

Mark 10:23-31

²³ Then Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!" ²⁴ And the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, "Children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

²⁶ And they were greatly astonished, saying among themselves, "Who then can be saved?"

²⁷ But Jesus looked at them and said, "With men *it is* impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible."

²⁸ Then Peter began to say to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You."

²⁹ So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, ³⁰ who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life. ³¹ But many *who are* first will be last, and the last first."

1. Last time we looked at Conscience, Commandments, Cross

I. Riches

II. Rewards

I. Riches

1. Our text is on the heels of the rich young ruler
2. When speaking with the young man, the Bible says:
 - a. Jesus loved him**
 - b. There is an unconditional love that God has for His creation
 - c. Despite the condition of anyone's heart, God's love is constant
 - i. One thing that true love does is it speaks truth
3. "How hard it will be for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God"
4. Some of us may be thinking, well, I don't have much so I think I'm ok

5. Dear Lord, I have been re-reading the record of the Rich Young Ruler and his obviously wrong choice. But it has set me thinking. No matter how much wealth he had, he could not-- ride in a car, have any surgery, turn on a light, buy penicillin, hear a pipe organ, watch TV, wash dishes in running water, type a letter, mow a lawn, fly in an airplane, sleep on an innerspring mattress, or talk on the phone, If he was rich, then what am I? (P. Brand)
6. We have much more today than we realize
 - a. More than much of the world
7. This applies to all of us
8. Jesus' words were a shock to the disciples because it was thought that the rich were under God's blessing
 - a. Jewish culture believed that you were blessed by God and the evidence was health & wealth
 - b. **Deut 28:11** The Lord will grant you abundant prosperity—in the fruit of your womb, the young of your livestock and the crops of your ground—in the land he swore to your ancestors to give you.
12 The Lord will open the heavens, the storehouse of his bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands. You will lend to many nations but will borrow from none. The Lord will make you the head, not the tail

- i. In the O.T, God's blessings were visual
 - c. They also had examples of godly men who were blessed
 - i. Abraham, David, Job and Solomon
- 9. [It was also strange because] The rabbis said that with alms one purchases his redemption.... One writing taken from Tobit says this,
 - a. "It is good to do alms rather than to treasure up gold, for alms deliver from death and this will purge away every sin."... If you want your sins washed away, give money...
 - b. "Alms will atone for sin."...
 - c. "Alms giving is more excellent than all offerings and is equal to the whole Law," in other words,
 - i. if you give alms, you have virtually kept the whole Law, and further, will deliver from the condemnation of hell and make one perfectly righteous. (MacArthur)
 - d. This thought has carried through to our modern day prosperity gospel
 - i. Which is built on
 - 1. If you are wealthy and healthy, you're blessed by God
 - 2. If you are sick / poor, you need stronger faith or perhaps you have sin...

- e. It creeps into our thinking when we say
 - i. They're blessed of the Lord
 - ii. They must be going through a discipline...
10. Having money or not having money is no indication of your spiritual state
- a. Paul declares, I've learned how to be abased and how to abound
 - b. Paul also suffered physical afflictions... along with his companions
11. Children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God
12. The issue is more than having money, it's placing your trust in money
- 13. What is Jesus teaching here?**
- i. Trusting in riches is a big deception**
 - a. Deceived that we did it on our own / pride**
 - i. **Deut 8:11** Be careful that you do not forget the Lord your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day. 12 Otherwise, when you

eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, 13 and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, 14 then your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. ... 17 You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth

ii. **John Wesley** Riches, in turn, "naturally beget pride, love of the world, and every temper that is destructive of Christianity."

iii. **Illustration**

a. The poor man who became a wealthy business man

iv. God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble

b. Deceived into thinking we're self sufficient

- i. One may not realize that his money may cause him to depend on it and forget about God
- ii. Feeling that his money can bring him out of most situations, no real need for God

iii. Without God, all of us are poor

iv. Entering heaven is for the poor in spirit

- 1. Matt 5 say's blessed are the poor in spirit...
 - 2. Entrance into the kingdom meant an awareness of your poverty
- v. The wealthy typically don't believe they have a need,
 - vi. They typically have a self sustaining attitude
 - 1. they're deceived
 - vii. **Luke 12:16** "The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. 17 He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.' 18 "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus

grain. 19 And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry." 20 "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?' 21 "This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God."

viii. **Prov 18:11** The wealth of the rich is their fortified city; they imagine it a wall too high to scale.

ix. He thought he had no need, he was deceived

c. **Riches expose you to harmful temptations**

a. **1 Tim 6: 9,10** Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

- b. This wealth or desire for wealth opens the door for all kinds of trouble under the names of
 - i. Entertainment
 - ii. Socializing
 - iii. Business deals
 - 1. Because now you may be compromising your faith to fit into the crowd
- 1. Riches usually bring pride, self sufficiency, harmful temptations
 - a. It is impossible to enter into heaven with this condition
- 2. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God
- 3. He's giving them a visual using an everyday example
 - i. He's picturing the impossible
 - ii. Camels were the largest animals in Palestine
 - 1. Now every time they saw a camel, they would remember this statement
 - a. It is impossible

14. Some of us may be saying that wealth doesn't apply to me
15. "the poorest Americans living in the United States are financially better off than people living in Brazil, China and India. Overall, US citizens who account for the lowest 5% of income in the nation are richer than just under 70% of the remaining citizens of the world"
(**Book:** haves and have nots)
16. The idea here is where a person places their trust
17. Those who don't have are also under this category
 - a. Just look at the lines during large lotto drawings
 - i. Having money and desiring to have it = same condition
 1. It's where people place their trust
18. This is not just about the wealthy
 - a. Having money is not the issue
19. It's about putting your faith and trust in God

20. **Psalm 20:7** Some *trust* in chariots, and some in horses;
But we will remember the name of the Lord our God.
21. **Prov 23:5** In the blink of an eye, money can disappear,
as if it grew wings and flew away like a bird
22. Who then can be saved?
23. With men, it is impossible, but with God, all things are possible
24. Salvation is all about God and there is nothing that a man can do on his own to be saved
25. If we understand the truth about our faith, even our ability to believe is a gift from God
- a. God drew us to Himself
 - b. Our desire to connect with God is a gift from Him
 - c. Our longing for righteous living is His gift to us
 - i. We're helpless without Him
 - d. As a child cannot be born without an earthly father, so a sinner cannot be reborn without a heavenly work of the Spirit of God

26. God touches our hearts and offers us the gift of salvation

- a. It's up to us to receive or reject it
- b. The rich young ruler rejected Christ for the temporary
- c. Zaccheus chose to believe and follow Jesus
 - i. May we offer everything to God and say, all I have is Yours.

27. Peter: We have left all and followed you

II. Rewards

1. What happens to those who chose to follow you Jesus?
 - a. Deny themselves
 - b. Take up their Cross
 - c. Follow You?
2. No one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the gospel's sake, ³⁰ but that he will receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and

brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms,
along with persecutions; and in the age to come, eternal
life

3. Jesus is saying that the reward for those who follow Christ
is 2 fold

**a. 1st, you will have people in your life that open
their homes to you**

- i. You'll have rich relationships that will be
rewarding and fulfilling in your life
- ii. You'll have homes to sleep in and kitchens to
eat in
- iii. You'll also have persecution
 - 1. This is part of the process
 - a. All those who live godly will suffer
persecution
 - b. All believers will have people mock
them for their faith
 - i. Or treat them with contempt

b. 2nd, you will have eternal life

- i. Your eternal soul will be in glory forever
 - 1. Where there is no more sickness, disease,
tears or death
 - a. Everlasting joy with God

4. **But many *who are* first will be last, and the last, first."**
 - a. Those who trusted in riches will probably not make it to heaven
 - b. Those who were counted as nothing here who placed their faith in Christ will be rewarded by Jesus
5. So what can we learn from this?
6. Money can buy a lot of things, but there are some things it cannot buy.
 - a. Money can buy a bed, but not sleep.
 - b. Money can buy you food, but not an appetite.
 - c. Money can buy a house, but not a home.
 - d. Money can buy medicine, but not health.
 - e. Money can buy amusement, but not happiness.
 - f. Money can buy a crucifix, but not a Savior. (Carr)
7. What is your attitude towards money?
 - a. Weather rich or poor, is it what consumes your thoughts?
 - i. Put your trust in God

8. Have you put you full faith in Jesus?

- a. He offers us what He told the rich young ruler
 - i. Go sell everything and follow me
 - 1. Are you following Him?