

Unvarnished – Inspired – Infallible – Inerrant...Word of God | Not about...but from the Bible
Ever learn from someone else's mistake? – Elementary School Project | disheartened – Confused
Continuation...ended bumper...this week disciples confused | RECAP – ETERNAL LIFE | LACKTHING
(22) 'Disheartened by the saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had a great many possessions.'
Sell stuff | Joke | Earn spot Heaven? | Do riches have that power? | What power does wealth have?
Rich is subjective | (GNI) Average income before tax | USA = 66k – Burundi \$686 | \$1000 = RICH!
Money = Morally Neutral – Wood | Can draw us closer or push us further away | Use / Abuse
Jesus not condemning wealth & commending poverty | **Warning = Wealth breeds self-dependence**
Big Idea: Earthly Riches Cannot Buy Spiritual Security | **Total Dependence on God Matters**

Last week – Man: Disheartened | This week – Disciples: Confused | You: Encouraged and Clear
READ - Why were they shocked?

Disciples thought wealth to be a spiritual advantage **Rich in Bible: Abraham | Job | Joseph Arimathea**

- Favor – Job 1:10; 42:10; Ps. 128:1-2; Isa. 3:10
- Curse – *Tobit* – 'Alms deliver from death & purge sin' | *Sirach* – 'Alms atone for sin'
Talmud – 'Alms = whole law' | Only the rich could afford...curse to be poor

So, the Rich young ruler left disheartened...the disciples are confused...**what are we to do?**

- Jesus is about to, once again, flip everything people think they understand about God on its axis

Show in the text through a sentence, that I will build in three parts: Jesus is teaching us to...

1. **A Willingness to Lose Anything (23-24)**

²³And Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How difficult it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!" | **Why is it difficult?**

Warnings About Wealth

- Lack's Holy Desperation** (Ps. 50:15 'Call on me in the day of trouble; I deliver you; You glorify me)
- False sense of security** (1 Tim. 6:17 'As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy.')
- Binds us to this world** (1 Jn. 2:15-16 'Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world – the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions – is not from the Father but is from the world.')

Wealth drives self-reliance and salvation is attained through total dependence

So, if I'm poor...I'm okay. I sell all my stuff, give away the proceeds...**Burundi = Easy to go to Heaven**
(Jesus covers that next) ²⁴And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said to them again, "Children, how difficult it is to enter the kingdom of God!"

Terrifying...Wealthy > everybody... **Why is it difficult?**

The heart of the gospel is about giving up power | **We hate giving up power**

I want to live my life – on my terms...I want to control my outcomes – my way | **Idol of 'me'**

The gospel says we have to be: **Willing to lose, 'Me...my way' for 'God...His Way'**

If God calls us to lose it...God has a good reason for it...It might be to save your eternal soul

If you want anything more than: Salvation – Eternal Life - Christ... He'll give you what you want...

You're showing what you want...and it's not Him

You cannot desire salvation as an addition...it's all or nothing

Term intentionally...'willingness' – He did not tell EVERYONE to sell everything (Peter's House)

True discipleship is found in saying 'yes' when the King calls

What about money? **What do I do with it? How do I know what to give? Where do I give?**

2 Corinthians 9:6-7 'The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. | **Sacrificially – Prayerfully – Willfully – Joyfully**

Bills – Saving – Investment | (Matt. 6:21) 'Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also'

- Your heart follows your treasure...Invest your Time, Talent, Treasure = Kingdom endeavors

God uses His people to provide for His plans

Unbelievers say: 'The church just wants our money' – God wants your life given freely to Him

Believers invest in Kingdom work...because they know it is the most important work there is

First part of the sentence: A willingness to lose anything...

2. **Displays Your Dependence (24-27) Hilarious and powerful illustration**

²⁵It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God."
Some people have tried to lessen this blow...'Rope' | 'Needle Gate' | Clear = IMPOSSIBLE

Graduation = 'You can do anything' ...levitate | Slam a revolving | wife = 'I don't care where we eat'

You cannot save yourself any more than you can stuff a camel through the eye of a needle

²⁶And they were exceedingly astonished, and said to him, "Then who can be saved?" ²⁷Jesus looked at them and said, "With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God."

'Then who can be saved?' – Rhetorical – Who in the world then?!? This cannot be true!

'Amazed' & 'Exceedingly Astonished' – Some of them were wealthy | Simple = Apart from God...None

Jesus is explaining in no uncertain terms - Realize the Deficiency of Self-Sufficiency

Dependence on earthly enterprise costs more than you should care to pay

Does this excuse inactivity? Does it promote being needy? Does it promote poverty? No

- (Prv. 13:4) Soul of the sluggard craves & gets nothing, while soul of the diligent richly supplied
- (Prv. 14:23) In all toil there is profit, but mere talk tends only to poverty.
- KEY – (Colossians 3:23) **Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men**

When it comes to disciplines of discipleship = Work hard and Trust the Lord

When it comes to salvation = Trust the Lord alone

A willingness to lose anything displays your dependence...

3. **Needed to Gain Everything (28-31)**

²⁸Peter began to say to him, "See, we have left everything and followed you."

Peter wasting no time to speak up and shove his foot in his mouth...See...see...we've left it all

- Even if that were true, which it isn't...Peter went back to fishing as soon as Christ left...JESUS
True comfort in this world isn't in what you've left...but what you've gained!

²⁹Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, ³⁰who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life. ³¹But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

Whatever you leave...God takes notice | Leave a little...get a lot | The blessings outweigh the losses

Incredible riches in spiritual poverty – **Oxymoron – Civil War / Dull Roar / Jumbo Shrimp and...**

- (31) Profound irony of discipleship 'Many who are first will be last, and the last first'
And...he speaks of 'gain' in two different time periods = 'Ages' | Two 'Ages'
- This age – Church (Hundredfold...you get a hundred mothers)
 - The whole weight of the Church of God = Persecutions come...blessing
- Age to come – You're trading all you have in this world...for a place with Christ in the next
John 14:1-3 'Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.'

BASEBALL - Make a great trade? 1987 Donruss Greg Maddux Rookie Card – Stack of cards...valuable

Christ Himself makes up for every loss...because He's more valuable than it all combined

Stick is everything you could ever make, position you could attain, or comforts you could ever have:

- Trade your stick for the one who traded His life for yours on the cross...builds a place for you
God owes us nothing and gives us everything

A willingness to lose anything displays the dependence needed to gain everything

- The rich who reject Christ will be spiritually poor forever
- Those who forsake all to follow Christ will receive eternal riches

Whatever you give up...you get back one hundred times in affection from Christ

19th Century – British were looking feverishly for a northwest passage from the Atlantic to Pacific

- Best ship – Accomplished sailors – extravagant supplies: China and Silver flatware
 - Found dead things of earthly value...how silly...how sad

What power do riches have? None...unless you let them have power...power over you

Rich isn't subjective: The Rich = who are dependent on Christ...poor are those dependent on self

Those who have Christ have it all, and who do not have Christ, no matter what else...have nothing

A willingness to lose anything displays the dependence needed to gain everything