

# What's blocking the Light?

Often when we hear of Gospel encounters with Jesus such as that of the “rich young man” (Mt 19:16-22), we might wonder what happened to them. What is the “rest of the story” here?

We may not know that answer until we get to Heaven. What we do know is the reaction of the young man to the words of Jesus. When the Lord challenged him to give up his many possessions, and then follow him, the young man went away sad.

It is intriguing that we hear this Gospel at Mass coupled with the reading from Judges (Jgs 2:11-19) where in the middle of one of the darker hours for the children of Israel in salvation history it is said they offered “distressful cries” to the Lord. They were sad. Even more, they were in great distress.

In two very different situations, there is a similar reason for the sadness. It is what happens when a person places something other than God in the center of his or her life, and then gives it the attention or allegiance that is due to Him. It is worshipping a “false god,” which is what the Israelites were doing in rampant, outrageous fashion. In the case of the rich young man, who was good, his riches and treasure prevented him from following the Lord. Having the benefit of hearing this Gospel today with the ears of faith and grace, it should be no surprise that he left sad.

A Christian will never be truly happy if he seeks to find his happiness, contentment or rest in anything other than God – specifically in the richness of a deep relationship with Jesus Christ. It is not only where we find our happiness but also our spiritual freedom!

Today, we might ask ourselves, with a little help from the Holy Spirit: What are the “false gods” in our lives that are vying for our attention? What are the false gods that we are tempted to look upon, to hold on to and depend upon, that distract us from the gaze of Christ into our eyes, minds and hearts? To use an analogy on this historic week of the solar eclipse: what is *blocking the Light*?