

## The Danger of Riches

~Matthew 19: 16-22

Now someone approached him and said, "Teacher, what good must I do to gain eternal life?" He answered him, "Why do you ask me about the good? There is only One who is good. If you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments."

He asked him, "Which ones?" And Jesus replied, "'You shall not kill; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; honor your father and your mother'; and 'you shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"

The young man said to him, "All of these I have observed. What do I still lack?" Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be perfect, sell what you have and give to [the] poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." When the young man heard this statement, he went away sad, for he had many possessions.

Jesus said to His disciples, "I assure you, only with difficulty will a rich man enter the kingdom of God."

The rich man went away sad because he was far too focused on his earthly possessions, so he failed to see the much greater heavenly treasure Jesus offered him. Jesus is always calling us to go beyond the status quo. In the book of Matthew, Jesus also says, "Moreover, everyone who has given up home, brother or sister, father or mother, wife or children or property for my sake will receive many times as much and inherit everlasting life."

In Matthew 16: 24-26, Jesus again talks about being rich and warns those who want more. "Jesus then said to his disciples: 'If a man wishes to come after me, he must deny his very self, take up his cross, and begin to follow in my footsteps. Whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. What profit would a man show if he were to gain the whole world and destroy himself in the process?'"

This is what Jesus asked the rich man and is asking us to do every day of our lives. Denying ourselves is giving from our want for the benefit of our neighbor in need and not getting caught up in material things. Taking up our cross is accepting God's will by doing things we may not want to do. When Jesus said, "whoever saves his life will lose it," He is saying if we depend on material things, money and ourselves and not on God, we will lose what God wants most for us, to be with Him for all eternity.



"It is better to give to the poor than to store up gold."

~Tobit 12:8