

Bible Studies for Life: October 25

Our Commitment to Christ • Mark 10:12-22

By Becky Brown



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Jesus' whole life was lived in the context of commitment. As we learned last week, Jesus was "all in" throughout His earthly life and ministry. I like to say that Jesus was "cross-eyed." He was born to live every day of His life with His EYES on the CROSS. Hebrews 12:2 admonishes us to fix our eyes on Jesus, "the author and perfecter of our faith, Who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." The joy that was set before Jesus was completing His assignment from His Father Who sent Him to accomplish the work of salvation by giving His life on the cross. His final words from Golgotha were, "It is finished!"

To set the stage for this event in the Gospels, do not miss the fact that Jesus was on a journey to Jerusalem. He had traveled there from Nazareth in Galilee at least once per year (Luke 2:41-42) for His entire life to participate in the Feast of the Passover. He had been there several times for other events during His three-year ministry.

This trip was different. He knew it would be His last one: Calvary awaited. In Mark 8:31 and Mark 9:31, we see Jesus

doing His best to prepare His disciples for what was ahead. Mark 10:32 tells us that they are on the road going up to Jerusalem. To their amazement, Jesus is walking AHEAD of them. His followers are somewhat fearful. In verses 33 and 34, Jesus repeats the plan for crucifixion week: arrest, condemnation, mocking, scourging, death, and resurrection.

As Jesus is walking “up to” the mountain supporting the city of Jerusalem, His steps are interrupted by an encounter with a man who is described as a rich (Mark 10:22), young (Matthew 19:20), ruler (Luke 18:18). Jesus hears quick footsteps. Suddenly this fellow is kneeling on the dusty road directly in front of Him asking a question, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

“What shall I do?” In stark contrast to this question, remember that Jesus was on His way to “DO” everything that was required to provide eternal life for all who would believe. He had lived a sinless life and was about to die a substitutionary death in obedience to the will of His Father. Nothing else would need to be done. Eternal life was earned FOR US by the life, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. Eternal life is not inherited. It is available free, bought for us by the shed blood of Jesus.

Jesus pauses in His journey and is now looking down at this rich, young ruler. First, He listens to the question. Next, He gives glory to God. Then, Jesus spoke to this man’s need directly by first reminding him of the commandments. Jesus was already aware that he had certainly “checked all the boxes” of religiosity. Jesus looks at him, deep down inside where real truth is stored. Don’t miss this – Jesus LOVED him. Jesus loved him enough to point to the idol in his heart.

This young man’s possessions possessed him. He was committed to his provisions, not to his Creator Who was fully committed to provide completely for him. Jesus gave him an opportunity to remove the idol. He chose to walk away. He had run to Jesus

desiring to be justified and now he walked away in sorrow. What is keeping you and me from willingness to obey Jesus completely? This young man went away sorrowful. His "stuff" was more important than emptying himself and following Jesus.

Matthew chapter 19, Mark chapter 10, and Luke chapter 18 all record this encounter with the rich young ruler. In all three accounts, that meeting is preceded by people bringing their children to be blessed with a touch from Jesus. Matthew says they wanted Jesus to pray for their children. The disciples had rebuked them. Jesus said, "Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God AS A LITTLE CHILD (emphasis mine) shall not enter it at all." Jesus took the children in His arms and placed His hands on them.

As they continued toward Jerusalem, surely the truth continued to dawn on these followers. When we reach out to Jesus with the innocence of faith, He will hold us for eternity.

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