

## Reflection on Mark 10:17-31

In this Gospel, we hear the story of the rich young man who came to Jesus and asked him: "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Instead of answering the man's question, Jesus asks him: "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone." Jesus then names several of the commandments. After Jesus had finished speaking, the young man told Jesus: "I have observed these commandments since I was young." Mark writes: "Jesus, looking at the man, loved him." Jesus then said to the man: "You are lacking one thing. Go, sell all you have and give the money to the poor. Then, come and follow me." When the young man realized what Jesus was asking of him, Mark writes: "At Jesus' statement, the man's face fell, and he went away sad for he had many possessions."

Now ask yourself: How would you (and I) respond if Jesus looked at us and asked us to sell everything we have, give our money to the poor and then leave home and follow him? Would we truly be willing to "give our all?" Or would we respond as the rich young man did? Would we also walk away from Jesus, sad and troubled? Possessions and wealth have a dangerous potential to possess us if we are not careful and mindful. Every ad we hear on TV and the radio encourages us to buy, buy, buy! For many people in the first world countries the slogan "more is better" is lived out every day!

Yet, Jesus clearly understands that our "need" for more possessions or upgraded possessions may begin to "possess" us! If you ever go to a mall the day after Christmas, you see people buying items that are a great bargain. However, do they truly need those bargains? Or do they buy the item simply because it is a bargain? However on these occasions do we buy only what we truly need?

If we are not mindful, our possessions may begin to "possess" us. Today Jesus warns his disciples (us) to be mindful and aware! Jesus wants us to be completely free to follow him. The question is: are we willing to give up all we have and follow Jesus? What is your (and my) answer?