

The Rich Young Man

Scripture Reading — Mark 10:17-27

"Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor ... Then come, follow me." Mark 10:21 —

This story began so beautifully. A fine young man, wealthy and well educated, came to Jesus, bowed before him, and asked a very important question: "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Most people came to Jesus for some benefit, such as healing or food for themselves or for a loved one. But this man was interested in spiritual matters. The story ended sadly, though, with the rich young man leaving disappointed by Jesus' response.

What was the young man's problem?

First, he loved his wealth more than he loved God. Possessing wealth is not wrong in itself, but letting wealth stand in the way of surrender to God brings spiritual disaster.

Second, the young man misunderstood God's way of salvation. He believed he was good, claiming he had always kept the commandments. And he wanted Jesus to tell him one more good work he might do that would guarantee him a place in paradise. Instead, when Jesus suggested that he give up what was closest to his heart, the young man showed that he did not see himself as a sinner in need of God's forgiveness.

Third, he walked away from Jesus. Like so many others over the years, he refused God's offer of salvation by free grace alone. How terribly sad!

Prayer

Lord, "nothing in my hand I bring; simply to thy cross I cling." Forgive me, cleanse me, and help me to follow you faithfully as you call others into your kingdom. Amen.

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