

Unit Verse

Give me understanding,
that I may keep your law
and observe it with my
whole heart. Psalm 119:34

The Young Ruler's Question**LEADER BIBLE STUDY****CONTEXT AND COMMENTARY FOR PERSONAL STUDY AND PREPARATION**

(For age-appropriate language, use the Bible story on the following pages.)

LIFE POINT

People can
choose to do
what is right
even when it is
hard.

**LEVEL OF
BIBLICAL
LEARNING**

God helps people
make good
choices.

**SCRIPTURE
REFERENCE**

Mark
10:17-22
Luke
18:18-23

BIBLE VERSE

But if it does not
please you to worship
the LORD, choose for
yourselves today
which will you
worship.

As for me and my
family, we will worship
the LORD.

Joshua 24:15

Which of the following do you protect most fiercely: your time, your talent, or your treasure?

Some people protect their time, perhaps because they have so little of it, and it is so easily wasted. Others protect their talent, fearful that if they are generous with using it to serve others, they might get asked to serve too often or be taken advantage of. For many people, they most closely guard their treasure--their financial resources.

The rich young ruler clearly fell into the latter category. When Jesus asked him to give his financial resources away, he could not or would not do it. Notice when Jesus questioned him about keeping the Commandments, He did not quote all ten. In both the Mark and Luke accounts, He chose to mention only some. What do all of these commands have in common? Jesus chose to mention commands that specifically address a person's relationship with others. In response, the man claimed to have consistently treated others in a way that honored God and kept His commands. Jesus then gave him a challenge. What was that challenge?

You may have read this challenge as a test of the man's willingness to obey sacrificially, and that is undoubtedly part of it, but remember that Jesus had just asked the man if he had kept the Commandments regarding how he treated others. Is it possible that Jesus' challenge further revealed the man's deep-rooted selfishness, even though he was checking all the right religious boxes? After all, by walking away, the man chose to keep himself comfortable, surrounded by his money and possessions, rather than financially helping others who really needed it.

As you pray this week, ask God to help you see in which areas of your life you fiercely protect your time, talent, or treasure. Ask Him to show you when that protectiveness veers into selfishness and an unwillingness to serve or help others, even if you have ample resources to do so. Ask God to change your heart so that you hold nothing back in obedience to Him.



TELL THE STORY

Intro Activity

Ask the kids: "Have you ever had to make a hard choice because you knew it was the right thing to do?"

- Give examples kids can relate to: "Maybe cleaning your room when you want to play, or being kind to someone who wasn't kind to you."
- Guide the discussion and let a few kids share their experiences.
- Emphasize: "We have choices to make all the time. Some are easy, but some are not. Choosing to do what is right shows love for God and others."

Say: "In today's Bible story, we will hear about a man who had a very hard choice to make."

- Remind kids that in this unit, they have learned about the choices that we make. We can choose to love, respect, and obey God. Today kids will hear another story about a man who had an important choice to make.
- Lead kids to sing "Follow It With All My Heart (Psalm 119:34)."
- Guide kids to turn in their Bibles to Mark 10. Distribute sticky notes and direct kids to place a note in the Mark passage, then turn to Luke 18, where they will also place a note.
- Encourage kids to listen carefully to the Bible story for help in guessing the fourth phrase. (I can choose to do what is right even when it is hard.)

Open your Bible to Mark 10 and tell the Bible story.

BIBLE STORY: THE YOUNG RULER'S QUESTION

A ruler came to Jesus and asked a question: "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

Jesus asked, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God Himself. You already know the commandments. Keep your marriage promises. Do not kill, steal, or be untruthful. Honor your parents."

The ruler said, "I have kept all those commandments since I was young."

"You are missing one thing," Jesus said. "Go and sell everything you have. Give to the poor. When you do, you will have treasure in heaven. Then come and follow Me."

When the ruler heard this, he became sad and left. He was sad because he was very rich.

- BASED ON MARK 10:17-22; LUKE 18:18-23



TELL THE STORY

REVIEW QUESTIONS

- What question did the ruler ask Jesus? ("What must I do to inherit eternal life?")
- What did Jesus tell the ruler to do? (sell everything he had, give to the poor, and then follow Jesus)
- Why do you think Jesus asked the ruler to sell everything he had? (Answers will vary.)
- Why do you think the ruler went away sadly? (The ruler was very wealthy. Answers will vary.)
- What are some things that keep people from putting Jesus first? (Answers will vary.)



BIBLE LEARNING ACTIVITIES

TREASURE OR JESUS RELAY

For this game, set out a box labeled “Treasure” and place a Bible nearby labeled “Jesus.” One at a time, kids race to pick up a paper coin or small object and decide whether to place it in the treasure box or beside the Bible. While they play, the leader may suddenly say, “Follow me!” When that happens, the kids leave the treasure and run to the Bible. After playing, explain that the rich young ruler did not want to leave his treasure to follow Jesus, and talk together about how it can sometimes be hard to put Jesus first and what kinds of treasures kids might struggle to give up.

OBEDIENCE OBSTACLE COURSE

For the Obedience Obstacle Course, set up a simple course using cones, chairs, hoops, or tape on the floor. As kids move through the course, they stop at different checkpoints where a choice card is posted, such as “Tell the truth or tell a lie,” “Be kind or be mean,” or “Share or keep everything.” At each stop, the child says out loud what the right choice is before continuing through the course. Explain that following Jesus can sometimes feel hard, but God helps us know and choose what is right.

“HANDS OPEN, HANDS CLOSED”

For this nature activity, give each child a small rock, stick, or leaf and ask them to hold it tightly in their hand. Invite the children to walk slowly while keeping their hands closed, noticing how it feels to hold on. After a moment, ask them to stop, open their hands, and gently drop the object into a basket. Explain that sometimes we hold tightly to things we like, but trusting God means being willing to open our hands and let go when He asks us to.

OPEN HANDS FOR JESUS

For this craft, each child traces his/her hand on a piece of paper and cuts it out. On the middle of the hand, they write the words “I choose Jesus.” On each finger, they draw or write something they like or care about, such as toys, games, money, sports, or friends. As they decorate their hand with crayons or markers, remind them that the rich young ruler had many things but found it hard to choose Jesus first. Explain that their hand is a reminder that we can choose to follow Jesus and trust Him, even when it is hard to let go of things we care about.

FOLLOW ME FREEZE

For this game, play music while the children move around the room. When the music stops, say, “Follow me!” and do a simple movement, such as clapping, hopping, or spinning. The kids copy the movement you do. While playing, explain that following Jesus means watching Him and doing what He does, even when it takes effort or attention.