

No. 30 Imitate, Not the Cowards, But the Courageous! (Symposium)
 -Not the Rich Young Ruler, But Paul

[PLEASE NOTE: This talk includes a video]

TWO MEN WHO ENCOUNTERED JESUS (1 min.)

During his earthly ministry, Jesus was approached by a rich young ruler (Lu 18:18)

After his resurrection, Jesus appeared to Saul, who became the apostle Paul (Ac 9:3-5)

At first glance, the rich young ruler and Paul may not seem to have much in common; however, there are similarities in the circumstances of both men

Both were prominent and successful

Both had a potentially life-changing encounter with Jesus

A YOUNG RULER IN WHICH "ONE THING IS MISSING" (2 min.)

The Bible calls the first man "young," "very rich," and a 'ruler' (Mt 19:20, 22; Lu 18:18, 23)

Furthermore, he was conscious of his spiritual need and sought to fill it (Mt 5:3)

As a devout Jew, he had kept God's Law since youth (Lu 18:21)

Yet, he recognized that something was lacking in himself; three times he asked Jesus for help (Mt 19:16-20)

[Read Mark 10:21, 22] The man was unwilling to relinquish possessions, which held him back spiritually

What is the lesson? We may have admirable qualities and a measure of courage, but if we hold back because we are attached to our possessions, there may be 'one thing missing' in us

What will we do if we are presented with opportunities to expand our sacred service?

A YOUNG MAN WITH THE COURAGE TO MAKE CHANGES (3 min.)

The Bible describes Saul as "young," well-educated, and a member of a prominent religious sect called the Pharisees (Ac 7:58; 22:3; 23:6)

Like the rich young ruler, Saul was "zealous for God"

He too had an encounter with Jesus that tested his humility and courage (Ac 9:6, 15, 16)

However, Saul responded to Jesus' instructions and became a courageous preacher known as the apostle Paul (Ac 9:18-22)

Why did Saul, who was a Pharisee and a persecutor of Christians, react differently from the rich young ruler?

Saul's desire to please God was stronger than any fear of losing his position and any possessions

He came to view his previous accomplishments as "refuse" (Php 3:4-8)

What is the lesson? Dedicating ourselves to Jehovah means that we must be willing to walk away from anything that might hold us back spiritually

In the following dramatization, note how young servants of Jehovah respond to various opportunities

VIDEO (2 min.)

HAVE THE COURAGE TO 'SAY GOOD-BYE TO YOUR BELONGINGS' (2 min.)

We may not be in a position to sell all our belongings and move to another land to preach

Yet, each of us does well to ask himself: 'Is there something missing about me? Am I more attached to my possessions than to my privilege of being a disciple of Jesus?' [Read Luke 14:33]

As the end of this system approaches, may each of us have the courage to walk away from anything that might hinder us in our whole-souled service to Jehovah!

TO BE COVERED IN 10 MINUTES

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