

## Lesson 13 – The Rich Young Ruler

Text: Matthew 19:16-20:34; Mark 10:17-52; Luke 18:18-43

Main Characters: God, Jesus, the rich, young ruler, Bartimaeus

### Key Passages:

- Mark 10:21 – The rich, young ruler only lacked one thing; he needed to sell all of his possessions.
- Mark 10:27 – With God, all things are possible.
- Mark 10:43-45 – To be great, one must become a servant as Jesus did.

### Main Storyline:

As Jesus was traveling, a rich, young ruler ran up to him and knelt in front of him. The man asked Jesus, “Good teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?” Jesus told him that he should keep the commandments. The man asked Jesus to clarify his statement; which commandments was Jesus talking about? Jesus cited numerous fundamental commandments from the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20). The man told Jesus that he had kept those commandments from his youth. Jesus told the man that he lacked one thing; if he wanted to be perfect, he would need to sell all that he had, give it to the poor, and follow Jesus. The man was very upset when he heard Jesus’ words, because he had so much. He turned and left Jesus.

Jesus looked around at his disciples and commented, “How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!” The disciples were astonished when they heard Jesus. Jesus went on to say, “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.” They were even more astonished and wondered who then could be saved. Jesus said, “With men, it is impossible, but not with God; with God, all things are possible.”

Peter, having obviously considered what had just occurred and what Jesus had said, said, “See, we have left all and followed you. Therefore, what shall we have?” Jesus told him that those who had followed him would sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. In addition, everyone who had left their house, or lands, or family for his sake and for the sake of the gospel would receive a hundred times more in this time (with persecutions) and, in the world to come, eternal life. Jesus said, “But many who are first will be last, and the last first.” Jesus then told a parable about a landowner hiring servants at different times of the day, but giving them all the same wage. Through the parable, Jesus reinforced his answer to Peter’s question: regardless of what any person must give up, God has the right to reward as he wishes (with eternal life).

As Jesus and the disciples were on the road to Jerusalem, the disciples became afraid. Jesus took the twelve apostles aside and explained to them what was about to happen to him. Jesus told them that he would be betrayed to the chief priests and scribes in Jerusalem. They would condemn him to death and give him to the Gentiles who would mock him, scourge him, spit on him, and ultimately crucify him. On the third day, Jesus told them that he would rise again. Despite this clear instruction, by the actions they eventually took, it seems that the apostles still did not understand what was going to happen to Jesus.

The mother of James and John later came to Jesus and asked that her two sons sit on his left and right sides in his kingdom. Jesus remarked that they did not know what they were asking. When the other apostles heard, they were very upset with James and John. Jesus called all of the apostles together and taught them about what would be required to be great: he must be a servant, just as Jesus did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.

As they were travelling near Jericho, a blind man named Bartimaeus cried out for Jesus to have mercy on him. Despite the disciples attempt to quiet him down, Bartimaeus cried out even more. Finally, Jesus called the man to him and asked what he wanted. Bartimaeus asked to be able to see, and Jesus healed him.

### Lessons/Applications:

- 1.) Being “mostly” good is not good enough by Jesus’ standards; we must be willing to give up everything.
- 2.) While there are many distractions to getting to heaven, focus on wealth is one of the tallest obstacles.
- 3.) In order to be considered great by God, one must be willing live his life as a servant to others.