



Today's Message

Date: January 9, 2022
Speaker: Pastor Steven Thomas
Title: *Camels, Needles, and Rich Men*

Text: Luke 18:18–30 (ESV)

¹⁸ And a ruler asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” ¹⁹ And Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. ²⁰ You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.’ ” ²¹ And he said, “All these I have kept from my youth.” ²² When Jesus heard this, he said to him, “One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.” ²³ But when he heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich. ²⁴ Jesus, seeing that he had become sad, said, “How difficult it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ For 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.” ²⁶ Those who heard it said, “Then who can be saved?” ²⁷ But he said, “What is impossible with man is possible with God.” ²⁸ And Peter said, “See, we have left our homes and followed you.” ²⁹ And he said to them, “Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, ³⁰ who will not receive many times more in this time, and in the age to come eternal life.”

Introduction: In today's text, a man asked Jesus one of life's most important questions: “What must I do to inherit eternal life.” Jesus' response has troubled many Bible students in modern American Christianity. It seems that Jesus failed to give him the obvious answer—an answer the man desperately needed. In fact, Jesus

allowed him to leave, lost. Could it be that the answer to his question seems so obvious today because many have been peddling the *wrong* answer? If we deal honestly with the text, we learn that it draws us to this conclusion:

Today's take-home truth: To enter the kingdom, Jesus must be more important to you than anything else in the world.

I. Jesus requires your unqualified obedience.

- A. Your praise does not flatter him. 18-19
- B. Your morality does not impress him. 20-21
- C. Your complete obedience is what he wants. 22-23

II. Therefore, the gospel is *not* “God’s simple plan of salvation.”

- A. It is hard to believe. 24
- B. In fact, it is impossible to believe as we ought. 25
- C. So, where does that leave us? We are utterly dependent on God’s mercy. 26-27

III. But all who come to Jesus on his terms find rich reward.

- A. The Christian life is the best life—despite difficulty. 28-30a
- B. And then, *heaven!* 30b



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