

## The Parables

May 1, 2016

### "Wealth, Camels, and Needles"

Highlight:

- [Dan Johnson – share re: Immigrant Family](#)
- [United for Tucson](#) – TCC Thursday night! See bulletin, and come pray!!

**Mar 10:17** And as he was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

**Mar 10:18** And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.

**Mar 10:19** You know the commandments: 'Do not murder, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and mother.'"

**Mar 10:20** And he said to him, "Teacher, all these I have kept from my youth."

**Mar 10:21** And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me."

**Mar 10:22** Disheartened by the saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

**Mar 10:23** And Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How difficult it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!"

**Mar 10:24** And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said to them again, "Children, how difficult it is to enter the kingdom of God!

**Mar 10:25** *It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.*" (this is the parable)

**Mar 10:26** And they were exceedingly astonished, and said to him, "Then who can be saved?"

**Mar 10:27** Jesus looked at them and said, "With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God."

First things first:

- I'm going to ask you to give a me ONE-word answer to my fill-in-the-blank statement.
  - Everybody stand up.
  - Do not just blurt out your answer when I ask the question.
  - Think on it, and then I'm going to call on you, one-by-one to give your one-word answer.
  - When you hear the same answer you thought of, sit down.
  - Here's the fill-in-the-blank statement (and NO BLURTING IT OUT!):
    - **This parable is about \_\_\_\_\_.**
      - (get answers... have someone write them on an easel?)

### Setting the scene...

- Jesus is ministering between Galilee and Samaria, north of Jerusalem.
  - He's healing, teaching about the Kingdom of God, prayer, trusting in oneself for righteousness, the high value of children, etc.
  - And he's about to leave – putting on his traveling sandals...
- A young man of great wealth has perhaps been watching all this from afar.
- He RUNS and KNEELS before Jesus, just as Jesus is leaving.

- One gets the impression he'd be contemplating asking this question earlier, but was too chicken... and now Jesus is leaving, and he throws off all cordiality and runs and kneels, stopping Jesus from going.
- He asks the greatest, most significant question all human beings can ask: **What must I do to inherit eternal life?**
  - It's the same question in Matthew and Luke – with the exception of “what good DEED” in Luke
- *(Now, within the question, he calls Jesus “Good Teacher,” and Jesus responds with “why do you call me good?” – this is a great study, FOR ANOTHER TIME. ☺)*
- So we're just going to stick with the question about salvation.
  - Now, a fascinating subject not talked or studied enough is that **Most of Christ's teachings are PRE-CROSS.**
    - The New Covenant was yet to be established, and wouldn't be UNTIL the finished work of the cross, the resurrection, ascension, and Pentecost.
    - Perhaps nowhere else in scripture is this more evident than right here – in BOTH answers Jesus gives:
      - Be a good person: Obey the 10 commandments.
      - Not, “believe in me, and that'll do it.”
      - Not simply, “Follow me.”
    - If someone asked you this same question today, you'd be RIGHT ON if you said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you'll be saved.”
      - You'd be DEAD wrong if you said, “Do right things and be nice to people.”
    - But hear this: THIS was the answer in the Old Covenant – in which this conversation took place.
      - If you wished to please God and spend eternity with Him, then the HOLINESS of God must be reflected in you.
        - This, of course, is impossible.
        - Once you slip up, you're defile, unholy – impure, unfit for the presence of Holy God.
        - UNLESS, of course, God Himself cleanses you.
        - And throughout the OT, the grace and mercy of God's cleansing and forgiveness are highlighted as a precursor to the Cross.
      - But the keeping of the LAW was the covenant God made with His people to be their God.
      - So the answer – at the time of this exchange with Jesus and the young rich man – was “obey God's commands.”
- The young man says, “I've got that covered – been doing that since I could walk. What else?”
  - Now, does anyone think Jesus believed him?
  - But here is the first detail of Mark – v21, **“Jesus looked at him, and loved him...”**
    - Not, “chuckled under his breath...” or “said, ‘Really???’”
    - He LOVED him.
  - What I believe is happening here is **Jesus gets to the heart of the matter.**
    - Paraphrase: **“You obviously have great wealth. And you greatly trust in it. Eternal life is offered to those who trust in God. So rid yourself of**

*what is trapping you, let your security now lie in the hands of God with treasures in heaven, and come, follow me.”*

- In both the Old Covenant, and the NEW, God desires ONE thing from man:
  - **TRUST.**
  - TRUST is *my* one-word answer to what this parable is about.
  - Life is an eternal series of **“trust falls” with God.**
    - Jer\_39:18 For I will surely save you, and you shall not fall by the sword, but you shall have your life as a prize of war, because you have put your trust in me, declares the LORD.”
      - **(next)** “Trust in the Lord” (or God, or “me” when God is speaking = 70+ times!)
      - **(next)** In the NT, “trust” and “faith” and “believe” (several hundred times!) all come from the same root word in the Greek:
        - **Peitho = to be convinced, to rely, agree, assure, believe, obey, be persuaded, trust, yield.**

Now, some of you had the one-word answer, “This parable is about ‘money’”.

- Before I began taking extensive notes to preach on this passage, my one-word answer would have been MONEY.
  - But digging deeper, TRUST – regarding not only money, but everything – is the lesson.
- But since money is the object used to teach on TRUST, it is time appropriately spent if we address...
  - **The one issue regarding money** (whether you’re rich, poor, or in between) **that seems the hardest to trust God with: TITHING.**
- Last week in our Annual Celebration, we got a little behind. LOTS TO SHARE!
  - Many ministries – exciting stuff!
  - In the midst of all of the reports, we also had planned to have Stuart share a brief teaching on the Biblical principle of tithing.
  - But we had to choose between cutting people off (so we didn’t!).
  - Because we are growing YOUNG, and because many new believers have not been taught this principle, we felt it appropriate.
  - Well, as God would have it, today’s parable is quite appropriate as well!
    - And again, **The one issue regarding money that seems the hardest to trust God with: TITHING.**
    - So I’m going to yield to Stuart to share what God laid on his heart last week...

**Stuart share...** (and I will return to wrap things up)

Continuing on with placing ourselves inside the passage...

- **“The young man went away sorrowful, because he had great wealth...” (v22)**
  - Some assume this man stayed away, disobeyed, and therefore likely found himself in Hell for eternity.
  - “That rich young ruler... he was a bad guy.”
  - I’d just suggest that we can’t know that for sure.
    - In fact, Luke doesn’t say “he went away,” only that he was very sad.
  - Who’s to say this man didn’t have a later change of heart?

- I love speculating about characters in the Bible.
  - I must – when doing so – be careful not to believe my speculation as absolute truth.
  - Now, Mark (the scribe for Peter) is – ironically (because it’s the shortest) – the most detailed HERE.
    - But from all three gospels, we know this man is young, rich, a “ruler,” and likely a Pharisee.
  - PERHAPS the detail is due to the impact this exchange had on Peter and the disciples LATER.
  - *It is quite plausible that he DID eventually obey Jesus, and that Peter and the disciples ministered with him later.*
    - And if so, perhaps he took that incredibly influence and put it to good use???
      - That said, this guy could have been Barnabas, for all we know. (sold his properties)
      - Or Matthias. Or Theophilus. Or.... PAUL?
      - Ask me some other time – I’d love to playfully speculate without getting into any theological trouble. ☺
  - **Why do I mention this man’s possible future plight? – why is it important?**
    - **How many of you would go away “joyful,” anxious to sell all you had?**
    - How many would instead go away perplexed, if not a little sorrowful, thinking hard on what Jesus just commanded you?
    - More often than not, people take a little time to let the conviction of the Holy Spirit sink in.
    - Repentance and genuine change CAN – for some – take time.
    - And I think when it comes to money, our fists may eventually open... our treating money as though it truly doesn’t belong to us... takes time.
    - We might think a radical change in worldview *impossible*, but with God as your King, nothing is impossible with Him!

Again, **This parable is about... TRUST.**

**Last question: How will you walk away today?**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ You’ve been greatly challenged regarding TRUST.</li> <li>○ Will your response be...           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sorrow?</li> <li>○ Joyful?</li> <li>○ Rebellious?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In anticipation of the great adventure?</li> <li>○ Challenged?</li> <li>○ A trust fall?</li> <li>○ Will you take the plunge and trust God with money?</li> </ul> |
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Pray