

FOLLOWING JESUS ALL THE WAY



One of the saddest stories recorded in the Bible is that of the rich young ruler who came to Jesus seeking eternal life. Is this story a reflection of our own experience? You will find the story recorded in Matthew 19:16-22.

The story is beautifully presented in the book "The Desire of Ages," pages 518- 520, which says: "And when He was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to Him, and asked Him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" . . .

This ruler had a high estimate of his own righteousness. He did not really suppose that he was defective in anything, yet he was not altogether satisfied. He felt the want of something that he did not possess. Could Jesus bless him as He blessed the little children, and satisfy his own soul want?

In reply to this question Jesus told him that obedience to the commandments of God was necessary if he would obtain eternal life; and He quoted several of the commandments which show man's duty to his fellowmen. The ruler's answer was positive: "All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?"

Christ looked into the face of the young man, as if reading his life and searching his character. Jesus loved him, and He hungered to give him that peace and grace and joy which would materially change his character. "One thing thou lackest," He said; "go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow Me."

The very holiness of God was offered to the young ruler. He had the privilege of becoming a son of God, and a co-heir with Christ to the heavenly treasure. But he must take up the cross, and follow the Saviour in the path of self denial. . . . "He wanted the heavenly treasure, but he wanted also the temporal advantages his riches would bring him. He was sorry that such conditions existed; he desired eternal life, but he was not

willing to make the sacrifice by putting God first. The cost of eternal life seemed too great, and he went away sorrowful: "for he had great possessions."

Too many of us are like the rich young ruler. We long for everlasting life, to repent and be forgiven, but we are un-willing to go all the way with Jesus. How is it with you?

WHAT JESUS SAID ABOUT FOLLOWING HIM

"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

John 15:11

As you study, be thinking about the Life Quest questions.

- What does this topic tell me about God?
- What difference does this topic make to my daily life?
- How does this topic help me in my relationship with Jesus?

HIS WORD SAYS

1. How far was Jesus willing to go for us? Philippians 2:5-8.

What Christ gave up to come to this earth is beyond our comprehension. The benefit of all the riches and glories of heaven and the worship of heavenly beings was not enough to stop Him from submitting Himself to become a man, live the life of a servant, and die the excruciating death of the cross. We can only stand in awe of such selfless love.

2. What is the first step we must take to be saved? Acts 16:30, 31.

The word to believe is more than a mere belief but to obey as well. James 2:19 says "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble." It could also be said that if we truly believe something, it will affect the way we live.

3. When and how will we find God? Jeremiah 29:12, 13.

4. How earnest must be our desire to become righteous? Matthew 5:6.

To be righteous is to be in harmony with God's will in every area of our life. It is the natural experience of every true believer to be drawn by the Holy Spirit to the point where they want nothing more than to please God and rightly represent His love and justice to a world that doesn't know Him.

5. What is one way we can be seen to be righteous by Jesus? Matthew 25:34-40.



6. What is another way that we should be righteous? Luke 1:5, 6

1 Peter 3:12 says "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil."

7. What has Jesus promised if we keep His commandments? John 14:15-17, 21.

The Holy Spirit abides with us on condition of obedience. We can see this also in Acts 5:32.

8. When the man in the parable found a great treasure how much was he willing to sacrifice to secure it? Matthew 13:44.

9. What did Jesus say about the individual who is unwilling to leave all for Him and take up his cross? Matthew 10:38.

10. To what extent does Jesus ask us to be willing to go for Him? Luke 9: 23, 24.



God doesn't accept half measures from those who enter His service. We must be all in, or all out. But we must keep in mind that God is not calling us to do anything that is not for our own good and for the benefit of others. It is a joy to enter into God's service and the more fully we devote ourselves to it, the greater our joy will be.

11. What kept the rulers of Christ's day from accepting Him? John 12:43.

12. What kept the rich young ruler from following Jesus all the way? Matthew 19:21, 22.

Satan has grown very good at selling us the lie that happiness exists in having an abundance of earthly treasure. However, this could not be further from the truth. When we look at the rich men of the earth, we see people who suffer from anxiety and depression just like any other. Happiness is found in being at peace with God and being satisfied with the lot God has chosen to give you.

13. When we have started our new life with Jesus what should we purpose to do?
2 Peter 3:17, 18.

14. What will be our happy experience if we walk in the light which God has caused to shine on our pathway? 1 John 1:6, 7.

15. What does Jesus say of one who lets a loved one keep him or her from choosing to follow Jesus? Matthew 10:36,37.

Any who would keep us from Christ would ultimately be leading us down a pathway of sin and death. Only in putting God first can we be the greatest blessing possible to those around us, even if they are unable to see it.

16 What promise is given to Jesus' faithful followers when facing trials?
1 Corinthians 10:13.

No matter how big the trials of life, Christ is able to make a way for us through it so that we might come safely out the other side.

17. What wonderful promises are made to us if we follow Jesus all the way?
Matthew 19:27-29.

Eternal life and joy unspeakable await all those who dedicate themselves to God. We cannot even begin to imagine the many wonderful things that God has in store for us. Hebrews 13:15 says 'By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.' Is Jesus not worth it?





Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Matthew 11:28

LIFE QUEST:

Have you thoughtfully reviewed these Questions?

- What does this topic tell me about God?
- What difference does this topic make to my daily life?
- How does this topic help me in my relationship with Jesus?

YOUR TURN

Check the statements that most closely reflect your response to this study.

___ I love Jesus and want to follow Him no matter what the cost.

___ I love Jesus but still have things in my life that are keeping me from a full commitment. Please pray for me.

___ I know how much it would mean to Jesus for me to be fully committed to Him.

___ Other _____