

dec 18

today i want to tell you a story. it is not my story, but one that has touched my heart. whether it is a true story or not, it certainly expresses a truth we all need to understand.

i recount it to you now. i hope you too will know and understand that true riches only follow, they do not lead. we all must decide what we hold most dear.

our Lord Jesus showed us the way to riches. "but seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." matt 6:33 i hope you are blessed.

-----

## Who Will Take the Son

A wealthy man and his son loved to collect rare works of art. They had everything in their collection, from Picasso to Raphael. They would often sit together and admire the great works of art.

One day the son went to war. He was very courageous and died in battle while saving another soldier. The father was notified and grieved deeply for his only child.

About a month later, just before Christmas, there was a knock at the door. A young man stood there with a large package in his hands. He said, "Sir, you don't know me, but I am the soldier for whom your son gave his life. He saved many lives that day, and he was

carrying me to safety when a bullet struck him in the heart and he died instantly. He often talked about you and your love of art.” The young man held out his package. “I know this isn’t much. I’m not a great artist, but I think your son would have wanted you to have this.”

The father opened the package. It was a portrait of his son, painted by the young man. The father stared in awe at the way the soldier had captured the personality of his son in the painting. The father was so drawn to the eyes that his own eyes welled up with tears. He thanked the young man and offered to pay him for the pictures. “Oh, no, sir. I could never repay what your son did for me. It is a gift.”

The father hung the portrait over his mantle. Every time visitors came to his home, he took them to see the portrait of his son before he showed them any of the other great works he had collected.

The man died a few months later. There was to be a great auction of his paintings. Many influential people gathered, excited over seeing the great paintings and having an opportunity to purchase one for their collection. On the platform sat the painting of the man’s son. The auctioneer pounded the gavel. “We will start the bidding with this picture of the son. Who will bid for this picture?” There was silence. Then a voice in the back of the room shouted, “We want to see the famous paintings. Skip that one.” But the auctioneer persisted. “Will someone bid for this painting? Who will start the bidding? \$100. \$200?”

Another voice shouted angrily. "We didn't come to see this painting. We came to see the Van Goughs, the Rembrandts. Get on with the real bids." But still the auctioneer continued. "The son! Who will take the son?"

Finally, a voice came from the back of the room. It was the longtime gardener of the man and his son. "I'll give \$10 for the painting." Being a poor man, it was all he could afford. "We have \$10, who will bid \$20?"

"Give it to him for \$10! Let's see the masters." But the auctioneer continued. "\$10 is the bid, won't someone bid \$20?" The crowd was becoming angry. They didn't want the picture of the son. They wanted the more "worthy" investments for their collections. The auctioneer pounded the gavel. "Going once, twice, SOLD for \$10!"

A man sitting on the second row shouted, "Now let's get on with the collection!" But the auctioneer laid down his gavel. "I'm sorry, the auction is over."

"What about the paintings?"

"I am sorry. When I was called to conduct the auction, I was told of a secret stipulation in the will. I was not allowed to reveal that stipulation until this time. Only the painting of the son would be auctioned. Whoever bought that painting would inherit the entire estate, including the paintings. The man who took the son gets everything."

God gave his son over 2000 years ago to die on a cruel cross. Much like the auctioneer, His message today is, "The Son, the Son, who will take the Son?" Because, you see, whoever takes the Son gets everything!"

Linda