

08/23/26

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MATTHEW

Chapter 19:13-30

RICH MAN - RICHER MAN

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. In our study of **Matthew – chapter 19**, Jesus has just clarified and restated God's original intention for marriage.
1. The Pharisees tried to put Him in a “double bind” by asking him if it was lawful for a man to divorce his wife “for any reason at all.”
 - a) As I explained last week there were two “camps” at the time with one believing that the answer was “Yes” – that a man could divorce his wife for any reason that displeased him.
 - b) And the other “camp” believed that the only reason for divorce, was infidelity = adultery.
 - (1) We know that the Pharisees were “testing” Jesus because the scriptures tell us so (**19:3**). You see they knew that no matter how Jesus answered, at least ½ of the people would be upset with His answer.
 2. As you might imagine, Jesus is not much of a “player” and does not care much for being “politically correct” – so He tells the truth!
 - a) I know this may sound funny – but what a novel approach to life – telling the truth.
 - (1) Can you image what life would be like if everyone told the truth?
 - b) Jesus told them **Matthew 19:4–6 (NKJV) — 4 And He answered and said to them, “Have you not read that He who made *them* at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’ 5 and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? 6 So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.”**
 - (1) That was the response the Pharisees were looking for because they countered with:
 - (a) **Matthew 19:7 (NKJV) — 7 They said to Him, “Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?”**
 - (b) Surely a true prophet of God – or one who claims to be the Son of God would not contradict the great Moses, who every good “Law” abiding Jew revered (or at least pretended to).
 - c) Jesus goes on to tell them that Moses only “allowed” divorce because of the hardness of their hearts, but it was not God’s original intention!
- B. And now we will look at how difficult it is for the rich to keep their eyes on the Lord.
1. But first a brief look at children, and how interesting that this comes right after the clarification about divorce.
 - a) Without a doubt – it is ALWAYS the children that suffer most in divorce!

II. **MATTHEW 19:13–15 (NKJV) — 13** THEN LITTLE CHILDREN WERE BROUGHT TO HIM THAT HE MIGHT PUT *HIS* HANDS ON THEM AND PRAY, BUT THE DISCIPLES REBUKED THEM. **14** BUT JESUS SAID, “**LET THE LITTLE CHILDREN COME TO ME, AND DO NOT FORBID THEM; FOR OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.**” **15** AND HE LAID *HIS* HANDS ON THEM AND DEPARTED FROM THERE.

A. I want to give you 2 other places where this is mentioned and I think you will see to a greater degree, the gentleness and kindness of Jesus:

1. **Mark 10:13–16 (NKJV) — 13** Then they brought little children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought *them*. **14** But when Jesus saw *it*, He was greatly displeased and said to them, “**Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. 15** Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.” **16** And He took them up in His arms, laid *His* hands on them, and blessed them.
2. **Luke 18:15–17 (NKJV) — 15** Then they also brought infants to Him that He might touch them; but when the disciples saw *it*, they rebuked them. **16** But Jesus called them to *Him* and said, “**Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. 17** Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.”

- a) So, here is Jesus - and parents who believe in Him are bringing their children, even their little babies and asking Jesus to touch them, to pray over them and bless them! What a tender moment that must have been!
 - (1) The disciples mean well I am sure, but I think they have made a mistake that is easy to make:
 - (a) And that is forgetting that people **ARE** the ministry - even little people!
 - (b) We can get so busy running here and there – meeting schedules and making the “machine” run – that we don’t have time for people!
 - (i) I love these stories about Jesus, because it shows us His “human” side. Keep in mind that He knew he only had a short time to live and therefore a short time to get everything accomplished, but He stopped to enjoy these young children, and to bless them!
 - (ii) And it gave him a wonderful opportunity to express to those he had just instructed about marriage and divorce – just how important the children are!

B. And lastly, in this chapter, the story of the rich young ruler.

III. **MATTHEW 19:16–20 (NKJV) — 16** NOW BEHOLD, ONE CAME AND SAID TO HIM, “GOOD TEACHER, WHAT GOOD THING SHALL I DO THAT I MAY HAVE ETERNAL LIFE?” **17** SO HE SAID TO HIM, “**WHY DO YOU CALL ME GOOD? NO ONE IS GOOD BUT ONE, THAT IS, GOD. BUT IF YOU WANT TO ENTER INTO LIFE, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS.**” **18** HE SAID TO HIM, “WHICH ONES?” JESUS SAID, “**‘YOU SHALL**

NOT MURDER,’ ‘YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY,’ ‘YOU SHALL NOT STEAL,’ ‘YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS,’ 19 ‘HONOR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER,’ AND, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’ ” 20 THE YOUNG MAN SAID TO HIM, “ALL THESE THINGS I HAVE KEPT FROM MY YOUTH. WHAT DO I STILL LACK?”

A. **Mark 10** tells us that this man came running up and kneeled before Him and called him “Good Teacher” and that is when Jesus seized the opportunity to proclaim He is God by pointing out that there is only One who is Good, and that of course is the Lord!

1. Please notice that this young man has “religiously” kept all the commandments, but he is **“still lacking!”** He is still empty inside and Jesus knows what he needs:
 - a) **(Jon Courson)** *According to an article in a newsmagazine, in the '80s people made a living. In the '90s, they were to make a life. No longer would young executives arrive at the office at six o'clock in the morning and be the last to leave at night. Long weekends, family time, and recreation would be the order of the day. In going from one extreme to another, however, our generation found emptiness once again. The only way to be fulfilled in life is through a relationship with God through Jesus Christ.¹*

IV. MATTHEW 19:21–22 (NKJV) — 21 JESUS SAID TO HIM, “IF YOU WANT TO BE PERFECT, GO, SELL WHAT YOU HAVE AND GIVE TO THE POOR, AND YOU WILL HAVE TREASURE IN HEAVEN; AND COME, FOLLOW ME.” 22 BUT WHEN THE YOUNG MAN HEARD THAT SAYING, HE WENT AWAY SORROWFUL, FOR HE HAD GREAT POSSESSIONS.

A. This man is often referred to as “The Rich Young Ruler”.

1. He was rich, young, and had risen in the ranks of his profession.
2. He had achieved what most people only dream of.
 - a) And he was still “empty”, and Jesus knew that.

B. The “Law” had his obedience, but God did not have his heart – the world did!

1. Remember, Jesus was not much for being a “player” to the crowd?
 - a) He always looked at the heart and he knew what each person needed.
 - b) Jesus didn’t care that this young man was rich – he cared for his soul, and He knew that this young man’s money was his god.
 - (1) Jesus’ solution – get rid of it all and follow me! “Give up your false god and give your heart to the One True God!”
 - (a) The young man couldn’t do it.

V. MATTHEW 19:23–24 (NKJV) — 23 THEN JESUS SAID TO HIS DISCIPLES, “ASSUREDLY, I SAY TO YOU THAT IT IS HARD FOR A RICH MAN TO ENTER THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. 24 AND AGAIN I SAY TO YOU, 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.”

¹ Courson, J. (2003) [*Jon Courson’s Application Commentary*](#). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, p. 150.

- A. The camel and the eye of the needle was a very common saying at the time and it was simply used for something that was impossible or absurd.
1. There are ancient stories that said there was a gate in Jerusalem that a camel could only get through if it was unloaded - AND - it could only get through if it was on its knees. (https://biblehub.com/topical/t/the_eye_of_a_needle.htm)
 2. Jesus is using it here simply to express the difficulty of the rich keeping their eyes on the Lord.
 - a) In the parable of the seeds - **Mark 4:18–19 (NKJV) — 18 Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word, 19 and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.**
 - b) Oh, there will be many in heaven that were rich in this world, but they made extra effort in keeping it all straight, and using what they have for the glory of the Lord!
 - (1) And praise the Lord that there are folks whom He can bless with riches, and they bless His kingdom all the more!

VI. CONCLUSION

- A. **Matthew 19:25–30 (NKJV) — 25** When His disciples heard *it*, they were greatly astonished, saying, “Who then can be saved?” **26** But Jesus looked at *them* and said to them, “**With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.**” **27** Then Peter answered and said to Him, “See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?” **28** So Jesus said to them, “**Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name’s sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. 30 But many who are first will be last, and the last first.**”
1. Things that are impossible for us, are simple for the Lord. Salvation is impossible for man and that is what Jesus is trying to communicate. But for HIM – that was the reason HE came!
 2. He reassures the Apostles **that in the regeneration** they will sit on the 12 thrones and judge Israel along with him.
 - a) And then finally He closes the chapter by reminding them that His ways are not theirs and He looks at everything a bit differently than they do.
 - (1) **Isaiah 55:8–9 (NKJV) — 8 “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD. 9 “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.**
 - (2) I think this is a reminder that you can be a “rich” “somebody” in this life and yet miss the next.
 - (a) Likewise, you can be a “nobody” in this life and be rich in the next!
 - (i) So, whether rich or poor, may we not let anything keep us from Jesus!