

**The Kingdom of God**  
**Lesson 21: Jesus Encounters a Rich Ruler**  
**LifeWalk Leader Guide**

**Open/Icebreakers:** Talk about some rich people in America. What are the benefits/blessings of being rich? What challenges/temptations do rich people face? The fact that we live in America makes us “richer” than 75% of the world. What are your thoughts on this fact?

**Digging In:** Luke 18:18-27

1. The question this ruler asked was constantly debated in religious circles. What strikes you about Jesus’ response? Jesus had called things ‘good’ before. (See Matthew 5:44-45) Why do you think He chooses to respond this way? What point could Jesus be making about ‘goodness’?
2. The ‘ruler’ in this text was probably a spiritual leader rather than political. Can you speculate on what motivated him to ask his question? Was he sincere? What evidence can you see from the text that leads you to your conclusion?
3. Why did Jesus choose to answer this question by pointing to the commandments? (Jesus quoted the 5<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> commandments which pertain to relationships with human beings.) Wouldn’t you say that in Jesus’ ministry, the ones that responded to Him seemed to be the ones that broke the commandments and the ‘hyper-commandment keepers’ seemed to be the ones that refused His message? Why would Jesus point to these commandments in this instance?
4. What strikes you about the ruler’s response? Do you believe him? What response does this spark from Jesus?
5. Why would Jesus ask this man to sell everything he had and give it to the poor? Do you recall a time where Jesus asked anyone else to do this? In Luke 19, Zacchaeus only gives half to the poor and he is commended. Why would Jesus ask this ruler to give it all up?
6. Why did this ruler walk away with sadness? What was Jesus trying to lovingly expose in this man’s life?
7. How did Jesus conclude this teaching? What strikes you about what He says?

**Reflection:**

1. Jesus seems to be confronting the “legal lens” through which this man seemed to be approaching Him. Legal terms are certainly used in Scripture, but what are the challenges/dangers of viewing/approaching God solely through this ‘lens’?
2. It seems that the best result of being right with God from a legal perspective is that we are a bunch of acquitted criminals. Doesn’t God teach us that He wants a bride? How does your relationship with God change when you view him more through the ‘lens’ of marriage?
3. How would you answer the question, “What must I do to inherit eternal life?”
4. Knowing that we are truly rich in America, how is God calling us to live? Share some practical things that your group can do to live out the teachings from this encounter.

**Prayer:** Father God, do the impossible in us. Confront us with the truth of who you are. Thank you for your beautiful love for us. Thank you for Jesus and His sacrifice. Holy Spirit, move my heart to love and service.