

# Rivals

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## The Reason is the Rival

There is a clear difference between a reason and an excuse. Excuses are not acceptable answers, but there are times when even “good reasons” fail to be “good enough”.

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## Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever had a “rival” or an “archenemy” in life? How did this person become your enemy? Discuss.
2. All of us are tempted to give excuses instead of reasons. What are some excuses you regularly give that might be re-phrased as reasons?
3. The Rich Young Man may have actually had a “good reason” not to do what Jesus asked. But if you could talk to him right before he walked away, what might you want him to know before he made his final decision? What would you tell him? Reflect on this and share your answers.
4. The story of the Rich Young Man can scare us because we may think Christ’s call for him is Universal and Arbitrary. But it was Personal and Necessary. Have you ever been afraid of what God might ask you to leave behind for His sake? Where does that come from? Please share and discuss.
5. It is possible that God has not yet identified a “dramatic choice” that you may have to make for Him. But what are ways that you can train your heart to eliminate God’s rivals today?

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## God in Real Life

What is one thing that you know that God has already asked of you that you will regularly give reasons why you “can’t” do it? Act on it as soon as you’ve identified it.

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## To the Heart

"Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said to him, 'You are lacking in one thing. Go, sell what you have, and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.'"  
Mark 10:21