

Living the Way of Jesus Week 13

'Changing Allegiance'

Bible Passage: Mark 10:17-31

Jesus continues to challenge the priorities of any who would like to follow him. And he does not make it easy!

Read Mark 10:17-31

- Why do you think that Mark has placed this encounter at this point in his gospel? (Look at the context surrounding this story.)
- What do you notice about this rich man as he approaches Jesus? (10:17)
- How does Jesus view this man?
- What commandments does Jesus mention in (10:18-19)? Do you know people today who live their lives according to the same sort of standards? Why do you think some people believe these standards make them good enough for God?
- Now look at what commandments Jesus leaves out? Why do you think he does this? (See Exodus 20:1-17)
- Why are these commands so crucial? (See especially Exodus 20:1-3)
- Mark tells us that Jesus 'loved' this man. (10:21) Given that this is the case, and the fact that for good Jews, obeying the Law, along with being prosperous were seen as signs of God's favour, do you think he is too hard on this man? Are there any implications here for us today? Think of times when God (or a Christian friend) has challenged you, and how you responded.
- Do you think that all of us should be selling our possessions as this man is asked to do? If not, why not? How far do you think money is a help or a hindrance to our discipleship? (See 1 Timothy 6:10; Hebrews 13:5; 1 Timothy 6:6; 2 Corinthians 8:9)
- Jesus says that wealth is a barrier to having faith in him (10:23-27). When it comes to sharing your faith with others, what has your experience been? How can the promise in (10:27) encourage us to pray for our family and friends?
- What is your understanding of the final few verses in this section? (10:29-31) Tom Wright says, 'those who have left family and possessions to follow Jesus will receive things back even in the 'Present Age' – a new and ever-enlarging family of their fellow-disciples, with homes open to them wherever they go ... and, of course, in the 'Age to Come', the God-given life of that new 'Age'.' How far do you agree with him?

Prayer Suggestions: Spend some time thanking God for all the blessings that you have received. Pray for those who have less than you, and for those who have given up much to follow Jesus, including the persecuted Church. Pray for relevant ways in which we can share our faith with others.