

**Sermon Series:** Book of Mark  
**Sermon title:** Choose Your Treasure  
**Scripture passage:** Mark 10:17-31  
February 25, 2018  
Clearwater Bay International Baptist Church  
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**William Borden**, known as Borden of Yale, was born in 1887 in Chicago to the very wealthy Borden family. He was the heir of the Borden Dairy Co., known for its mascot, Elsie the Cow.

When William was a young man, his mother became a Christian and started taking William with her to church, and he too became a Christian.

When he graduated at the age of sixteen, his parents gave him a gift: a trip around the world.

He was not on his own as a sixteen-year-old; he was with Walter Erdman, a minister and a missionary. They visited numerous countries, and along the way, Borden's calling became very clear to him: he would be a missionary.

On this trip, he saw firsthand— entire people groups without a gospel witness. This left such an impression on this young seventeen-year-old that he knew he wanted to give his life to missions.

When he graduated in 1912, he was ordained and he became aware of a people group in China—ten million Muslims without a gospel witness among them. This was a very difficult people group to reach and a very difficult people group to get to, but Borden was committed to this group as his calling.

He decided that he would go to Cairo to learn Arabic so that he could minister to these Muslims in China. He left America in December 1912.

On March 21, he was taken ill with spinal meningitis; nineteen days later, he died. April 9, 1913, was the date. He never made it to China.

When he died, his Bible was returned to his parents.

When they opened it, they saw on the flyleaf these words, written by William Borden: “**No reserves.**” Those words were written over the date when he decided that he would not take up a role in the family business but that he would become a missionary.

At a later date, he wrote these words, “**No retreat.**”

And then, during his illness after March 21 and shortly before his death on April 9, he wrote these words: “No regrets.”

**No reserves. No retreat. No regrets.**

Dr. Samuel Zwemer said this at the funeral:

“He won the victory over his environment. By some the victory has to be won over poverty; by others over heredity or over shame and temptation; but Borden won the victory over an environment of wealth. He felt that life consisted not in ***‘the abundance of things a man possesses’ but in the abundance of things that possess the man.***”

Borden was one of the richest young men in the world but he gave it all up to follow Jesus Christ.

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Open your Bibles to **Mark chapter 10.**

**In this passage today we have 3 conversations.**

They are connected, but let’s handle each one separately.

### **The Conversation with a rich man.**

This is famous story of the ‘rich young ruler’.

Matthew’s gospel tells us he is young.

Luke tells us he’s a ruler.

Mark just says he is wealthy.

He comes to Jesus with an important question.

**What must I do to inherit eternal life?**

Jesus points him to the 10 commandments in Exodus 20.

**“Do not murder, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your mother and father”**

The man said, “I’ve kept those.”  
He must not have known himself very well!

Jesus knows his heart. So, in verse 21 it says, Jesus ‘loved him’ and so he presses on his heart.

**“Go, sell all you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.”**

What does he do? Does he do like Bill Borden?

No.

He has a choice; Jesus or possessions. He chooses possessions.

Jesus says to him, **“Choose your treasure...me or the money.....me or the stuff.”**

He went away sad and gloomy.

He couldn’t do it.

Listen to what Jesus said in **Matthew 6.**

**“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and**

**steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**

**No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.”**

So, the conversation with the rich young ruler can be summarized this way....

### **1. To follow Jesus is to treasure Jesus.**

- Jesus is the greatest treasure and those who wish to be saved, must treasure nothing more.

You see, Jesus was getting at his heart, his affections. There's nothing wrong with money or having possessions, but we mustn't 'treasure' those things. They must not be dear to our hearts.

Possessions and money are to flow into us and flow out of us. They're not meant to stay. If they stay, they begin to rule.

Jesus called him to come and follow. To follow Jesus is to treasure Jesus.

### **The Conversation with the disciples.**

The conversation now shifts to teaching his disciples something. The rich young man is gone. He walked away.

Notice 2 statements by Jesus and 2 responses by the disciples.

**Statement 1:** Verse 23, “How difficult it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God.”

**Statement 2:** Verse 24, “Children, how difficult it is to enter the kingdom of God. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.”

The disciples responses to both of these statements are similar: They were ‘amazed’ and ‘exceedingly astonished’.

Why were they amazed and astonished?

Because most Jews believed that, although wealth wouldn’t buy you into heaven....wealth and possessions were a sign of God’s blessings.

So, you have money it seems like God is shining on you.

When Jesus says that it is ‘easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God’, what he means is that it is impossible.

\*He doesn’t mean that there’s a gate in Jerusalem called the needle’s eye and you have to work hard at getting a camel through.\*

That’s a myth.

The disciple's response and the context tells us what it means...

"Then who can be saved?"

Jesus says, **"With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God."**

This is related to the rich man's question, "What must I **DO**....to inherit eternal life? What must **I DO**????

Answer: Man can't DO anything. It's impossible for a rich man to treasure Jesus over his riches and it's impossible for anyone to treasure Jesus. But not with God.....

So, the conversation with the disciples can be summarized this way....

## **2. Treasuring Jesus Christ is a work of grace.**

- Only God can cause you to see and savor Jesus Christ in such a way that you treasure him.

It's impossible with man, but God can open the eyes of the blind, soften the heart, cause the deaf to hear, raise the spiritually dead to life.

I could give you a lot of verses but let's look at one.

**John 6:44, "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day."**

I'd also point you to **2 Corinthians 4:3-7**

If you treasure Jesus Christ today above money, houses, wife, land, degrees, or fame....it's because God, by his grace... caused you to treasure Christ.

To follow Jesus is to treasure Jesus.  
Only God can cause you to treasure Jesus.

and the last conversation.....

### **The Conversation with started by Peter.**

**28 Peter began to say to him, "See, we have left everything and followed you." 29 Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, 30 who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life. 31 But many who are first will be last, and the last first."**

The disciples have made the transaction, by the grace of God, that the rich young ruler couldn't make.

Leave everything 'for his sake and the gospel' and follow....he said, "No."

Leave everything 'for his sake and the gospel' and follow.....they said, "Yes."



## **What's in it for them?**

Is it worth it?

Do without here on earth, be "last", be persecuted by associating yourself with Jesus....and the gospel....?

Is it worth it? for them? for us?

### **3. Choosing Christ over other treasures will be worth it!**

Treasure Christ now...and you'll treasure him forever; you'll enjoy him forever. It'll be worth it.

Do you know why?

### **CAUSE HE IS THE RICH YOUNG RULER.**

He owns the universe. He is more wealthy than that young man, or the disciples or we can even imagine. And he has the power to give you eternal life...an inheritance with the saints in light...

In his Father's house there are many rooms. He went to prepare a place for those who treasure him and he'll come back and take us to where he is....that where he is...there we may be also.

**In his presence is fullness of joy. At his right hand are pleasures forevermore. Psalm 16:11**

He is the rich young ruler....

and **unlike** the rich young ruler who **couldn't** sell all that he had and give to the poor to place treasure in heaven....

**“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.”**

**2 Corinthians 8:9**

He sold all he had and gave it to the needy and bids us to follow him...to treasure him.

1. To follow Jesus is to treasure Jesus.
2. Only God, by his grace can cause anyone to treasure Christ. So cry out to him to save you or to keep you from treasuring anything more than him.
3. Choosing to treasure Christ will be worth it.

**Choose your treasure!**

The world and all it's possessions and trophies or Jesus Christ.