



Lesson 2, Devotion 1

“Jesus looked at him and loved him. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” – Mark 10:21

The story of the rich young man is one of the saddest in the entire Bible, though it might not seem like it at first. Take a second and read the entire story in Mark 10:17-22. It’s just a few verses.

So, why is this story so sad? First, here is a man who wants to be right with God. And by almost every measure, he is. He does the best he can to live according to the Law. And when he says that he keeps the commands Jesus told him to keep, Jesus didn’t correct him. He was a really good guy.

And that’s why his response was so sad. Jesus told the young guy that the **ONLY THING** he lacked from being able to have an eternal relationship with Jesus was that he needed to sell all his stuff and become a follower of Christ. The sad part? The guy couldn’t do it! He was SO close to having a relationship with Jesus, but he loved his stuff so much that he couldn’t bear to part with it.

This is such a huge lesson for us. Does your stuff come between you and truly following Jesus? Do you love your things so much that you would hesitate if Jesus asked you to give them all up? You may not answer “yes” at first, but think about it: what do your actions say?

Lesson 2, Devotion 2

It’s probably worth taking some more time with the story of the rich young ruler. Because there is something that Jesus said that we can get wrong if we’re not careful.

Look at the following exchange:
Jesus looked at him and loved him. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and

give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth. Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!” (Mark 10:21-23)

We need to be clear that Jesus wasn’t saying that wealth was bad. He wasn’t saying that everyone needs to give up their possessions. There were two things at play that help us understand exactly what Jesus was saying.

First, for this specific man, his possessions came between him God and him. And so for him, he needed to give away his stuff in order to be sold out to following Jesus. If it had been another person, maybe Jesus’ response would have been different. Maybe he would have said, “You need to quit drinking and follow me,” or, “You need to sell your business and follow me.” Jesus knew what this man’s struggles were. And while it’s a powerful warning to all people, it doesn’t mean that everyone has to sell their possessions to follow Jesus.

Second, Jesus isn’t saying that wealth or money is bad. There have been countless numbers of Christians throughout the centuries whom generously funded nearly infinite amounts of missions, charitable projects, and other initiatives that have grown God’s Kingdom. God leads many wealthy people to generously give. So being rich isn’t a sin. Not by any means.

What Jesus *was* saying is that it’s harder for a wealthy person to stay focused on the things of God because there is great temptation to allow their wealth to distract them.

It’s an important teaching, one that is easy to get wrong. Now you know!

Lesson 2, Devotion 3

Have you been thinking about your attitude toward your stuff lately? What have you discovered? Maybe you haven't been able to focus on it like you should.

Take this time to talk with God in prayer, and really listen to what He is saying to you. Be honest about your attitude toward your stuff. Is this something you need God to help you work on? Don't waste the chance to get right in this area of your life.

Don't be like the rich young man. Don't let your stuff come between you and following Christ.