

The Story:

A young leader ran up to Jesus and fell on his knees. He had desperation in his eyes while he blurted out the big question he needed an answer to: "What do I need to do to get eternal life?"

Jesus gave him an interesting response, probably the one he was expecting - "You know the commandments: 'do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not lie, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.'"

The young man knew there must be something more than this as he had kept these laws throughout his life and was still lacking something. He told Jesus that he had lived this way since he was really young and looked at Him for something more profound, something that had special relevance to him as an individual. Jesus looked at him and loved him. He saw the hunger for reality and the genuine desire to know the truth, so Jesus cut to the chase and spoke directly into his life. Jesus saw that, for this young man to be fulfilled, there was something he had to let go of, something that was directing his life and stripping him of the life God had intended him to enjoy. Jesus said to him, "You're missing one piece. Go and sell everything you have and give it to the poor, and you will find the answer you are looking for." The young man's face fell. He knew he had heard the truth, but it was too hard for him to act on. He had a lot of money and it seemed too scary to do what Jesus asked. He slowly got off his knees and walked away sad. Jesus stood and watched as the young man disappeared in the distance. He still loved him.

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- Why do you think the young man came to consult Jesus in the first place?
 - + Do you think he was surprised by what Jesus told him?

Quite often, we already know the right answers to our big questions and hope that someone gives us an easier way out when we ask them for advice. Big questions normally have simple answers that require an action from us that we struggle to act upon. Sometimes, when we are faced with the truth about ourselves, we need the time and space to evaluate what we want to do. Jesus understands this and is patient with us.

- What do you think it was about the young man that drew out Jesus' love for him?

+ Do you think it was easy for Jesus to tell the young man what to do?

Jesus' approach is different than what we normally encounter with other people in life. He understands the importance of letting someone come to their own conclusions when faced with reality.

- Have you ever had a big question you needed answered about your life?

+ Who did you go to?

+ Were they able to be honest with you?

+ What was your response?

It is important to gather a couple of wise people around you in life who can assist you to grow and help you to ask the big questions. Choose these people wisely and find out who they consult when they have to make life-changing decisions. There was one thing worth noting that this young man did wisely - he went to Jesus!

- How do you think Jesus felt when the young man walked away?

+ Have you ever had someone walk away from you?

+ Were you able to continue to love and appreciate them?

+ Why do you think it is important not to pressure people to make big choices?

Jesus values our choices and is patient with us, even when we choose to ignore good advice. His love for us is not conditional on us doing everything right and following His example. He knows that, over time, we will see that His advice and direction for us will make sense, even if it means making the wrong decision sometimes. Trusting Jesus' direction grows through experience. The long-term results of following Jesus show that He always has our best interest in mind. Jesus offers a way that brings life, but it often confronts the stubbornness of our present existence.