION TO PART VI: LIFE'S MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE - LIFE AFTER DEATH (e²)

One day a rich young business man came to Jesus and asked Him, "...what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" Jesus answered him "...if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments." The young man asked "Which ones?" After Jesus had related the applicable commandments, the young man was still not satisfied and replied, "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?" Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." But when the young man heard Jesus' answer, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. Then Jesus turned to His disciples, and said, "Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God" (Matthew 19:16-24). When His disciples heard what Jesus said this to the young man, they were astonished. Wealth was considered by the Jews as evidence of God's favor; it is still considered a sign of God's blessings in some churches today. But if wealth alone was a sign of God's blessings, then crime bosses and drug lords would be spiritual giants.

When the rich young man opened his conversation with Jesus, he asked "...what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" Like most people, he thought that he had to **earn** eternal life. I used to think like that myself; I knew I wasn't living right, so I thought I had to do something good to find favor with God, if there was a God. Just prior to talking with the rich young man, Jesus had told his disciples that in order to enter the kingdom of God, one must be converted and become as a little child (Matthew 18:3). Children are trusting and teachable; they always want to learn from their father. It's particularly hard for those who trust in their wealth and are proud of their possessions to humble themselves and put their trust in a Savior and yield to His plan for their lives. But you can't remain neutral toward Jesus. You are either for Him or against Him; there is no middle ground.

In the next chapter I share how my father, because his wife had prayed for the salvation of his soul for more than fifty years, accepted Jesus as his Savior just days before he died, and how I, also being the recipient of more than forty years of my mother's prayers, accepted Jesus and was baptized in the Holy Spirit quite late in life. (I was forty-three years old.) As I shared earlier in this book, that decision radically changed my life and has caused me, an ordinary businessman, to travel to the four corners of the earth, sharing and demonstrating the Good News of Jesus Christ. The good news is that Jesus has redeemed you and me from the curse of poverty, sickness and spiritual death. He will not only give you eternal life and baptize you in His Holy Spirit, but He will heal you of sickness and cause you to have good success in your life and your business. If you have not yet received Christ as your Savior or have not yet been baptized in the Holy Spirit, then for you, the next chapter is the most important chapter in this book.