

# DAY 32

SELL ALL THAT YOU POSSESS  
AND GIVE TO THE POOR  
MARK 10:21

America makes up less than 5% of the world's population, yet controls 20% of the world's wealth.

One billion people in the world do not have access to clean water, while the average American uses 400-600 liters of water a day.

Every seven seconds, somewhere in the world a child under age five dies of hunger, while Americans throw away 14% of the food we purchase.

40% of people in the world lack basic sanitation, while 49 million diapers are used and thrown away in America every day.

Americans spend more annually on trash bags than nearly half of the world does on all goods.<sup>39</sup>

While there are many that are struggling in our nation, the above statistics point out that the majority of us have plenty. By all accounts, as a nation, we are experiencing tremendous wealth. The more we dig into the words of Jesus and His action statements in the Gospels, the more we see how much the followers of Jesus are meant to be givers! But today's words from Jesus kick it up to a level we haven't seen yet. This one might be the hardest of all of the quotes we've looked at in the Challenge so far!

Whatever you invest in financially you will also connect to emotionally, as well. If you give money to a university, you will monitor how that university is doing. If you are a member of a country club, you will make sure they are keeping the golf course in great shape. I am part of a Homeowner's Association and because I pay dues to that every month I expect others to keep their houses and yards up to the required level.

Our emotions follow our money, so Jesus is telling you to invest in Him. Give to His Kingdom. Give to the church. Give to people who need help. Give to organizations that are meeting needs in the community.

I believe God asks us to give until it hurts until it feels good!

Giving should hurt. In other words, it should be a sacrifice. Yesterday we talked about tithing, but for some people giving a tithe is not really a sacrifice at all. They believe that because they are tithing they are doing what God wants them to do. But the reality is that if you make \$1 million a year and you are giving \$100,000 to your local church, that \$100,000 will make a huge difference to the church but it's not a sacrifice for you. The sacrifice would be to give \$900,000 and live on \$100,000!

The more you start giving the easier it gets. It hurts to sacrifice at first, but if you keep giving and sacrificing, it begins to feel really good! The closest thing I can equate it to is exercising and working out. If you haven't worked out for a while and then all of a sudden go in and lift weights, you will be very sore, especially if you push yourself hard while you are there. But you will realize it's "good pain." Then you work out again and you feel less pain.

And then the next time, even less pain. This pattern continues until you work out and experience no pain at all.

The same is true of giving. **To follow after God faithfully means following after Him with everything you have**, including your money and your possessions. He wants you to be a generous person. If you haven't given in a while or if you've given but not sacrificially, then giving what God actually wants you to give will hurt. But it will feel good at the same time. Then you will give again, and it will still hurt, but it will hurt less. And as you keep giving, it will hurt less each time, until all of a sudden you are giving and it doesn't even hurt at all!

Today's quotation is so hard and so shocking that it forces us to ask the question: How serious is Jesus here? Does He really want us to sell everything and give it to the poor? What is everything? Like everything everything? Am I giving until it hurts until it feels good?

TO FOLLOW  
AFTER GOD  
FAITHFULLY  
MEANS  
FOLLOWING  
AFTER HIM  
WITH EVERYTHING  
YOU HAVE.



#REDLETTERCHALLENGE

The man who asks Jesus how to inherit eternal life has lived a pretty good life according to the world's standards. But we see his heart was torn and leaned more towards earthly wealth than following after Jesus.

### MARK 10:17-27

17 As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

18 "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone. 19 You know the commandments: 'You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honor your father and mother.'"

20 "Teacher," he declared, "all these I have kept since I was a boy."

21 Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

22 At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth. 23 Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!"

24 The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! 25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."

26 The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, "Who then can be saved?"

27 Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God."

# GIVE SACRIFICIALLY TODAY. PRAY ABOUT WHERE TO GIVE AND HOW TO GIVE IT, THEN ACT IN FAITH.

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