

Mrk37 – **The Rich Young Ruler – Mark 10:17-31**

We **Continue** – In the “**The HARD Sayings of Jesus**” today  
**Our** 3<sup>rd</sup> “**Hard Sayings**” Message

**There** was a **Feeling** (a **belief**) in **Judaism** – in **that day**  
**that Christianity** has **kind** of ‘**held onto**’ - **today**

It is **the belief** that **WEALTH** – was **the EVIDENCE**  
That **God** is **Blessing** you

& - **Wealth** certainly **CAN BE** a **Blessing from God**  
**DEPENDING** on the **Truths** we’ll **learn today**

**But** - The **Rabbis taught** - if you **had Wealth**  
It **was a Sign** that you were **doing** things **right with God**

**It** meant that **you** had **achieved**  
a **certain approval rating** with **God**

**Very similar**  
to the **Prosperity Teaching Heresy** of today

But **today** – we’re going to **meet a man**  
**who** has **come** to **be known** - as “**The Rich Young Ruler**”

**& it is going** to **lead to** – **one** of the  
“**Hard Sayings of Jesus**” – About **WEALTH**

**Let’s Pray**

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It's important we connect our text today with our Previous Text

Because Mark PUTS his Events IN ORDER  
For a REASON

Last week Jesus said – in Mark 10:15 (NLT)

*15 I tell you the truth, anyone who doesn't receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it."*

THEN – on the HEELS of that HUGE statement –

*(needing to receive the Kingdom of God Like a Child)*

We MEET the Rich Young Ruler

Mark 10:17 (NLT)

*17 As Jesus was starting out on his way to Jerusalem, a man came running up to him (that's our guy), knelt down, and asked, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"*

As our Rich Young Ruler – is introduced to us

He is RUNNING UP to Jesus (a little intense)

Then KNEELING down

(I see him sliding in on his knees – for dramatic entrance)

& then he calls Jesus – GOOD TEACHER

That is a three-fold - Over-Doing-It – introduction

Running up

Slides in on his knees

& Good Teacher

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You see – the Rabbis would never  
let anybody call them GOOD Teacher

because they taught that only God was “Truly Good”

So – in V.18 -, Jesus kinda  
“Splashes Water” in this guy’s face -  
To Shock him – to kinda “Slow his Roll”

### Mark 10:18 (NLT)

*18 “Why do you call me good?” Jesus asked. “Only God is truly good.*

It seems to me – that Jesus wants to INTERRUPT  
this guy’s “Pattern for Success”

This guy KNOWS how to WIN  
He knows how to ‘come on strong’  
& ‘take home the prize’

So Jesus Interrupts him – Shocks him

& Suddenly – JESUS is in charge of the conversation  
NOT the Rich Young Ruler

*(you see what Jesus did there?)*

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So – now that Jesus has CONTROL of the conversation

he’s going to walk this “Over-Confident Young Ruler”  
RIGHT to where he wants him

**Not only** for the **Rich Young Ruler's** Benefit –  
But **also** – **For OURS**

**Jesus cont's – in Mark 10:19 (NLT)**

***19 But to answer your question, you know the commandments: 'You must not murder. You must not commit adultery. You must not steal. You must not testify falsely. You must not cheat anyone (coveting). Honor your father and mother.'***

**Jesus** begins by **saying** ***"to answer your question"***

**But** – is Jesus **really answering** his **question**?

Or is **Jesus** just **GENTLY** setting up  
this **religious** **'over-achiever'**?

In **v.19** Jesus **lists ALL 6** of the **horizontal** (love your neighbor)  
**commands** – The **2<sup>nd</sup> half** of the **10 commandments**

But **notice** - Jesus **doesn't mention** the **1<sup>st</sup> half**  
**Which** are the **4 vertical** (love God) **commandments**

& **MAYBE** it's **because** - - **Jesus** will **be GETTING to**  
the **'Love God'** commands – **soon enough**

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But – Because **Jesus** is **MOVING** this **guy** – to a **Crisis Moment**  
**Lists only** the **back-half** of the **law** (*horizontal half*)

<p>&amp; the <b><u>Rich Young Ruler</u></b> <b><u>starts doing</u></b> the <b><u>HAPPY DANCE</u></b></p>
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**& we read in - Mark 10:20 (NLT)**

***20 “Teacher,” the man replied, “I’ve obeyed all these commandments since I was young.”***

**& right here – this guy is thinking**

***“Man, I’ve got it – I’ve nailed it”***

***“I’m at the top of the class – I’m at the front of the line”***

***“I am Good To GO – With GOD”***

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**& then – Jesus LOOKED AT HIM . . .**

**Not GLANCED at him – Not Casually**

**Jesus LOOKED INTENTLY at him**

**Mark 10:21(a) (NLT)**

***21 Looking at the man, Jesus felt genuine love for him . . .***

**The word translated ‘Looking’ means**

**to look intently, or to examine closely**

**Jesus LOOKED into this man’s HEART**

**Jesus LOOKED at what Truly Motivated Him**

**Jesus LOOKED at what this man, Actually LOVED**

***& Jesus felt genuine love for him***

**& Jesus was trying to LEAD HIM**

**to the answer that he truly needed**

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**Mark 10:21(b) (NLT)**

***21 . . . “There is still one thing you haven’t done,” he told him. “Go and sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”***

**Listen to me please**

**What Jesus is saying**

To **THIS Rich Young Ruler**

Is – **Your STUFF is in your WAY**

**Jesus is saying**

You **DON’T OWN** - your **Stuff**

Your **Stuff** - **OWNS YOU**

**& THAT – is a PROBLEM**

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Now – **Please ALWAYS Remember**

**CONTEXT** determines **Correct Interpretation**

& **so** we’ve **GOT** to **keep** this **vs**  
**in its CONTEXT**

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So first – Jesus did NOT tell  
EVERY wealthy person he met to do this

In fact we KNOW – there were wealthy people

who supported Jesus & his disciples  
during their 3 years of full time ministry

& to support them – Some chose to travel with them  
Since “Online Giving” wasn't a thing yet

AND we know – God moved  
on wealthy people - thru-out the NT

to finance & provide places  
for the NT church to meet & Grow

& We see in Acts 4 & 5 – it was NOT a requirement  
for wealthy people to sell what they had

BUT – Some STILL DID by choice

& I can tell you FOR SURE

that BOTH - this Church AND Word By Mail  
would NOT exist

without some people who have Some MONEY  
being willing to invest in God's Kingdom

THRU these Ministries

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So - WHY this man?

Why did Jesus Require - THIS particular – successful, wealthy, religious man – to sell everything?

Because Jesus – LOOKED AT HIM  
& Jesus SAW his HEART

& BECAUSE Jesus loved him  
Jesus REVEALED this man's OWN Heart – to him

This Rich Young Ruler  
had “success in life” written all over him

But – the attitude of the heart – that can come  
from TOO MUCH Success in life

can easily get in the way of us  
Truly surrendering our lives to Jesus as Lord

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Which is exactly – what is about to happen  
To our Rich Young Ruler here

Mark 10:22 (NLT)

*22 At this the man's face fell, and he went away sad, for he had many possessions.*

*At this, the man's face FELL*

The word means – to become greatly down-cast



**But Listen** very **carefully** please

***His face fell, and he went away sad,  
because his Possessions - OWNED HIM***

He **DIDN'T OWN** His Possessions  
His Possessions **OWNED HIS HEART**

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& **Jesus REQUIRES** – **Your HEART**

& it **seems clear** –  
**BOTH** in **the Bible** - & in **our World**

**that one** of the **top things** that **will**

**Either KEEP** your **heart** - **from Jesus**  
or **STEAL it AWAY** - **from Jesus**

**Are your Possessions OWNING YOU**

**Whether** it is **you IDOLIZING**  
**What** you **DO HAVE**

**Or you COVETING**  
**What** you **DON'T HAVE**

**Either way** – the **STUFF** of **this World**  
Can **KEEP** your **Heart** - **FROM Jesus**

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**Remember Earlier** – Jesus **didn't list**  
the **FIRST HALF** – of the **10 Commandments**

**those** are the **“Love God” commandments**  
& **THAT WAS** – the **Rich Young Ruler's Struggle**

The **FIRST Commandment** is  
***“Have NO OTHER GODS before me”***

The **SECOND Commandment** is  
***“Have NO IDOLS in your life”***

**& the challenge** Jesus **gave** this **man** - **PROVED**

he was **NOT WILLING** To **EMBRACE**  
**those** first two **Vertical Commands** to **Love God**

& **so** – **he went away** - **SAD**

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& **then** – it just **GETS HARDER** for the **Disciples**

**Mark 10:23 (NLT)**

***23 Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God!”***

**That** is a **BOMBSHELL STATEMENT**

**Because** the **disciples thought** - (**like some** of **us**)  
that **wealth** - was the **SIGN**

**That** a **person** was **APPROVED By God**

& so – this Statement AMAZES the Disciples

**Mark 10:24 (NLT)**

**24 This amazed them. But Jesus said again, “Dear children, it is very hard to enter the Kingdom of God.**

**The NKJV adds – it is very hard “for those who trust in riches” to enter the Kingdom of God**

& it is very hard indeed – to enter the kingdom of God -  
In fact – it is impossible

Which is Exactly What Jesus says in

**Mark 10:25 (NLT)**

**25 In fact, 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!”**

This vs has caused a LOT of attempted explanation

maybe you’ve heard the explanation of the SMALL DOOR  
within the LARGE Gate in Jerusalem

that is called the Eye of the Needle

We’ve had fun at this Eye of the Needle “Door”  
That’s part of the Jaffa Gate at the old city

The only problem is – there is no Historical Evidence  
of that TYPE of Door in the Gate – Until the 9th century

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**BUT** - The analogy that comes  
out of the small door within the gate explanation

is that the rich person has to rid themselves  
of all the baggage that often comes with riches

& HUMBLE themselves  
to receive Christ by Faith & enter heaven

Which CAN BE a good analogy – if it's used correctly

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**BUT** – that is Probably NOT what Jesus was talking about

Because the Camel & the Eye of the Needle  
Was actually a “Figure of Speech” in the first century

It is – HYPERBOLE

& when you say – *it would be easier for a Camel  
to go thru the Eye of a Needle*

What you're saying is  
THIS is IMPOSSIBLE – Period!

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Which is exactly what Jesus ends up saying

But first - *The disciples were astounded*

Look at Mark 10:26 (NLT) → →

**Mark 10:26 (NLT)**

***26 The disciples were astounded. “Then who in the world can be saved?” they asked.***

The **Disciple’s heads** are **SPINNING** right **now**

**They’re thinking** – ***“Wait - We thought riches were a sign of God’s Approval on someone’s life”***

So – **if someone** with **Riches CAN’T Be Saved**  
then **WHO in the world - can be?**

**& THAT is really the ultimate POINT**

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**Which is what Jesus says in Mark 10:27 (NLT)**

***27 Jesus looked at them intently*** (the same word for looked as before – Jesus looked straight thru them) ***and said, “Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But not with God. Everything is possible with God.”***

**WHO** can **get into Heaven?**

**Jesus** says - ***Humanly Speaking – It is Impossible!!***

**Without GOD**

**Stepping** in - & **Doing it FOR US**

**It is IMPOSSIBLE** - for **us** to **Get into Heaven**

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& if WE - - IF ALL of us – Rich & Poor  
Would fully embrace THAT truth

We would stop trying to be  
“Good Enough” or “Religious Enough”

& we would crush the Devil’s Lie that makes us say

“*Well, I’m doing pretty good, I think God  
will accept me when I get there*”

Not if you’re showing up in your own effort he WON’T

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The Bible is CLEAR

There is no amount of GOOD  
that you can do on your own

to EARN God’s Acceptance of you – into Heaven

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& Ultimately – this is true – For RICH or POOR

But the CORE of THIS Message

The CENTRAL Point of this Message

Is how the Possessions  
that OWNED - this Rich Young Ruler

KEPT HIM from seeing his need for Jesus

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### **Matthew 6:24 (NLT)**

**24 “No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money.**

**The word translated “Money” here - is MAMMON  
an Aramaic word – for WEALTH or RICHES**

This Rich Young Ruler - was Enslaved by his Riches  
& it seemingly cost him – his eternal life

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**But – it also brought up a thought – from the  
“Ever-Willing-To-Speak” – Apostle Peter**

### **Mark 10:28 (NLT)**

**28 Then Peter began to speak up. “We’ve given up everything to follow you,” he said.**

**Now – Peter IS a Fisherman  
& it certainly seems like he’s FISHING here**

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& Jesus responds to him  
with one of the Greatest Promises in the N.T.

### **Mark 10:29-30 (NLT)**

**29 “Yes,” Jesus replied, “and I assure you that everyone who has given up house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or property, for my sake and for the Good News,  
30 will receive now in return a hundred times as many houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and property—**

along with persecution. And in the world to come that person will have eternal life.

**Jesus promises** – a **HUNDRED TIMES** more **BLESSING**  
Than what it will COST you - to truly Follow Him

**ALONG WITH** the **Persecution**

You will **gain** a **HUNDRED TIMES** the **FAMILY**  
**Within the Family of God**

**& the** very **real Blessings**  
Will **always** **Far Outweigh** – the **COST**

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**& then** – **in closing** - it **seems**  
**Jesus Refers back**

**to** the **Rich Young Ruler** - who **just walked away**

**& he says in Mark 10:31 (NLT)**

**31 But many who are the greatest now will be least important then, and those who seem least important now will be the greatest then.”**

The **Kingdom of God**  
is an **UPSIDE DOWN Kingdom**

**WE** – **LIKE** the **Rich Young Ruler** - **MUST Decide**  
**Which Kingdom – We want our REWARD IN**



**Do we want to WIN IT ALL - NOW  
& Risk LOSING IT ALL - for ETERNITY?**

**Just 2 Ch's ago – Jesus said - Mark 8:36–37 (NLT)  
36 And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but  
lose your own soul? 37 Is anything worth more than your  
soul?**

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**Jesus tried to get the Rich Young Ruler  
To CHOOSE WISELY**

**May we - Make a Better Choice  
Than HE DID**

**Whether we are RICH or POOR  
May we MAKE SURE**

That Jesus Christ – TRULY HAS our Heart

**Let's Pray**