



Session 3: What Is Required?
Suggested Week of Use: March 19
Core Passage: Matthew 19:16-26

News Story Summary

According to a new study by Merrill Lynch and Age Wave, approximately one third of American adults have zero saved for retirement. Another twenty-three percent had less than \$10,000. Most of the respondents say they do not aspire to be wealthy in retirement, but they hope to be secure. (The survey included 5,000 who are 25 and older.)

Those surveyed felt their three biggest concerns about retirement are: that they might face an expensive health issue; inflation will cause their “nest egg” to be less viable; and they will not have enough to do the things they want to do.

Cyndi Hutchins, director of financial gerontology for Bank of America Merrill Lynch stated that Americans struggle with balancing what is important now with the future. They want to save for the future, but they are also aware of more pressing needs.

(For more on this story, search the Internet using the phrase “3 big concerns about retirement”.)

Focus Attention

To supplement the focus attention idea share the news story and ask: *Do you think the same statistics would be true when it comes to being prepared for eternity? Are people as concerned with eternity as they are with a secure retirement? Explain.*

The young man who approached Jesus in our passage today had “many possessions.” Although he was relatively secure, he did not understand where his future security lay. Explain that he appeared sincere in asking about eternal life but did not realize that earthly security accumulated through investment, or earned by good behavior, cannot compare to the *gift* of eternal security.

Challenge

To supplement the Summarize and Challenge ideas, remind the group of the news summary and ask: *How important is retirement planning? How important is eternal retirement? How can we communicate to others the importance of investing in eternity?*

Lead the group to prioritize their own thinking in the coming week: to see that we should “Seek first the kingdom of Heaven and His righteousness,” and realize that God alone can impart righteousness. Suggest that they also seek to share insights from this lesson with friends who are only thinking about earthly investments and not eternity.