

Lesson 2: Follow Me, But Leave Your Stuff

What we want students to learn: That if our love for our stuff comes between our devotion to God, we're doing it all wrong.

What we want students to do with what they've learned: To honestly evaluate whether or not their love for their stuff competes with their devotion to Christ.

Scripture Focus: Mark 10:17-22

Overview: Jesus' encounter with the rich young man is a remarkably heartbreaking one. Here is an individual who by all accounts desired to live a godly life. His actions supported this. And yet, he had a problem: his stuff came between God and him. His love for his money (and all the trappings that money bought) kept him from loving and following Jesus. This made Jesus sad, as Jesus saw the great potential in this man's life snuffed out by his love for material things. In this lesson we'll help your students learn a valuable lesson: money and things aren't inherently bad. It's our attitude toward them that can lead us off course. Your students will be challenged to answer the question: does their love for stuff keep them from following Jesus? Does their stuff come between God and them?

Teacher Prep Video

The *Jesus And Stuff* Teacher Prep Videos are short videos designed to help you grasp the main points of the lessons as you prepare to teach.

To access your "Jesus And Stuff Lesson 2 Teacher Prep Video," click on the URL below.

- <https://youthministry360.com/jesus-and-stuff-teacher-prep>

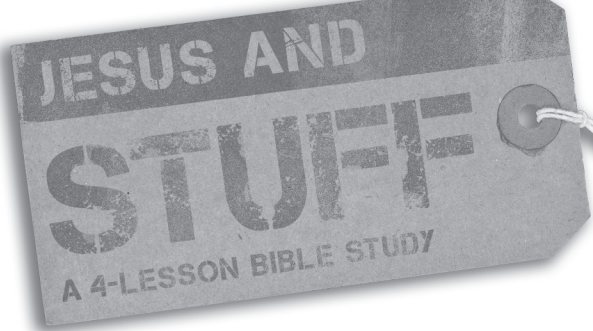
Bible Background

The Bible Background is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you'll be studying. The Details gives you background info for each book, The Setting informs you what's happening in and around the passage, and The Main Point gives you an overview of how the passage will be used in the lesson.

- **What do we mean by "context"?** In every ym360 Bible study lesson, you'll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By "context" we mean at the very least helping students know who wrote the book, when it was written, and why it was written.
- **What's The Big Deal?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don't get a "big picture" understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God's plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the Bible Background to help summarize the context.

The Details

- **Author:** The Gospel of Mark was written by its namesake. Mark, also known as John Mark, is believed to have received most of his information for his Gospel from Peter's firsthand accounts.
- **Time frame:** Mark is thought to have written his Gospel in the mid 50's AD.
- **Purpose:** Mark was writing primarily for a non-Jewish audience. His Gospel explains Jewish customs to non-Jews in an effort to get them to see the big picture of Jesus' identity.



The Setting

As we've mentioned before during the course of the Jesus Studies, Mark's Gospel reads like an executive summary of the life and times of Jesus. Mark doesn't mince words. So, by the time we get to Mark 10, a lot has happened in Jesus' ministry. In Mark 8 Jesus feeds the 4,000 and still finds time to rebuke the Pharisees and ask the disciples who they say that He is. In Mark 9, we see Jesus transfigured on the mountain, cast out a demon, and teach on welcoming the children. This is the backdrop for what happens in Mark 10.

The Main Point

It probably needs to be said that the main point of this lesson is found in verses 21-22 and not 23. We don't want students to get the idea that money in itself is a bad thing. For centuries, God has worked through the wealth of His generous people to advance His Kingdom. This parable is about the condition of our heart as it pertains to our wealth. Jesus' commandment to the rich young man isn't a blanket commandment for anyone who has wealth. However, it is a blanket command to anyone whose wealth comes between God and them. The young man loved his money and, ostensibly, his possessions more than He loved Jesus. Jesus knew this and cut straight to the heart of the issue. This is apparent in how the young man responded. Rather than obey Jesus, he slinked back to his stuff, unwilling to do without the one thing that came between him and an honest pursuit of God. It's a powerful lesson for teenagers. Anything that comes between them and Jesus must be paired away, especially their stuff. This lesson will help you challenge your students to evaluate their attitude when it comes to their possessions.

Lesson Plan

The Lesson Plan contains three elements: An introductory activity called The Lead In; the Bible study section called The Main Event; an application-focused segment called The Last Word.

The Lead In

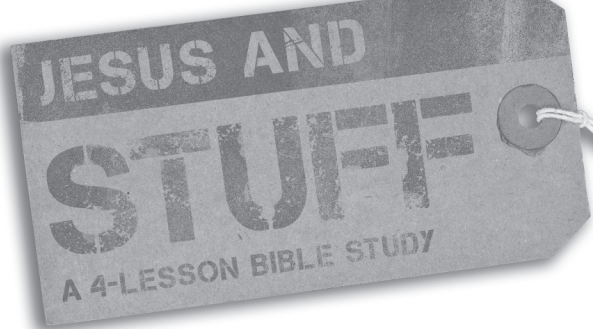
- **Goal:** To help students begin thinking about how much they value their stuff.
- **Set-Up:** None needed, though you might bring your favorite thing if it's something you can bring to class.

BEGIN explain to students that you're going to start off by imagining a scenario that involves them thinking about their favorite things. So, ask students to take a second and think of what they're absolute most favorite thing is. It can be an electronic device, a musical instrument, a memento from a loved one, and so on. When they have had a second to think about it, ask them to go around and tell the group what their favorite thing is. (If you've brought your favorite thing, share it with the class now.)

NEXT, ask students to imagine for a second that this thing was taken away from them. They could never have it again. Have them share the first word that comes to mind. Then, have a few volunteers share what it is about their favorite thing that they would miss the most.

THEN, share with students the following summary of a study done by Bank of America. Read the following:

- **A recent study showed that 45% of Americans responded that they couldn't go one day without their cell phone. And the teenagers and young adults surveyed placed more value on their cell phone than any other group. 18-24 year olds reported that their cell phones were more important**



than the Internet, their toothbrush, and their deodorant. So, for those of you who shared that your favorite thing was your cell phone and that you'd be lost without it, you're apparently in good company (though in company who may very well have BO and very bad breath).

(Source: <http://www.nbcnews.com/tech/mobile/plugged-half-americans-cant-go-day-without-phone-study-says-n142831>)

FINALLY, transition to the Main Event by saying something like this:

- **This lesson is the second in our four-lesson look at what Jesus had to say about our stuff. In today's lesson we'll discover that Jesus gets real about our love for our stuff. It's a pretty straightforward teaching that may very well convict quite a few of us in regards to our attitudes toward our stuff. But even though it may lead us to ask some tough questions, it's important, so let's jump in.**

The Main Event

- **Goal:** To help students understand that if our love for our stuff comes between our devotion to God, we're doing it all wrong.
- **Set Up:** None needed.

FIRST, see if anyone can recall what you studied last lesson. Refer to the bullet points listed below if you need help:

- **We learned that Jesus said it's impossible to both love our stuff and truly love God.**
- **We learned the importance of understanding that our stuff is fleeting; only the impact you have for God will go with you to heaven.**

THEN, once you've had a chance to review, instruct students to turn to Mark 10 in their Bibles or Bible apps. While they are looking, provide some of the context for the passage you'll be studying by referencing the Details and Setting sections of the Bible Background. Then, read or have a student read Mark 10:17-19. When you've finished, lead students in a discussion. Ask something like:

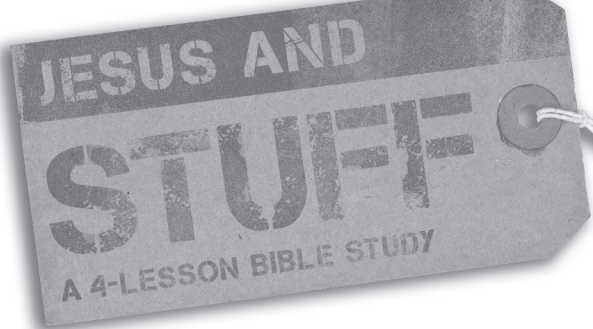
- **What does verse 17 tell us about the rich young man's intentions? What clues are there?**
 - o Answer: There's no reason to think he had anything but good intentions. He knelt before Jesus and used the title of teacher, both signs of respect.
- **What is the man asking? What is significant about his actual question?**
 - o Answer: The young man is asking the right question. He wants to be with God forever. But notice the terms in which he asks, "What must I do"? Explain to students that we may be quick to note his works-based approach to salvation. But we have to remember his thought process isn't necessarily incorrect or misplaced. Remember, this man's Jewish understanding of righteousness would be to obey the Law in every way. The significant thing about this question is that Jesus' message of grace-based salvation had not yet penetrated this man's heart.

Instruct students to look at Jesus' response to the man in verse 19. Say something like this:

- **We know that Jesus isn't telling the man that all he has to do to have eternal life is to keep a few commandments, right? This would conflict with the rest of Jesus' message about salvation through faith in Christ. Jesus is engaging the man on his own terms, framing the nature of the argument in a way that will cut to the heart of the rich young man's issues.**

Ask:

- **Here's an extra credit super tough bonus question. What do you notice about the commandments Jesus listed verses the ones He left out?**



- o Answer: This is a super tough question, but it's kind of cool because it shows how Jesus was leading the man to a point where he could see his own flaws. Jesus didn't list all 10 commandments. He only lists the second half. The first half of the commandments deal with how we interact with God (You shall have no other gods before me; You shall not make an idol; you shall not misuse the name of God, and so on), while the second half lists how we interact with other people. From a rhetorical perspective, Jesus is asking this man specifically how he has treated others.

NEXT, direct students' attention to Mark 10:20-22. Read or have a student read them aloud. Then, ask:

- **What does the man's response in verse 20 say about him?**
 - o Answer: Again, this isn't a trick. The way the Gospels record this interaction is supposed to lead us to believe the man truly was a good and righteous man. There is nothing in the text that leads us to doubt this assertion.
- **So, let's look a little more closely at Jesus' ultimatum in vs. 21. Is Jesus really saying that by giving away his stuff the man could be saved? Is that in line with Jesus' teaching about salvation in the rest of the Bible?**
 - o Answer: No.
- **So, what do we make of this command? Why did Jesus command the rich young man to give away all his stuff in order to obtain eternal life?**
 - o Answer: Jesus was dealing with this specific man as a unique individual. Jesus knew this man's possessions were his undoing. He was materialistic, and his love for his stuff kept him from following Jesus. The writer Warren Weirsbe writes, "By asking him to sell his possessions, Jesus was in effect asking him to examine his heart." Maybe the man had kept the letter of the Law, but He had not kept the spirit of it.
- **Let's not miss the most important point of all. What was the last thing Jesus said in verse 21?**
 - o Answer: Follow me.
- **Let's tie this all up in a bow. What was the man's response?**
 - o Answer: "At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth."

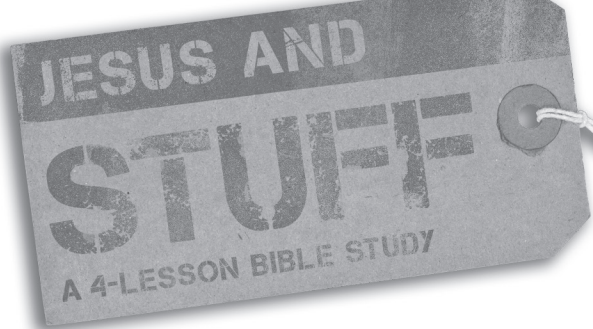
Say something like this:

- **We have to dig a bit here. The man didn't go away sad because he was rich. He went away sad because he loved his wealth. Jesus knew this. The man was so close to following Jesus. Yet he chose his stuff over God, in a sense, choosing material things over eternal life. William Barclay, another writer, sums up this dilemma nicely: "If a man looks on his possessions as given to him for nothing but his own comfort and convenience, they are a chain which must be broken; if he looks on his possessions as a means to helping others, they are his crown." The young man could have gone away in joy. But he went away sad. We have a ton to learn from this story, don't we?**

FINALLY, ask something like:

- **Jesus wasn't saying that having possessions was wrong. He didn't say it was a sin to be rich. What truth was Jesus pointing out in this story?**
 - o Answer: That anything that comes between God and us has got to be removed. In this man's case, it was his stuff.

Transition to the Last Word by explaining to students that it would be a lost opportunity if we didn't take the chance to evaluate your own attitude toward your things.



The Last Word

- **Goal:** To help students honestly evaluate whether or not their love for their stuff competes with their devotion to Christ.
- **Set-Up:** You'll need to arrange for each student to have one of the cards from the Last Word Activity Sheet (located in your Lesson 2 folder). You'll also need to make sure students have something to write with. (HINT: If you print the cards on cardstock, they will be a little more sturdy and will last a bit longer.)

BEGIN by distributing the cards you have cut out for students and something to write with.

THEN, explain to students that what they see on their cards is a scale. On one side they have their stuff. On the other, they have a cross. Instruct them to think if the scale between as a sort of meter that measures where their heart lies. Say something like:

- **I want you to take a moment and really think about your attitude toward the material things in your life. How much value do you put in them? How important is your stuff to you? If you were the rich young ruler, and Jesus asked you to leave behind all your stuff, what would your response be?**

NEXT, instruct them to draw a line somewhere on the meter to show where their heart is. Is it more inclined toward their stuff? Or more inclined toward Jesus? Encourage them to be honest, as it's just between them and God. Allow them a few moments to think about this.

FINALLY, encourage them to take this card with them and use it as a reminder of what they've learned today. Encourage them to be in prayer about their attitude, asking God to help lead them closer to Him and to help them lessen their love for the things of this world. If there are no comments or questions, close in prayer.

- **Don't forget to distribute the devotions to your students this week. If you're printing them, have them available for students as you wrap up class. If you're texting a link, posting them on Facebook, or some other means of electronic distribution, make sure you inform students of when they will be receiving them.**
- **Use the Social Media guide to stay in touch with students via text or Twitter, and to encourage them to follow through with reading their devotions and with being mindful of the choices they make during the week.**

We Want To Hear From You . . .

- Do you have questions about a lesson?
- Something that worked particularly well you want to share?
- Something that didn't work you want to bring up?

We value your feedback! Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions, comments, or concerns, at feedback@youthministry360.com.