Mark 10:17-22 New Revised Standard Version

17 As he was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before
him and asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal
life?” 18 Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is
good but God alone. 19 You know the commandments: ‘You shall
not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You
shall not bear false witness. You shall not defraud. Honor your
father and mother.’ ” 20 He said to him, “Teacher, I have kept all
these since my youth.” 21 Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said,
“You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to
the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow
me.” 22 When he heard this, he was shocked and went away
grieving, for he had many possessions.

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“Close don’t count in baseball. Close only counts in horseshoes and hand grenades.” –Frank Robinson

Perhaps we should add discipleship to the first part of Robinson’s observation because today’s text from Mark 10 gives us that very impression. Over the years, the man who ran up to Jesus has come to be known as the “Rich Young Ruler,” a designation created from the similar accounts of the story found in Matthew, Mark, and Luke (also known as the “Synoptic Gospels”). At first glance, his motivation in going to Jesus seems sincere. I imagine he was the kind of person who was identified as being “good” to those around him.

However, even a “good person” realizes when something is missing. It may be difficult to pinpoint, but there are moments in each of our lives when we feel accomplished, but we wonder is there something more to life. Recently, I heard a coach speak of the improvements taking place within his team. He indicated they were “getting close,” but there was still “a little something they needed to find.” I would have considered his team to have already been successful, but he admitted “close was not enough.” In our allegiance to Jesus, he does not want close. He does not want a limited commitment. Close does not equal discipleship.

1. **Following Jesus is not contingent upon our performance.**
2. **Being a disciple is never based upon what we avoid.**
3. **Jesus will not soften his expectations to please us.**

Prayer Pebble: Lord, help me not to miss out on following you. Amen.