

30 DAYS IN THE BIBLE

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Key Verse – Matthew 19:16–29

You can tell by my hulking 5'7.5 (that half is important) frame that I was a basketball player in high school (actually 5'5 then). It required an incredible amount of dedication, discipline, and commitment. I was at the school almost every morning at 7 AM, then school, and then either practices or games nearly every day after school as well. Tournaments often on weekends, camps in the summer. My life was eat, sleep, school, and basketball (and of course I went to church). It consumed my life.

Jesus wants every part of our lives as believers. He wants to consume us. A young man approaches Jesus one day, and we're not really sure what his intentions were. He asks a question, but it seems that perhaps his intentions were to show Jesus how awesome he was. "What good deeds must I do to inherit eternal life?" They have a conversation about keeping the commandments, and you can tell the guy's answer is really, "I've done all the things that I'm supposed to do, and I've not done all the things I'm not supposed to do," but he finishes by asking Jesus, "What do I still lack?" Jesus knew this guy was filthy rich, and so He told him to sell everything he had, and then to come follow Him. The Greek word they use there is more akin to being *like* someone rather than being in proximity to someone. Some speculate that Jesus was inviting this young man to be a disciple. I'm not sure I'm ready to make that leap. In any case, Jesus was calling this young man to come and be like Him; think the way He thought, and do the things He did. This young man had one hurdle; his money. He wasn't willing to let it go to follow Jesus.

It's easy to cast judgement on the rich young ruler and think that it would be such an easy decision. Jesus is inviting you to follow Him. There wouldn't be an experience like it. It's an absolute no-brainer. I don't think it's "money" that is the issue of all issues here. I just think it was this man's issue. I think we like to think that if we were put in a similar situation and Jesus told us to sell everything, we'd be quick to do it.



Maybe that's just because money isn't your issue. I'd bet that Jesus wouldn't be asking you for your money if money wasn't your issue. Jesus was making a point here about lordship and control. If your issue was unforgiveness, maybe that would be it. Or greed. Or lying. Or your sexuality. Or anger. Or trusting Him. Whatever your issue is, He wants it. Total control. He wants to consume your life, and He asks us to surrender. It's really the only way this works, like when I played basketball. If we're not willing to give everything we have, I think we'll find we have a shallow experience of Christianity.

It wasn't impossible for this man to be saved. Difficult, yes. Impossible, no. The disciples are intrigued, no doubt, by this conversation that they have witnessed. Peter, the loud one, pipes up, "See we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?" And they had. They'd left their careers with no guarantees of any kind of security. There were no promises made. In fact, I wonder if they would have said yes if they knew everything that awaited them. Jesus essentially tells Peter that he is going to be taken care of.

That's the issue right there isn't it? Even as Jesus commanded in Matthew 6 to seek first His Kingdom and righteousness, and all these things would be added to us, He tells us to fix our eyes on Him; to give up complete control of our lives. He asks us to set ourselves apart for His purposes, so that we can be like Him, and do the things He did; bring heaven to earth.

What Scripture can I meditate on today?

What did God speak to me today?

How can I respond in obedience?

How can I pray?