

Apostolic Compromise

One of the most difficult aspects of the apostolic assignment is when we have to confront people who want access to the grace in our lives, regarding an issue that is left untouched by the Spirit within them. I call this the "One Thing Ministry." Mark 10:17-32 records the story of the Rich Young Ruler who came to Jesus wanting to partake of Eternal Life. This young Jewish man had been faithful with many aspects of the requirements of the Law, but was still unsatisfied in his heart. He had obviously seen and heard Jesus and was drawn by the "anointing" and came wanting whatever it was that made Jesus different from all the other "religious teachers" he had encountered in his lifetime. The Law will never satisfy what only the Spirit can provide. The same is true today with those ministries that offer only "religious duty" and not the Life of the Spirit.

"Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. You know the commandments: Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do no defraud, Honor your father and mother." And he answered and said to Him, "Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth." Then said Jesus, looking at him, "ONE THING YOU LACK, go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me." But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions."

Jesus was an Apostle with a "One Thing Ministry." He would not compromise the need to qualify in every area for a spiritual breakthrough in someone's life or ministry. Today, a "religious leader" may do differently when someone comes into their ministry with resources like this young man possessed. The temptation would be to give the person what they want in order to gain access to their possessions. True apostles will not compromise the progress of a person in order to obtain from them what they think they need for themselves or their ministries. True apostles will discern the "one thing lacking" and seek to bring that issue into the light. Paul told the Thessalonians, *"Night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face and perfect what is lacking in your faith."* 1 Thess.3:10. Jesus and Paul could not be bought or enticed by someones resources, but put the spiritual progress of the individual in top priority.

There are many would be disciples who come and go today because they don't like "the Word they received. ' Having been in apostolic ministry for nearly 30 years, I have dealt with many people sent by God to our ministry for further training and preparation for the destiny God had planned for them. Many have been like this "rich young ruler," who had experience in the "things of God", or were successful in business but still lacking in a particular area of character or wisdom. They expecting to be accepted and promoted because of their "past" successes or experiences, and were shocked when I had to point out that "one thing" they were still lacking in order to have the next level of blessing released by the Father. These people are often of "championship potential" and they only need that "one thing" in their lives to be "set in order" before they can go to the

next level. Sometimes they are “grieved,” like this young man in our story, and go away without full comprehension of what we are trying to reveal to them. This young man obviously didn’t realize that Jesus was trying to get him delivered from “*trusting in riches*” so that he could qualify for an “*hundredfold return*” (vs.29-30). He didn’t stay around for the “rest of the story,” as Paul Harvey would say. Often when “young men” go away grieved over the revelation brought to them, they spread a bad report about that “mean apostle” who didn’t recognize all their background and experience, but instead tried to “control them” into doing what they wanted them to do. Sometimes, being an apostle who won’t compromise the best interest of individuals for the sake of gain will get you into some spiritual warfare that you would rather avoid. Nobody wants to have accusation and slander released against them, but that is often what happens when we are truthful and pure hearted in ministry.

The disciples of Jesus saw this whole episode and responded that “they had done all that Jesus told this young man to do.” They wanted to know what they could expect for “giving up all for His sake and the gospel.” Jesus said, “You shall receive a hundredfold now in this time, and eternal life in the age to come.” (My paraphrase) Those who continue in the process and allow God to deal with the “One Thing Lacking,” can expect the same reward.