

A Tough Decision

by Linville Dunaway, Corinth Christian church

Luke 18:18-23 tells the story of one who came to Jesus with an important question. He wanted to know what he should do to have eternal life. There is no other question that is more important to mankind. We might also note that he came to the only one with the power and the authority to give him the answer. It is vital to go to the one with the truth and not someone offering their opinion. This man came to the right person.

When someone asks a question he should expect an answer. I would hope that the person would want and desire a factual and truthful answer. Some people know what they hope to hear and if the answer is not that, then it may be rejected. One example of this is found in Jeremiah 42-44. This rich man who came to Jesus is but another example of someone who asked a question and didn't like the answer and rejected it. In both cases the answer came from God and rejecting it brought sorrow.

This man who came to Jesus was a good man in

many ways. He was mindful of the commandments of God from his youth. That is something that not everyone can say that they have done. Even so, this man was not assured of life eternal and he knew it. Jesus said that if we were not with him then we were against him. Matthew 12:30. Being honest, a good neighbor, and an all around good person who is without Jesus is still a lost person. This is what this man was to find out when he came to Jesus.

He was a good man, but not perfect. Jesus told him that he lacked one thing. That was faith in Jesus and to live for him. He was told to sell what he had and to give to the poor; then to come and follow the Lord. If he had been told to give a few hundred pieces of silver to the poor he might have done it, but he wouldn't give all. He could not bring himself to trust Jesus that much. His riches let him live a comfortable life and he would not give it up. This man who had come to the right source to find out about life eternal went away sorrowful. Even the promise of eternal life could not cause him to part with his riches. He trusted in wealth more than in the Lord.

Did the rich man leave because he was told to give away his possessions or was it because he was

told to come and follow the Lord, or both? This man was like a lot of folks throughout history. They want the blessings of God and to go to heaven, but at a cost that doesn't change their lives much. To them God should bless them, but not rule them. God tells us what we must do to be saved and it is up to us to obey.

Like the rich man the decision is ours to make. The effects of this decision will last for all eternity and is not to be made lightly. The man who asked Jesus about eternal life went away sorrowful. He wanted eternal life, but he also wanted to live as he had all his life. When faced with such a choice he chose the material things of this world. That which he chose would be used up, or he would die and leave them behind. Either way he would face eternity without Jesus.

Mankind needs to realize that to be saved and to walk with God is more important than to live for the things of this world. This world and the things of it is for a limited amount of time. However, to live for the Lord is to live forever. These are the choices that a person is faced with in this life. The world or Jesus is a decision that everyone has to make. That is really not a tough decision at all.

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WHEN THE GREAT PROPHET ELISHA LAY UPON HIS DEATH BED, JOASH, KING OF ISRAEL, CAME TO MOURN HIM AND ELISHA BADE HIM PICK UP A BOW AND ARROW AND POINT IT IN THE DIRECTION OF SYRIA AND SHOOT IT OUT THE WINDOW. JOASH DID AS THE PROPHET DIRECTED. THEN ELISHA TOLD JOASH TO TAKE THE REST OF HIS ARROWS AND STRIKE THEM UPON THE FLOOR....



...JOASH DID SO, BUT IN A PERFUNCTORY MANNER, FOR HE COULD SEE NO IMPORTANCE IN THIS ACT, LAZILY STRIKING THE FLOOR THREE TIMES. ELISHA BECAME ANGRY AT THIS DISPLAY OF LAZINESS FOR, HAD JOASH STRUCK THE ARROWS SIX TIMES, HE WOULD HAVE COMPLETELY DEFEATED SYRIA TO SAVE HIS KINGDOM, BUT, SAID THE PROPHET, NOW HE WOULD ONLY DEFEAT SYRIA IN THREE BATTLES—NOT ENOUGH TO SAVE ISRAEL! ALL THIS WAS BORNE OUT AFTER ELISHA'S DEATH—SURE ENOUGH, JOASH WON ONLY THREE BATTLES AS THE PROPHET HAD DECLARED!

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