

The Things That Hold Us Back

Jesus told a story about a rich young ruler who was intrigued by Jesus' teachings and, in particular, His offer of eternal life. So, the rich young man asked, "What must I do to receive eternal life?"

Jesus responded by telling him to keep the commandments, "Do not murder, steal or commit adultery."

"I've got those covered," the young ruler replied, "Anything else?"

Jesus' next response challenged the young man at his very core. "OK, then sell all you own, give it to the poor and then come follow Me."

Jesus does not deny us money and possessions. Yet He knows our attitudes about them could be the biggest stumbling block in our lives. Money issues can lead to greed, corruption, divorce, sickness, heart attacks and even suicide. Yet, for the rich young ruler, Jesus knew that his lifestyle—money, cars and beautiful women—had become a personal roadblock to what he really wanted, which was to follow Jesus into eternity.

This is the quandary we all deal with from time to time. Do our lifestyles cause us to choose what is convenient and what is safe, or do we seek the road less traveled? Are the momentary comforts of money and possessions holding us back from what we really desire in life, or, even more, from the dreams God has place in our hearts?

Is Jesus challenging you to follow Him on a special journey? Will you have the strength to go? Or, like the rich young ruler, will you just go away sad?

Matthew 19:16-26 –

This Is About Michael Belk:

For more than 30 years, Michael's photographs appeared in fashion publications including Vogue, Elle, GQ and Vanity Fair for clients that included Nautica, J. Crew and a host of fashion brands. He has been the man behind the camera, the creative director and the account executive for his own fashion-advertising agency.

In 2008, Michael sensed God asking, "What are you doing with all that I've given to you? Using it all for yourself or sharing it with others?" It was time to make a move.

With his camera and creativity, he and his wife, Cheryl, began investing their savings into the production of a collection of fine art photographs that would depict the modern-day relevance of the centuries-old messages of Jesus. The result is the magnificently beautiful and thought-provoking Journeys With the Messiah.

Bold and imaginative, Journeys With the Messiah's images capture first-century Jesus intimately interacting with 21-century Wall Street executives, Nazis and ordinary people like you and me. This one-of-a-kind photographic journey creates a depth of feeling and emotion with images that are comforting, enlightening, full of hope and challenging. "It is our prayer that they ignite a passion in the viewer to enter into a deeper relationship with Jesus."

The images have been interpreted into limited-edition fine art, a beautiful coffee table book, DVD and more. Michael travels to churches and other venues to present the images in an exciting audio/visual presentation. An exhibit and more images are planned.

This Is About Presentations:

We receive stories from around the world of how God is touching the hearts of His people through Journeys With the

Messiah's images and the messages they depict. Now, you can invite Michael to share his story in person while taking your audience on a personal journey with the Messiah.

Using powerful imagery, Michael tells about his life as a fashion photographer; how he reached the depths of despair while at the pinnacle of success and how God invited him on a once-in-a-lifetime journey to create Journeys With the Messiah.

This fast-paced presentation includes many exciting images as well as video clips as Michael takes the audience behind-the-scenes in Italy as the images were created.

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Journeys is not just our project, it is a project for everyone who believes the Great Commission of sharing the gospel of Jesus with all nations and with all people who are hungry to hear the Word of God.

This is just the beginning. There is so much more to come. Thank you and may He bless you, indeed!

Dr. Charles Stanley: "I cannot recall the last time I was so absolutely inspired by a presentation as I was by yours. Your images are astounding—capturing the stories and parables of the New Testament in wonderfully creative and imaginative ways. You challenge how people think about Jesus. What a powerful way to communicate the gospel and glorify Him."

For more information, email Michael at michael@ or call him directly at 850-502-9777.

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