

Thursday, March 30, 2023  
Season of Lent  
Day 32

### **Matthew 19:16–30**

<sup>16</sup> Just then a man came up to Jesus and asked, “Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?”

<sup>17</sup> “Why do you ask me about what is good?” Jesus replied. “There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, keep the commandments.”

<sup>18</sup> “Which ones?” he inquired.

Jesus replied, “‘You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, <sup>19</sup> honour your father and mother,’ and ‘love your neighbour as yourself.’”

<sup>20</sup> “All these I have kept,” the young man said. “What do I still lack?”

<sup>21</sup> Jesus answered, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

<sup>22</sup> When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.

<sup>23</sup> Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Truly I tell you, it is hard for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. <sup>24</sup> Again I tell you, 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.”

<sup>25</sup> When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished and asked, “Who then can be saved?”

<sup>26</sup> Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

<sup>27</sup> Peter answered him, “We have left everything to follow you! What then will there be for us?”

<sup>28</sup> Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. <sup>29</sup> And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life. <sup>30</sup> But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first.

### **Reflection**

Our understanding of this passage must revolve around the disciples’ astonishment. Why should they be astonished when they hear that it is almost impossible for the rich to enter the kingdom? With their question of “then, who can be saved?,” they betray their assumption that riches show God’s blessing. It doesn’t. On the other hand, there is not anything particularly holy about being poor—it’s just easier to grasp things with empty hands.

What is the mark of God’s blessing? Obedience. To do the will of God; not as a handful of actions to be taken as occasion warrants but as the totality of our lives. To follow Jesus in the life of the kingdom is to keep the Law in its entirety. How is it possible to live this sort of life? With God. And, those who do, and those who release the trappings of the world find that they, in fact, lose nothing; not in this life or in the age to come. They gain life.

It is tempting for us to ask similar questions as the questioner: what is the minimum I have to do to be saved? How much of my present life can I keep without losing my salvation? Our questions betray that we too need to be perfected by losing all that holds us back from Jesus and his life. Of course the problem isn’t with the questions, it’s in our rejection of the answer. Thank God, he makes possible the impossible.

### **Prayer**

Lord, help us to pursue you, Jesus. Fan into flame the embers of our desire to enjoy your life. Release us from the grip of wealth so that we can enjoy the poverty of obedience. Amen.