

Follow – Walking in the Way of Jesus

“A Kid, A Rich Dude & Eternity”

Mark 10:13-31

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I. A Heart Like A Child – Mark 10:13-16

In the first century Greco-Roman world children were not elevated and valued unless they survived and showed themselves to be making an effective contribution.

🔗 Were you aware of the low status of children in the 1st Century? The example and words of Jesus caused that to eventually change. How does that inform the way you talk about Jesus to your non-Christian friends & family?

When a child receives a gift, they delight in both the actual gift and the giver. Sometimes adults, through a desire to be polite & kind can offer 3 statements which are fine when we are talking about gift cards to Starbucks or fashionable new clothes, but they are not good responses when Jesus gives us an invitation to be participants in the Kingdom of God. There are some bad ways to respond to Jesus' invitation to the Kingdom...

“Oh, you shouldn't have”

“Ohhh my...I can't accept this, it's too expensive”

“I can't let you buy me this, I'll pay you for it.”

🔗 Jesus commanded that all his followers, in any time period, are to receive the Kingdom of God like a child. Is there an aspect of your Christian life that you have resisted more than received?

II. A Heart Hiding an Idol – Mark 10:17-22

The rich young ruler is wealthy in two different ways.

✅ In terms of keeping the 10 commandments he gets all check marks.

✅ He was doing well financially which in the first century Jewish context made people think that God was approving of him and therefore the wealth was a confirmation of that blessing. But Jesus has eyes that pierce through everything straight to his inner thoughts, feelings and will of the human heart. He discerns that there is an idol hidden in the deepest parts of this man who looks so good on the outside.

🔗 Do you agree that the point of Jesus' command to “go, sell everything you have and give it to the poor” is to remove the idol in this man's heart that would prevent him acknowledging Jesus as his saviour and lord? If not, why?

The King James Version, New International Version and a few others state that the man went away “sad”. It’s an o.k. translation but, in our 2025 way of talking, it doesn’t sound strong enough. The original Greek is to be distressed, grieve or be sad.

This is gut wrenching grieving because he refused to dislodge the idol in his life and put Jesus at the centre and it was eating him up.

Most people have heard of Jonah in the belly of the whale. Almost 800 years before Jesus encounters the Rich Young Ruler, the prophet Jonah rebelled against God’s call on his life and tried to sail in the opposite direction. It turned out that the idol in his heart was the absolute hatred of the sworn enemies of Israel – the Assyrians. Jonah didn’t want to go to their capital city, he didn’t want to preach repentance and faith to them, and he certainly didn’t want to show them mercy and grace. God rescued him from drowning through the intervention of the whale which caused a heart shift in that wayward prophet.

“Those who cling to worthless idols turn away from God’s love for them.” Jonah 2:8

That is the rich young ruler. It states it in black and white right there on the page, “Jesus looked at him and loved him.” Ultimately though – he said no to God’s love in Christ and turned to the idol of his wealth and self-sufficiency.

You see church... “Letting go of idols let’s us embrace the love of God.”

You may never have thought about that question before, “What’s my idol?” I heard someone phrase it like this – “Who or what do you turn to when life is really difficult, when it feels like everything is falling apart, that’s your idol.”

❓ Do you turn to trying to control everyone and everything else? Then power is your idol.

❓ Do you obsess over your own moral scorecard and tell yourself that you are better and more faithful than the people around you? Then religiosity is your idol.

❓ Do you turn to alcohol? Then it is an idol in your life, and it will become an addiction before you know it.

Instead – let’s be a church where we strive to **“let go of idols and embrace the love of God in Christ.”**