

Lent Day 31
Wednesday March 16, 2016
Colombo, Sri Lanka

Reading: Mark 10.17-31

Reflection

What has following Jesus cost you?

Let's park that question for a minute because it really needs some introduction.

Yesterday's passage was about the disciple's guarding their high status by keeping little children away from Jesus — he's too important for that. However, Jesus says, no let them come to me for the kingdom belongs to such as these. In short, the disciples thought they were the wrong people, but Jesus said they were the right people.

Now, comes a man with great wealth and asks Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life. From the disciple's point of view this is the right kind of person to join their cause, finally Jesus' openness to everyone is going to pay off. Nope. Instead Jesus tells him that he has to sell everything, give to the poor and then become a disciple.

The heart of the story is that the man left disappointed because he had much wealth. Do you see what happened? His question was about eternal life and how to ensure he enters it. ETERNITY with God and his people in the new age, in the age of the resurrection. And, he leaves. He was unwilling to give up what he had today for the kingdom. Wealth is a problem.

The danger is we think it's not our problem. We tend to think that we aren't wealthy — we're middle class at best. So we read the Scripture through those eyes thinking, this doesn't apply to me. But, we miss the point. Jesus is saying it is hard for the rich to enter the kingdom because it requires a giving up of everything to enter it. That's why I ask the question, what has following Jesus cost you?

At any point in your journey with Jesus have you had to decide between the kingdom and something else? A little wealth can kill. Pride can be an issue. My comfort can derail my discipleship. The truth is, for most of us, we just want our life and to add Jesus to it. We might even take Jesus on board to try to secure a good, comfortable life.

A better way of asking the question would be, what is Jesus calling you to leave, or change, or let go, or sell, or give up, or take on? Let's assume discipleship is about growth and growth comes with pain and discomfort. So, let's assume the goal isn't to make you comfortable — how are you being called to discomfort?

Prayer

God who makes all things possible, give us the courage to ask the question, what must I do to inherit eternal life? Direct our desire for the kingdom over our comfort. Amen.