

Resurrection Life of Jesus Church

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

RLJ-1950

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PART 51: THE EYE OF THE NEEDLE

RICH YOUNG RULER

A young rich man came to Jesus one day and asked what was necessary for eternal life. **Matthew 19:16; Mark 10:17; Luke 18:18**

It is interesting to note that Jesus did not provide the same response given to Nicodemus. **John 3:1-7**

The God-man's answer was not meant to set forth doctrine concerning salvation, but tailored to this man as an individual.

Jesus started out by addressing the man's claim that He was good. The God-man quickly refuted that line of reasoning and pointed to God as the only source of good. Even though Jesus was God-incarnate, He pointed humanity to God the Father.

Matthew 19:17; Mark 10:18; Luke 18:19

Jesus did not promote a new doctrine on salvation, but sought to deal with the man's personal issues:

1. He was a ruler.
2. He was very rich.

Jesus' response began with the importance of keeping the Ten Commandments.

Matthew 19:18-19; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20

The man responded that he had done so from his youth. **Matthew 19:20; Mark 10:20; Luke 18:21**

Jesus listened to the man and loved him. Since Jesus could read the minds, He knew the man was sincere in his love for God and desired to be obedient.

But Jesus could also see that riches were a stumbling block to him. The Son of God did not want him unless he was willing to give 100%. This is why he associated salvation with earthly treasure and giving it all away. Only a liquidation of his riches would free him to follow Jesus. **Matthew 19:21; Mark 10:21; Luke 18:22**

The young ruler was grieved because he wasn't willing to give up his wealth to follow Jesus. He quietly walked away and Jesus did not make another offer. **Matthew 19:22; Mark 10:22; Luke 18:23**

The God-man said it is difficult for rich people to enter into the Kingdom of God. Why? Presumably because they trust in their riches and do not need a Savior. **Matthew 19:23; Mark 10:23; Luke 18:24**

Once the church was established after the day of Pentecost, there were few rich people who wanted to follow Jesus. **1 Corinthians 1:26-31**



EYE OF THE NEEDLE

All large cities were enclosed by walls some 2,000 years ago and so were major villages. Jerusalem had eleven gates whereas smaller cities only had a single gate. They were closed in the evening and opened at dawn. In order to facilitate the people arriving after the gates were closed, there was a much smaller gate. It was large enough for a man and even a camel to pass through, but only if the animal knelt on its knees. There were always guards on site if enemy soldiers tried a sneak attack and they could easily be killed as they entered the eye of the needle one by one.

It was not easy for a camel driver to make his camel kneel and crawl through the opening. Having this in mind, Jesus stated it was more difficult for a rich man to be saved and enter the kingdom of God than for a camel to pass through the opening of the small gate known as the “eye of the needle.” **Matthew 19:24; Mark 10:25; Luke 18:24-25**

When the disciples heard how difficult it was for rich people to enter heaven, they asked who could be saved? **Matthew 19:25; Mark 10:26; Luke 18:27**

Jesus responded by saying that all things are possible with God. **Matthew 19:26; Mark 10:27; Luke 18:27**

HEAVENLY EXPECTATIONS

Peter was a practicable man and he wanted to know what awaited the apostles after leaving everything behind to follow Jesus. **Matthew 19:27; Mark 10:28; Luke 18:28**

Jesus said there would be dividends on earth and the great rewards in eternity would more than make up for the things given up on earth. **Matthew 19:28-29; Mark 10:29-30; Luke 18:29-30**

A WARNING

Some Christians think too highly of themselves. They don't have the correct attitude – one of a servant – and will be in for a big surprise upon reaching heaven. We need to have the right motive or we will be in for a nasty surprise when we're judged by Jesus. The way of love is superior to riches, fame, and power. **Matthew 19:30; Mark 10:31**

Most people don't want to hear the Gospel, and when people have been saved, they are constantly tempted by the Devil, and it is difficult to work out the salvation provided by Jesus. A lot of Christians spend more time building their own kingdoms than working on the kingdom of God. It is a beautiful thing to be blessed by our Creator – now and later in eternity! **Philippians 2:12-15**

Remember, it's not so important how you begin your life after salvation, but how you finish it!

Do you have an ear to hear with?