

Whole or Half Christians? (Ioannis Karavidopoulos, Professor of the School of Theology of the University of Thessaloniki)

[Ξένες γλώσσες / In English](#)



The case of the prominent Jew who had observed all the commandments of Mosaic Law from the time of his youth is one we can easily relate to. He asks Jesus what remains for him to do in order to gain eternal life. Jesus knows what it is that usually binds people to earth, so He answers: 'You're missing one thing: sell everything you've got and give the money to the poor and, in that way, you'll have treasure in heaven. Then come and follow me on the difficult path of the cross'.

subjection to God's absolute demands.

Jesus doesn't blame His pious interlocutor for what he's done, but for what he's omitted to do. He doesn't condemn him for his virtues, but because He sees that they aren't part and parcel of the man's complete commitment to God, but rather are isolated expressions of the way he lives his life- though they're correct and praiseworthy in every way. Christ also sees that the man's religiosity isn't linked to his life in the community, that the road bringing him to God doesn't pass through the society of other people and doesn't cross paths with the ways they're walking. It's a single path that ensures his own satisfaction as regards his conscience, but not the satisfaction of God, Who doesn't accept compromises, hypocrisy or falsehoods.

Three main truths are underlined in this Gospel reading:

1) As Jesus Christ has revealed Himself to humankind, God has one absolute demand that He makes of us all, without compromises or one-sided activities. He asks for the whole of our being, not merely some religious activities, some virtues, and the partial observation of His commandments.

2) What impedes our total commitment is our attachment to earthly treasures.

3) What seems impossible to us, that is our total rather than partial commitment to God, becomes easy through God's grace, through the experience and acceptance of this grace within the church. If 'what is impossible for people is possible for God', then let no-one think that our complete subjection to Him is unachievable and impractical.

Source: agiazoni.gr