

**Mark 10:17-31 — “The Danger of Wealth & the Demands of Discipleship”**

In verses 17-31, the 3 paragraphs are interwoven together because of the common theme. It is all about **weakness** in entering the kingdom — not self-sufficiency. Children are weak and offer nothing to Christ. Christ calls for **commitment** (Walter Wessel)

Jesus is the perfect:

1. Biblical Evangelist!
2. Biblical Counselor!
3. Biblical Instructor!

**THESIS — This account teaches the “dangers & hindrances of wealth” while giving the demands of True Discipleship. *This text teaches about true discipleship:***

**I. TRUE DISCIPLESHIP REJECTED (17-22)**

The desire

The Law & the Gospel

The result

**II. TRUE DISCIPLESHIP HINDERED (23-27)**

The declaration

The confusion

The regeneration\*\*

### III. TRUE DISCIPLESHIP REWARDED (28-31)

★ Jesus makes 3 promises (vv.29-31)—

1. God will reward you with more spiritually than you ever gave up physically.
2. You will receive persecution as his disciples in this life as you follow Him.
3. Disciples will enjoy the reward of eternal life with infinitely, unending blessings

#### **Ed Welch: The Rich Young Ruler**

When the wealthy young man could not quite give all his money away and follow Jesus, we are given a hard story (Matt. 19:16-22). Many of us have wondered what we would have done if Jesus asked us the same question. The story is always challenging. But the wealthy young man has recently been hijacked by someone new: the young man who is hoping to have sex...soon.

He is twenty-ish and a capable apologist with his friends. If you spoke with him for five minutes you would be impressed with his spiritual depth and think there is hope for the next generation. But, if you spoke with him for a little longer, you would discover that he has decided not to follow Jesus.

He wants to keep his options open—his sexual options that is.

He has not had a sexual relationship yet, but he hopes to date soon and he does not want to be encumbered by God’s restrictions. So, rather than possibly feeling guilty or being a hypocrite, he has renounced his faith—at least until he gets married and sex is legit.

The Word of God has come to him, asked him to hold off on sex and follow Jesus, and he has chosen instead to keep the possibility of sex available and follow his own desires.

I am impressed with his spiritual understanding. Most young men—and older men—think they can have it both ways.

**Great Reminders regarding the topic of Money:****Hard times teach us to trust God.**

Some people growing up in the affluence of the West have never really had to wonder from where their daily bread would come (Mt. 6:11). The current financial crisis serves as a reminder that we trust God to meet our needs (Mt. 6:25ff). We also may have to learn to be content with the necessities of life (I Tim. 6:6-8) as we find our greatest joy in the Lord, not mammon.

**Make it your goal to be wise, not rich!**

Take my instruction and not silver, and knowledge rather than choicest gold. For wisdom is better than jewels; and all desirable things cannot compare with her (8:10-11). Material things will never satisfy you. He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves abundance with its income. This too is vanity (Eccles. 5:10). Someone asked a rich man, ‘How much money is enough?’ His reply was, ‘Just a little more.’ He also was quoted saying, ‘I have made many millions, but they have brought me no happiness.’ On the other hand, if you seek wisdom your financial needs will also be met (10:3; Matt. 6:10).

**You can’t take it with you**

My family lives within an hour’s drive of Disneyland where they sell ‘Disney Dollars’ with which purchases can be made inside the park. But when you leave Disneyland, you can’t use Disney Dollars to buy gasoline or a meal on your way home. When Christ returns, this present world will end and everything we have accumulated will be like Disney Dollars (2 Peter 3:10-13). On the other hand, the riches of the wise will endure forever because his treasure is in heaven (Matt. 6:19-21).

**Remember Christ who paid your debt**

While God warns us against taking on the debts of others (6:1-5), he sent his son to be surety for our sin. We owed an infinite debt because of our guilt. He took on our debt, for which he fully paid on the cross. Not only that, but He also has transferred His spiritual wealth to our account so that we are not merely debt-free. We are rich! For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich (2 Cor. 8:9). Are you debt-free? Do you possess the riches of Christ?

Jim Newheiser

Ten biblical principles are developed throughout the book by Jim Newheiser, “Money, Debt, and Finances”:

1. Private property rights are affirmed. The Ten Commandments forbid not only stealing your neighbor’s property, but even coveting what doesn’t belong to you (Exod. 20:15, 17). The story of King Ahab trying to take Naboth’s vineyard (1 Kings 21) illustrates the reality that even a ruler does not have the right to take away a man’s property.
2. Vocational and financial success comes through hard work and skill (Prov. 10:4; 22:29; 6:6–11). God has designed the economics of the world in such a way that you will be rewarded according to your effort and your ability. The way to get ahead is to acquire valuable skills and to work hard in your vocation.
3. Get-rich-quick schemes are foolish and lead to poverty (Prov. 13:11; 29:19–20, 22). In every age there are people who try to circumvent God’s way of financial success by promising prosperity without hard work and skill. Such unwise and greedy schemes will sooner or later fail, thus increasing one’s financial woes.
4. Wages and prices are to be equitable (Prov. 22:29; James 5:1–7). The concern for fair wages for laborers is not merely a modern phenomenon. God’s Word opposes the unjust oppression of the weak by those who possess economic power and requires that we treat others with fairness which goes beyond mere impersonal forces of supply and demand.
5. An extravagant lifestyle will make you poor (Prov. 21:17). People will always be attracted to pursue possessions and experiences which are beyond their economic means. The enjoyment of these luxuries may be pleasant in the short term, but they will lead to severe financial difficulties in the long run.
6. Going into debt (or cosigning for the debt of others) is foolish and can be financially ruinous (Prov. 22:7, 26–27; 28:43–44; 15:6; 6:1–5). Debt can be tantalizing. It can temporarily enable you to enjoy a standard of living which is way beyond your income. Corporations anticipate that they can increase their profits by financing their expansion through debt rather than equity. Governments have realized that spending on various programs is popular but that taxation is not, so they create massive amounts of debt. Debt greatly increases risk of financial disaster for families, corporations and governments. Sooner or later the bills must be paid.
7. Saving for the future is wise (Prov. 6:8; Gen. 41:33–36). Those who are wise know that times of prosperity (for nations, corporations and families) are often followed by financial downturns, thus they exercise self-control in spending so that they can have reserves to ride out economic storms. They also put money aside for anticipated future expenses such as major purchases (house or car), education and retirement.
8. We should honor God from our wealth, which includes having compassion upon the poor (Prov. 3:9; 19:17; Luke 12:21). We are stewards of the resources God gives us. We are to give to the work of his kingdom by faith and in proportion to how he has blessed us. We also are to be concerned for the deserving poor among us, especially our earthly and spiritual families.
9. Taxation is a reality of life (Neh. 5:4; Rom. 13:6–7; Luke 20:22). As long as human government has been in existence there have been taxes. These are not always fair. Nor do governments always spend our money wisely and justly. But we pay them, ultimately for the Lord’s sake.
10. Wisdom thinks long-term and is willing to postpone gratification (Matt. 6:19–21). This general principle of wisdom applies to many areas of life, including our finances. Living frugally and saving will produce blessing in this life. Foregoing earthly pleasures and possessions for the sake of God’s kingdom will result in great blessing in the life to come.