

Following the King — Message 7

The Currency of the Kingdom: What Heaven Values Most - Matthew 19:16–26 (NKJV)

Series Recap → Transition: From Call to Currency

We've been walking with the King:

- **The Call** (Matt 4): “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.” They left nets for destiny.
- **The Constitution** (Matt 5–7): On the mountain He established heaven's code of culture.
- **The Commission** (Matt 10): He empowered disciples to bring heaven to earth.
- **The Conflict** (Matt 16): Peter's confession met the cross—glory always carries a price.
- **The Climax** (Matt 17): His glory shone on the mountain, His power worked in the valley.
- **The Community** (Matt 18): He taught us how to live together under heaven's rule—humility, protection, pursuit, reconciliation, forgiveness.

Now in Matthew 19-20, Jesus steps from the mountain of revelation into the marketplace of evaluation. He begins to ask every follower: What do you truly value? What currency are you using to measure life?

Matthew 19:16-26 (NKJV) - Now behold, one came and said to Him, ‘Good Teacher, **what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?**’ So He said to him, ‘Why do you call Me good? No one is good but one, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.’ He said to Him, ‘Which ones?’ Jesus said, ‘You shall not murder,’ ‘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 these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?’ Jesus said to him, ‘If you want to be perfect, go, **sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven;** and come, follow Me.’ But when the young man heard that saying, **he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.** Then Jesus said to His disciples, ‘Assuredly, I say to you that it **is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.** And again, I say to you, it is easier for a **camel to go through the eye of a needle** than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.’ When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, ‘**Who then can be saved?**’ But Jesus looked at them and said to them, ‘**With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.**’”

1. The Mispriced Man — The Rich Young Ruler

This man had morality, money, and manners—but not mastery.

In rabbinic culture, wealth was a sign of favor. Jesus flips the assumption: **Heaven's value system measures surrender, not success.**

- The Greek word **teleios** (“perfect”) means complete or undivided. **Jesus exposed a divided heart.**
- **Christ bids us cast away not the wealth but the passions that cleave to it.**

Heaven's currency is obedience, not ownership!

- You can't follow the King while financing your own throne.
- He asked for eternal life but refused eternal lordship.

Transition: *From the mispriced man, Jesus moves to correct the mistaken measure—what we call success.*

2. The Mistaken Measure — The Eye of the Needle

Key Verse (NKJV): **“It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.” (Matthew 19:24)**

- This Hebrew idiom meant impossible.
- Jesus wasn’t talking about a small gate; He was talking about the futility of human effort.

Salvation is not moral achievement; it’s divine intervention. “With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.” (v 26)

Possibility:

The Prayer Shawl: The Thread That Passes Through

Text: Numbers 15:38–40 (NKJV) - “Tell them to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a blue thread in the tassels of the corners... that you may look upon it and remember all the commandments of the Lord and do them.”

1. The Corners – God’s Covenant to the World

- The four corners (kanfot) represent the four directions of the earth.
 - **The tallit was designed so God's Word literally covered the wearer—"under the wings of the Shekhinah."**
 - When one wraps in the prayer shawl, it's a picture of being clothed with God's presence and His authority over all creation.
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2. The Tassels – The Living Torah

- Each tzitzit has four threads doubled into eight ends = new beginnings.
- Five knots represent the five books of the Torah—the foundation of God's Word.
- Four windings ($7 + 8 + 11 + 13 = 39$) represent a spiritual journey:
 - 7 = Completion
 - 8 = New beginning
 - 11 = Testing
 - 13 = Love and Oneness (Ahavah / Echad)
- **The total 39 recalls "The Lord is One" and prophetically the 39 stripes by which Messiah healed us.**

- **The word tzitzit (600) + 8 threads + 5 knots = 613 — every tassel symbolizes the 613 commandments of the Torah.**

It's a wearable covenant, a sermon you put on your shoulders.

3. The Five Knots – Binding the Covenants

First 5 Books of OT - The five knots remind us of God's five binding covenants:

1. Noahic – Mercy preserved
2. Abrahamic – Faith credited
3. Mosaic – Holiness revealed
4. Davidic – Kingship promised
5. New Covenant – Grace fulfilled

Five eternal “knots” of God’s faithfulness tie history together.

4. The Blue Thread – Tekhelet

- **The tekhelet dye came from a rare sea snail—the color of the sea, sky, and God’s sapphire throne (Exodus 24:10).**

- **Its name shares a root with tachlit = purpose, end, or completion (the same concept as teleios in Greek).**
 - The blue thread is the heavenly strand—the visible reminder that divine life is woven into human obedience.
 - **When the woman touched the “hem” (kraspedon) of Yeshua’s garment, she touched this blue covenant thread—and power flowed from Him.**
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5. The Revelation – The Eye of the Needle

- The rabbis used “eye of the needle” to describe the impossible.
 - **The tzitzit is like a rope—many cords, many knots. The rope of self-effort is too thick to pass through.**
 - **But the tekhelet, the single blue thread, can—because it carries heaven’s color and divine purpose.**
 - **Messiah is that thread—God woven into flesh, who passed through the eye of death and came out in resurrection.**
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6. The Message (Hold the Shawl)

Show your tallit and say:

- Four corners: God's covenant for all the earth.
- Five knots: His five unbreakable covenants.
- 613 reminders: His complete Word.
- Blue thread: Heaven in human form.

Grace doesn't lower the standard—it carries us over it.

- Grace doesn't help you climb—it lifts you through.
- The gate of heaven is too narrow for pride to squeeze through, yet wide enough for repentance to run through.
- Salvation is not God improving the good—it's God resurrecting the dead.

Human effort can never purchase divine entrance.

Transition: For centuries, the rabbis taught that a man's prosperity proved his righteousness. The disciples are stunned when Jesus reverses it:

“With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.” (v. 26 NKJV) Now that Jesus has overturned the old metric of merit, He introduces heaven's new accounting system—the math of mercy. - the shocking economics of grace.

3. The Math of Mercy — The Laborers in the Vineyard (20:1–16)

Key Verse (NKJV): So, the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen. (Matthew 20:16)

The parable of the laborers is a revelation of divine equity.

In first-century Judea, day laborers gathered in the marketplace at dawn—men desperate for hire. Mosaic law commanded employers to pay them daily (Leviticus 19:13) so their families could eat.

Jesus tells of a landowner who hires throughout the day and pays every worker the same wage—a denarius. To the religious mind, this offends justice. But in heaven's economy, grace, not grind, sets the wage.

- Greek nuance: Denarius was a full day's wage—symbolizing the full reward of salvation, not parceled by performance but granted by grace.
- The parable dismantles transactional faith. Heaven's justice doesn't pay by hours—it pays by relationship.

God rewards according to relationship, not résumé.

- In the Torah (Leviticus 19:13), wages had to be paid daily showing God's concern for the poor.
- Jesus elevates this: God gives daily bread not based on hours but on His heart.
- Augustine wrote, "Grace is not measured by time but by love."

God's generosity offends human fairness. Grace is not fair it is better than fair - Heaven's payroll runs on mercy, not minutes.

GRACE IS NOT FAIR!

- Grace is not fair—it's favor you couldn't earn and mercy you don't deserve!
- Grace is not fair—it reached me when I couldn't reach God!
- Grace is not fair—it picked me up when I was disqualified!
- Grace is not fair—it turned my sentence into a testimony!
- Grace is not fair—it broke the rules to redeem the rebel!
- Grace is not fair—it gave me a seat at a table I had no right to sit at!
- Grace is not fair—it found me guilty and called me chosen!

- Grace is not fair—it canceled my debt and credited my destiny!
- Grace is not fair—it took my place, wore my crown, and paid my price!
- Grace is not fair—but it's the only reason I'm still standing!

Somebody shout — **GRACE IS NOT FAIR!**

- Fair would've left me where it found me!
- Fair would've given me justice — but grace gave me Jesus!
- Grace is not fair — it doesn't balance the scales, it breaks them!
- Grace is not fair — it reached lower than I could fall!
- Grace is not fair — it turned my mess into a ministry!
- Grace is not fair — but thank God, it's mine!

Transition: As the disciples process that, Peter blurts out the question in every heart: “We have left all—what do we get?” Jesus answers with the miracle of multiplication.

4. The Miracle of Multiplication — Leaving All for His Name (19:27-29)

Key Verse (NKJV): **And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.**

- **This is not about deprivation - it's about divine exchange.**
- The phrase “for My name's sake” (Greek heneka tou onomatos mou) means “for the sake of My authority and reputation.”
- Acts 2:45 records the early believers “**sold their possessions and goods...as anyone had need.**”
They saw giving not as loss but as seed.

He who possesses Christ cannot be poor.

Loss for Christ is never subtraction - it is investment. Whatever you release for His Name multiplies in His Kingdom. Heaven always remembers what earth forgets you gave.

Transition: Jesus closes the teaching with the meaning of value—heaven's exchange rate.

5. The Meaning of Value — Heaven's Exchange Rate

Key Verse (NKJV): But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. (Philippians 3:7)

Paul—once a Pharisee who measured worth by pedigree and performance—understands the Currency of the Kingdom better than anyone.

In one verse he dismantles human valuation systems: everything outside of Christ is counterfeit wealth.

All through Scripture, God re-prices reality:

STRENGTH become SERVICE. POWER becomes PURITY. WEALTH becomes WORSHIP. POSITION becomes POSTURE.

Rabbinic Wisdom: “The humble in spirit is greater than the conqueror of cities.” (Pirkei Avot 4:13)

- Humility is heaven's legal tender.
- Faith spends what fear tries to save.
- Generosity is the currency of glory.
- You can't take it with you, but you can send it ahead.

Conclusion — Heaven's Economy - When we stand before the King, He will not total what we earned but

what we exchanged, temporary for eternal, self for Savior.

The world says climb; heaven says kneel. The world says keep; heaven says give. The world says be first; heaven says serve.

Church...every one of us is trading something right now.

- We are trading time for treasure, effort for approval, and sometimes our peace for what doesn't satisfy.
- But Jesus asked, "What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul?" (Matthew 16:26 NKJV).
- **That is the real question tonight: what are you gaining, and what is it costing you?**

The rich young ruler walked away sorrowful because he valued the wrong currency. Heaven's economy is different - it does not measure by what you keep but by what you surrender.

Maybe it's not money holding you—it's pride, pain, or control. But the King is calling: "Come, follow Me." Trade what is temporary for what's eternal. Trade what is in your hands for what is in Mine." This is your moment to make the exchange.

So right now - if you're ready to give Him everything you've been clinging to - come to this altar. Kneel before the King. Because the moment you let go, heaven goes to work. You trade what you have—and gain Who He Is.