
DAY 4 • AUGUST 8

Unashamed of God: Counting the Cost**READ: MARK 10:17-31; PHILIPPIANS 3:7-9**

²¹And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.”²²Disheartened by the saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

MARK 10:21,22

Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ...

PHILIPPIANS 3:8**REFLECT**

Without thinking too long about the question, what would you say your most treasured possession is? How would you feel if you were asked to give it up?

The rich young ruler in the book of Mark had everything anyone could want—success, wealth, and a good upbringing. He had also kept all the commandments of the law since his youth. He turned to Jesus for the last thing he felt was lacking—eternal life. Jesus, in turn, told the young man what he was truly lacking—to sell all he had and give to the poor, which would save him treasure in heaven. Then Jesus told the man to follow Him. The young ruler left disheartened, unable to give up his possessions.

What the young man lacked was not obedience of the law, but a love of God above all his possessions. His encounter with Jesus showed that his devotion to God was not complete. He learned that what he considered worthy of eternal life—his fulfillment of the commandments—would not be enough. He learned that his possessions were the cost of eternal life, decided it wasn't worth the price, and ended up not following Christ.

Like the rich young ruler, we sometimes have a hard time choosing between following Jesus completely, and our desires. Sometimes we choose the acceptance of our family, classmates, and peers over obedience to Jesus. Sometimes we say what we don't mean or go where we don't want to go because we feel out of place, or that we'll miss out on something. Sometimes we trade following Jesus for something temporary.

Following Jesus has a cost, and only a revelation of the gospel will allow us to follow Jesus no matter what. Through the gospel we realize that Jesus is the greatest good we can ever experience, in this life and the next. His love is more satisfying than the approval of our peers. His presence gives us fullness of joy (Psalm 16:11). Knowing all this brings us to the conclusion that everything we desire can only be fulfilled in and through Him.

The gift of salvation is only free because Jesus paid for it with His life. It's something we could never pay for, not in a lifetime. Jesus counted the cost, paid with His life, and saved us from eternal death. He set the standard for all who want to follow Him by giving up everything for us. As we meditate on the gospel, like the Apostle Paul, let us choose to suffer the loss of all things in order that we may gain the greatest reward of all, Jesus Christ.

RESPOND

1. How does the story of the rich young ruler speak to you? What possessions or emotions (want of approval, fear of rejection) are being prioritized over Jesus in your current situation? What is one thing you can do to put Jesus first today?
2. What do you feel you gave up when you followed Jesus? How did He show you that He is in control and has power over even that situation?

PRAY

1. Pray that God will show you something you have been prioritizing over Him, even if you didn't know it. Ask Him for the grace to love and obey Him with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.
2. Thank God for everything you have gained ever since you started following Him.