



THE YEAR OF  
**DISCIPLESHIP**

## What would you do if Jesus asked you to give up everything?

It could have gone very differently for the “rich young man” if he had chosen to give up everything for Jesus’ sake (Mark 10:17-22). He was a young man who knew the laws and had been careful to keep them. But the story shows that he sensed in his heart that there was something more he needed to give to be perfect. And when Jesus pointed it out, he knew exactly what it was.

There’s an incredible lesson hidden there for us. When the young man asked what he needed to do to inherit eternal life and knelt before Jesus, it is written that Jesus looked at him and loved him. Jesus saw that this young man had an upright heart, and that he really had lived a good life. So He told him the truth – what you need to do is give up all your possessions and come follow Me. It was a test – the final test to see if the young man loved Jesus above everything else. But he just couldn’t do it. He went away sad, because he knew it was the truth and he didn’t have the power to do it. And I’m sure Jesus was sad too.

I’ve often thought about another way this story could have ended. The rich young man knew that Jesus’ words were true. If he had stayed for a moment and asked Jesus for help, then history would have been much different for him. If he had said, “Jesus, I know you are right. I need to give up everything I own and I want to follow you; I want to be your disciple.”

Jesus promised that if he gave up his earthly possessions that he would have treasure in heaven. If he had done it, then he would have had to put his trust in God instead of his own abilities and possessions. But then he would have experienced that God could give him far more than he had to give up. He would have received a joy that was independent of his earthly goods, but based on an assurance that he was living a life that was completely well-pleasing to God, and that he had a place in eternity.

I think we all come to that moment in our lives where we have to choose to give something up to prove that we love God more than anything on this earth. It’s not always money or riches. Perhaps it’s a relationship, our time, our plans for the future, or many other things. These things aren’t necessarily “sin,” but perhaps there is something that we want to keep for ourselves even though we sense that God’s will for us is to give it up so that He can lead us to eternal life. Then we have to make a choice whether we humbly acknowledge the truth and with God’s help do what we sense is right or walk away like the rich young man, and miss out on a deeper relationship with God. It’s worth it to give up everything.

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