

## *Just Looking for a Team*

Christ the Redeemer Church  
October 11, 2009  
19<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

Mark 10:17-31  
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You all certainly are a unique group of people, you Christians. On this rainy, cool autumn morning you could be home sleeping. But you choose to come here and spend one hour thinking about life and God and people. William Willimon says that the problem with being in church as much as we are then this stuff all begins to make sense. It is all odd.

While I was in seminary and had little money and a new baby, a parishioner in my church who was my age had just inherited a huge sum of money from his deceased parents. He took me to play golf. I was excited to go play golf and get a break from religion talk.

The guy had a huge house in a neighborhood of wealthy people in Fort Worth. His parents had lived and died in California and had left him enough money that he paid cash for his very expensive home and he did not have to work. Set for life. No children.

On the first tee he told me how guilty he felt about having all of this money and not having any house payment and not having to work and he wondered what God felt.

I really just wanted to play golf and enjoy a 4-hour break from God talk. But he talked God stuff. By the 4<sup>th</sup> hole I suggested to him he give ME all of his money and let me worry about what God wanted ME to do with all of that money!

The rich man was looking for a team to be on, sort of. He ran to the Teacher, fell on his knees, and said, “Good Teacher, what can I do to have life forever?”

Jesus said, “First of all, why do you call me good? Only God is good.” Secondly, he told the man “You know the commands. Do not murder. Do not commit adultery. Don’t steal. Don’t lie about your neighbor. Don’t cheat. Honor your father and mother.”

Then the guy makes a mistake. He tells Jesus he is already perfect. He already obeys all of these laws and has done so since he was a young boy.

So Jesus never hesitated and shrugged and said, “Okay then. Since you are perfect then just go sell everything you have and give the money to the poor.”

Uh oh. The guy was ruining my fun on the golf course with all of his religious questions.

Many are looking for direction in life. The only person Jesus ever told to sell all he had and give all the money to the poor was this rich man who claimed to be perfect. I have tried to claim perfection in my marriage and I never got by with the claim. My advice to you is to not try and convince God or a mate or a friend that you are perfect.

A man was born in Italy in the 15<sup>th</sup> century to parents of great wealth. The kid grew up in the Church, later renounced his wealth, actually gave away all of his money to the poor, and became known as St. Francis. He was a man of peace who gave us beautiful concepts on Prayer and the animal world. He would pray in the woods with the animals listening.

Many look for direction in life on many matters.

Quin was on a business trip this past week and went to an airline representative in the airport and asked "Where is the gate for the flight to Cleveland?" She said, "Sir, you are in Cleveland." We have all had similar moments in life as Quin.

Sometimes we already are in the city we are looking for in life and we do not know it. .

Several of our players from our church championship softball team are not able to play this fall in this fall church league. Kyle players all have kids in football. We are short.

Karl James said a friend of his was bringing a new guy to us who wanted to play. I said, "Sure. But he will have to wait to play like the rest. I will try to work him into the game."

Karl said, "This guy was drafted by the Houston Astros a couple of years ago."

I put him in the starting line up. He made three spectacular plays in the infield. He hit a three-run homer. The umpire told me "That kid is a ball player." I said, "Yeah, we picked him up from the Astros." I loved being able to say that.

I asked the kid after the game if he was coming back next week to play for us. He said, "Yeah, I have been coming here every week just looking for a team."

I finally told the rich guy on about the 10<sup>th</sup> hole to go to a children's hospital where kids have terminal diseases and little hope for the future and then ask God what to do with his new money. Or go to a nursing home and ask that question.

I used to wonder, actually I still wonder some days, if Pam wishes she had married someone else. When we would be around some handsome guy or a guy who had more money than we did I would ask her later if she wished she had married someone like that. I hoped she would say, "No, you are more handsome." But her answer would be, "No, I don't think he would be easy to live with."

How easy are you to live with? How easy are you to play golf with? How easy are you to be in church with? Have fun, follow the commands, and be generous with your money. Be an easy group to be around, like you are.

I can not wait until softball playoffs. The Connection Church, the team which is our main competition in the church softball league, told me this past week they had picked up some

new players and can not wait to meet us in the playoffs. I just smiled. I told them it should be an interesting championship series. Amen.