

Mark 10:17-45

Rich Young Ruler

17 As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. “Good teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

- Matthew identifies the man who approached Jesus as young (19:20), and Luke calls him a ruler (18:18); hence the common name of this story is “the rich young ruler.”
- A wealthy man in the first century could generally find the best or most popular teacher for himself.

18 “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone.

- The Jews would not use the word “good” in addressing a rabbi,
- Jesus had every right to ask the man why he used it. Did he really believe that Jesus was God? If so, would he obey what Jesus said?
- Think calmly about what you are doing.’ Jesus was not cold-shouldering the man. He was telling him even at the very outset to count the cost.

19 You know the commandments: ‘You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honor your father and mother.’<sup>20</sup> “Teacher,” he declared, “all these I have kept since I was a boy.”

- Since I was a boy, This probably refers to the age of 13, when every Jewish boy became a “son of the commandment.” At that point in a Jewish boy’s life he became responsible to live by God’s commands.

21 Jesus looked at him and loved him. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

- The word for “looked at” “to examine.
- He sees inside him and “loved him.

22 At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.

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Jesus does not teach or uphold poverty as an ideal, but he does regard the awareness of a need that results from poverty as a blessing.

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23 Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!” 24 The disciples were amazed at his

words. But Jesus said again, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God!

- Like many Jews, the disciples thought that wealth was proof of God’s blessing,

Jesus saw how wealth could hinder one from putting his trust and dependence in God.

- The More Money you have, the More of the world you control.

WE ALL WANT CONTROL !!!

25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”

- Those who think Jesus refers here to a gate in Jerusalem called the “eye of a needle” are mistaken, because there is no evidence for this legendary gate until the ninth-century a.d.

Mark 10:13-15

13People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. 14When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. 15Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.”

The children in the former story who possess nothing are not told that they lack anything, but rather that the kingdom of God is theirs; yet this man who possesses everything still lacks something.

- Anything that causes disciples to forget their poverty and childlikeness before God prevents them from following Jesus Christ

26 The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, “Who then can be saved?” 27 Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.”

- Jesus looks at them as he did at the rich man
- Now Jesus points to the solution. His answer makes clear that salvation is totally the work of God.

28Then Peter spoke up, “We have left everything to follow you!”

- Most of Jesus' disciples had not been poor (being fishermen and tax gatherers) but had abandoned their economic position to follow him.

### The Request of James and John

35 Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. "Teacher," they said, "we want you to do for us whatever we ask."

- The disciples may have viewed Jesus' final journey to Jerusalem as a royal procession
- The disciples believed Jesus to be the Messiah; and since it was now clear that he was going up to Jerusalem, they expected his messianic glory to be revealed there.

### James & John

- Jesus' twelve disciples were probably young, almost all under the age of eighteen and some as young as 15.
- There is no indicator in Scripture of a specific age for any disciple. So we look through the lens of historical context as well as clues derived from Scripture.
- In the time of Jesus, a Jewish man received a wife after the age of 18. *Peter was the only one known to have been married.*
- Education for the Jewish child concluded at the age of 15.
- If they didn't find a rabbi that accepted them as a student then they entered the workforce by their mid-teens. In most cases, they apprenticed under their fathers (like James and John)
- In the Gospel of Matthew, it was their mom making the request for them
- Only Peter Is Known to Have been Paid the Temple Tax
- *Jewish law states that every male over the age of 20 is to pay a half-shekel as a census offering when they visit the temple of God.*
- In Matthew 17:24-27, Jesus instructs Peter to "fish up" this tax. And in the mouth of the fish he catches; enough to pay the tax for two men, himself and Jesus.

36 "What do you want me to do for you?" he asked. 37 They replied, "Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory."

- In Jewish custom the place of highest honor was at the center followed by the right and left hands, respectively.

The brothers hope to honor Jesus while honoring themselves.

- They envision an earthly kingdom established and run according to human norms.
- They foresee themselves as the elite of the elite, ruling over others in an earthly empire.
- What they really expect is a kingdom for themselves, where they can impose their own will on others.
- They hope to replace the self-serving oppressive power structure of the Romans with their own self-serving oppressive power structure.

They were young, but if Jesus grants this request then they big RICH, YOUNG RULERS!!!!!!!!!!!!

38 “You don’t know what you are asking,” Jesus said. “Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?”<sup>39</sup>“We can,” they answered. Jesus said to them, “You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with,

- James would be the first of the Twelve to be martyred (Acts 12:2), and John would experience Roman persecution at the end of his long life.

40 but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared.”

- But Jesus may be alluding instead to those crucified on his right and his left

41 When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John.

- Mark’s source for this narrative is most probably Peter, who had reason to remember and relay this story.

Blind Bartimaeus Receives His Sight

46 Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (which means “son of Timaeus”), was sitting by the roadside begging.

The blind, the lame and others who could not engage in the traditional occupations of the day could support themselves only by begging,

- Normally on a busy roadside.
- Jericho was a prosperous town with a good climate.

47 When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” 48 Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”

The main road ran right through Jericho.

- Jesus was on his way to the Passover.
- When a distinguished Rabbi or teacher was on such a journey it was the custom that he was surrounded by a crowd of people, disciples and learners, who listened to him as he discoursed while he walked.
- It was the law that every male Jew over twelve years of age who lived within fifteen miles of Jerusalem must attend the Passover.
- Those who were unable to go were in the habit of lining the streets of towns and villages through which groups of Passover pilgrims must pass to bid them godspeed on their way. So then the streets of Jericho would be lined with people.

49 Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.” So they called to the blind man, “Cheer up! On your feet! He’s calling you.

50 Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus.

Illustration-

The cloak would have been placed before him to collect alms by day and would have been his source of warmth by night.

- The little bit of control he had in his life he throws to the side to follow Jesus.

51 “What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked him. The blind man said, “Rabbi, I want to see.”

- ‘What do you want me to do for you?’ ” asks Jesus. This is the same question he asked James & John.

The kingdom of heaven, it has been said, is not for the well-meaning but for the desperate. Bartimaeus is desperate

52 “Go,” said Jesus, “your faith has healed you.” Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.

- ‘Go, your faith has healed you.’ ” The word for “healed” also means “saved,” combining both physical and spiritual dimensions.
- In Bartimaeus’s case the word is doubly appropriate, for “he received his sight” and “followed Jesus along the road.”

1. His persistence- Nothing would stop him from coming face to face with Jesus. It was a desperate desire, and it is that desperate desire that gets things done.
2. His response was immediate. He knew precisely what he wanted—his sight.