

Bible Stories for Adults

The Rich Young Man

Luke 18:18-30

Opening

Gathering: What kinds of things do people put before God?

Today's Focus: Jesus pointed out that it is easy for people to love riches more than God and thereby keep themselves out of God's kingdom.

Key Verses: "One thing you lack," He said. ... "Come, follow Me." Mark 10:21

With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God. Mark 10:27

Opening Prayer

Lesson

If I Were a Rich Man (*Luke 18:18*)

How does today's story begin?

Matthew 19:16 = A man came to Jesus asking how to get eternal life

What else did Matthew tell us about this man?

Matthew 19:22 = He was young and he was very wealthy

What else do we learn about this man from Luke? = Didn't say what type of ruler

Luke 18:18 = He was a "ruler" - an important person in the community

Name the Price (*Mark 10:17*)

What was this man's concern?

Mark 10:17 = He wanted to know what he had to do to get eternal life

How sincere was his concern? = *He ran to Jesus and fell on his knees*

Mark 10:17 = Running in public was undignified; on knees showed great reverence

How did the man show his respect and belief that Jesus had God's truth on this matter?

Mark 10:17 = He called Him "good teacher" - not a typical title given in those days

Greek for *good* is *agathos* - means intrinsic goodness (vs. *kalos* meaning externally pleasing)

What's Good Enough? (*Luke 18:19*)

What was wrong about the man's question of what he should do to get eternal life?

Ephesians 2:8-9 = Eternal life is a gift of God, can't earn by doing good

EBC: Many Jews believed that a specific act of goodness could win eternal life

What lesson had Jesus just taught that should have made this clear? = Receive, not earn

Luke 18:15-17 = God's kingdom is a gift given to those who recognize their helplessness

How did Jesus begin to point out the error in the man's understanding?

Luke 18:19 = Pointed out that only God has *agathos* - intrinsic goodness

What level of goodness does God require?

Matthew 5:48 = Perfection, just as He is perfect

How likely are we to be able to meet these requirements?

Romans 3:10-12, 23 = Impossible - *all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*

So what is the purpose of God's Law if we cannot follow it to earn our way into heaven?

Romans 3:20-22 = It shows our sin and need for God's righteousness through faith in Jesus

Bible Stories for Adults

The Rich Young Man

Page 2

A Checklist (*Deuteronomy 5:6-21*)

What did the Old Testament teach about what is needed for eternal life?

Deuteronomy 30:15-16 = Love God, walk in His ways, keep His commands, decrees and laws

How did the Jews summarize the many commands, decrees and laws?

Deuteronomy 5:7, 11-12, 16-21 = The Ten Commandments

How are the first three commandments even further summarized? = The First Table

Deuteronomy 6:5 = Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and strength

How are the remaining seven commandments summarized? = The Second Table

Leviticus 19:18b = Love your neighbor as yourself

Did the Jews recognize these as valid summaries of the two tables of the Ten Commandments?

Luke 10:25-28 = Yes, an expert in the law summarized it to Jesus this way

Check the Easy Ones First (*Luke 18:20*)

How did Jesus try to help the man start to see the futility of looking to deeds for eternal life?

Luke 18:20 = He listed the Second Table of commandments

How did Matthew, writing to Jews, point out that Jesus was referring to the Second Table?

Matthew 19:17-19 = Concludes with "love your neighbor as yourself"

Why did Jesus begin by having the man reflect on the Second Table of the Ten Commandments?

Philippians 3:4-6 = They were externally visible by others

Why else might Jesus have started with the Second Table?

1 John 4:20 = If we don't love others, we can't love God

Put a Check in That Box (*Luke 18:21*)

How did the man feel about how he measured up to this list?

Luke 18:21 = He felt good that he had met those requirements

Why did he qualify his statement by saying he had obeyed since he was a boy?

Luke 2:42 = At twelve a boy became a man and responsible for living by God's commands

Although most Jews said they obeyed these commands, what kept them from true obedience?

Matthew 5:21-22a, 27-28 = Obedience is internal purity of heart, not external abstinence

One Thing You Lack (*Luke 18:22*)

How did Jesus show the man that his external obedience to God's commands was inadequate?

Luke 18:22 = He told him to give away everything he had and follow Jesus

How was this pointing the man to evaluate his internal obedience to the First Table?

Luke 16:13 = By doing so he would reveal His love for God exceeded his love for wealth

Which commandment would the man be breaking if he had trouble with Jesus' instruction?

Deuteronomy 5:7 = The first - to have no other gods before God

Why did Jesus pick this test to help the man see his inability to save himself through works?

1 Timothy 6:10 = The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil, pulls people from faith

This was a difficult request. Did Jesus make it to make an example and put this man in his place?

Mark 10:21 = No, He did it out of love; He wanted to guide the man to salvation

Bible Stories for Adults

The Rich Young Man

Page 3

Choose Today Whom You Will Serve (*Luke 18:23*)

Did the man recognize his sin and inability to save himself?

Luke 18:23 = Yes, he became very sad

Did he take this opportunity to confess his sin and turn to Jesus for salvation?

Mark 10:22 = No, he went away - he saw his sin, but wouldn't turn away from it

How did the man's response to Jesus' guidance fit within Jesus' parable of the sower?

Mark 4:14, 18-19 = His seed did not grow because of the thorns of desires for other things

What had Jesus described earlier to be required for someone to receive eternal life?

Mark 8:34-37 = Deny yourself to the world and give yourself wholly to Christ

What rich man did Jesus encounter soon afterwards who had a similar opportunity? = lesson in 2 wks

Luke 19:2 = Zacchaeus, a wealthy tax collector in the trade route town of Jericho

How did Zacchaeus respond to his choice between God and money?

Luke 19:8 = He recognized his sin and repented

Did Jesus recognize his response of faith?

Luke 19:9-10 = Yes, He pointed out that Zacchaeus had the faith that gives eternal life

A Universal Problem (*Luke 18:24*)

How did Jesus respond to the man's reluctance to turn his devotion from his wealth to God?

Luke 18:24 = Said it is especially hard for the rich to receive eternal life

How did the disciples respond to what they had seen and what Jesus had said?

Mark 10:24a = They were amazed

Why were the disciples amazed at His words?

Job 1:9-10 = Jews believed that wealth was evidence of God's favor and blessing

Did Jesus mean that those who are not rich won't have this problem of putting money before God?

Mark 10:24b = No, it is difficult for everyone

Eye of a Needle (*Luke 18:25-27*)

How did Jesus go on to explain that it is impossible for someone who trusts in riches to be saved?

Luke 18:25 = Easier for camel (largest Palestine animal) to go thru needle (tiniest opening)

"Eye of the Needle" Gate added to Jerusalem in medieval times just too small for a camel

Did the disciples understand the impossibility that Jesus was trying to convey?

Luke 18:26 = Yes, they *were even more amazed*, wondered if anyone could be saved

Dwight Pentecost: *If the rich whom God loved and blessed and with whom He was pleased could not enter the kingdom, what chance was there for the multitudes?*

How did the disciples' question help lead them to the whole point Jesus was trying to make?

Mark 10:27 = *With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God*

What About Us? (*Luke 18:28*)

Did the often slow-to-learn disciples catch what Jesus was saying?

Luke 18:28 = Yes, Peter as spokesman looked for the application of the lesson to their lives

Was Peter bragging and claiming they had done better than the rich man?

Matthew 19:27 = No, he was honestly trying to understand the implications for his situation

What had Peter meant by saying that they had left everything to follow Jesus?

Matthew 4:18-22 = P, A, J & J had left their fishing business to become fishers of men

Matthew 9:9 = Matthew left his lucrative tax collection business to follow Jesus

How had Jesus earlier taught these disciples a stronger lesson in trusting in Him and the Father?

Mark 6:7-10 = He had sent them out with nothing, they'd get only what God gave thru others

Bible Stories for Adults

The Rich Young Man

Page 4

Rewards in Heaven (*Matthew 19:28-29*)

Would there be any special reward for the apostles who had left all to follow Jesus?

Matthew 19:28 = They would be honored on thrones by Jesus to judge the Jews

Did John get a glimpse of this in the revelation he was given of the end times?

Revelation 20:4 = Yes, other martyrs and faithful also reigned to judge other peoples

Did Jesus only offer rewards in His kingdom to the apostles?

Matthew 19:29 = Hundred-fold blessings and eternal life to any who has left all for Him

Leave Your Home (*Luke 18:29-30*)

Is Jesus saying that we are to neglect or desert our families in order to receive eternal life?

Matthew 10:37-39 = We must love Jesus more than anything, even more than our families

How are we to deal with non-Christian family members who threaten our relationship with Christ?

Matthew 10:34-36 = Being in Christ's family is more important than in our own human family

How did Luke word the seriousness of putting Jesus before even the members of our family?

Luke 14:26 = Our love for Jesus must be much greater than our love for our family or selves

A Cost of Leaving (*Mark 10:29-31*)

Besides putting Jesus before our own family, what else did Mark include as a cost of discipleship?

Mark 10:29-30 = Persecutions

How was this leading the disciples to better understand what Jesus was next going to tell them?

Mark 10:32-34 = Jesus was going to Jerusalem to be killed, but He would rise in glory

What is our promise as we are persecuted for His sake?

Romans 8:17 = Just as we share in His sufferings, we also will share in His glory

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. How sincerely do I desire God's kingdom?
(*Mark 10:17, 52; Matthew 6:33; 8:19-22; 19:27; Luke 5:28; 13:23-30; John 21:19-22*)
2. How well do I know God's commands?
(*Luke 18:20; Exodus 20:1-17; Deuteronomy 6:1-9; 30:15-16; Psalm 119:97-105; Proverbs 3:1-6; Ezra 7:10*)
3. How well do I follow God's commands?
(*Luke 18:21; Exodus 12:24; Lev. 18:4-5; 1 Samuel 15:22; Matthew 5:17-48; Romans 3:10-24; 6*)
4. What do I love in my life that threatens my relationship with God?
(*Luke 18:22-30; Deut. 5:7; Judges 11:30-40; Matthew 6:24; 10:32-39; 19:27-30; Mark 8:34-37*)
5. What do I treasure?
(*Luke 18:22-25; 12:16-21, 32-34; Prov. 23:4-5; Matthew 6:19-21; 1 Timothy 6:10, 19; Hebrews 13:5*)