

The One Thing You May Lack in Your Walk With Christ

How great would it be to hear Jesus say, "You lack one thing?" Just one thing; just one area you need to get right. How awesome to have your weaknesses reduced to just one thing in the eyes of the One who sees all. What a relief it must have been for the young leader to hear Jesus say you only need to change in one area to walk into eternal life.

He waited with bated breath as he looked eagerly into the loving eyes of Jesus. His thoughts raced like chariots in the arena, *"What is it, Lord? Tell me so I can get it right and receive the assurance of true salvation."*

"Then Jesus, looking upon him, loved him and said to him, 'You lack one thing: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. And come, take up the cross and follow Me'" (Mark 10:21).

The words crashed into him like a powerful wave causing him to stagger under the weight.

"No! Not that! Anything else, yes. But no to that!"

Conflicting thoughts raced through his mind. Warfare escalated. Hope like a great light flashed in front of him, but a deep sorrow rose within him. He so wanted eternal life! He so wanted to be a part of what Jesus was doing. *"He was saddened by that word, and he went away grieving. For he had many possessions."* [Mark 10:22]

The issue wasn't that he had many possessions. The issue was that riches possessed him. His security was in stuff instead of the Lord He claimed to trust. Jesus taught that it is extremely difficult for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God (Mark 10:23).

Unwilling to do the “one thing,” the rich young leader turns his back to Jesus and walks away.

Sorry? Yes. Willing? No.

I am amazed at how many people are willing to give up on their destiny over one thing they are unwilling to lay down. One thing they determine is more important to them than the future Jesus offers.

Far too many walk away from salvation because of one thing they will soon discover they cannot hold onto anyway: A relationship, an addiction, a genre of music, a cultural style, uncertain riches, sexual desires and on and on. Whatever it is, it will not last. And even if it would last and if someone could gain it all, Jesus said, “For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Matt. 16:26).

Sadly, millions turn their back to the One who loves them unconditionally and proved it with His life! Why? It seems ludicrous to reject life because of something they refuse to surrender. But it happens time and time again.

Self is a horrible deceiver, a brutal taskmaster and our greatest enemy. How do we deal with this enemy? How can we overcome? Can we reach an agreement where we can live peacefully with the selfish nature of flesh? Jesus’ answer was that we never make a treaty with the sinful character of fallen self!

Self is only successfully dealt with by:

1. denying self, the throne in your heart (deny means: “to lose sight of”)
2. taking up the cross (the instrument of death to self)
3. choosing self-sacrifice and dependence on God over self-

help (see Mark 8:34-38)

4. following Jesus as a true disciple

Thousands of years after Jesus' challenge to the rich young leader, professing followers of Christ are still trying to make treaties with self. Some even in ministry hold on to jealousy and seethe with envy toward fellow Christian workers instead of rejoicing in God's grace in them. Too many continually choose to hold on to insecurity and smallness of heart. Rather than surrendering their fears and competitive nature to Jesus, they surrender their destiny.

Whomever you are and wherever you are on your journey, make the decision now that your life is entirely His. The only way to arrive at the destiny of God for your life is the way Jesus outlined: Deny self, take up the cross and follow Him. It will be more than worth it in every way.

The rest of the story in Mark 10 is amazing. Just after the rich young ruler walks away, the Lord makes an incredible promise: "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left a house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields, for My sake and the gospel's sake, who shall not receive a hundred times as much now in this age ... with persecution, and in the age to come, eternal life" (Mark 10:29-30).

Wow. You can trust Jesus. What you lose in denying self and following Jesus can never compare to the life you gain in Him. Trust Him and follow. It is the one decision in life you will never regret. {eoa}

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