

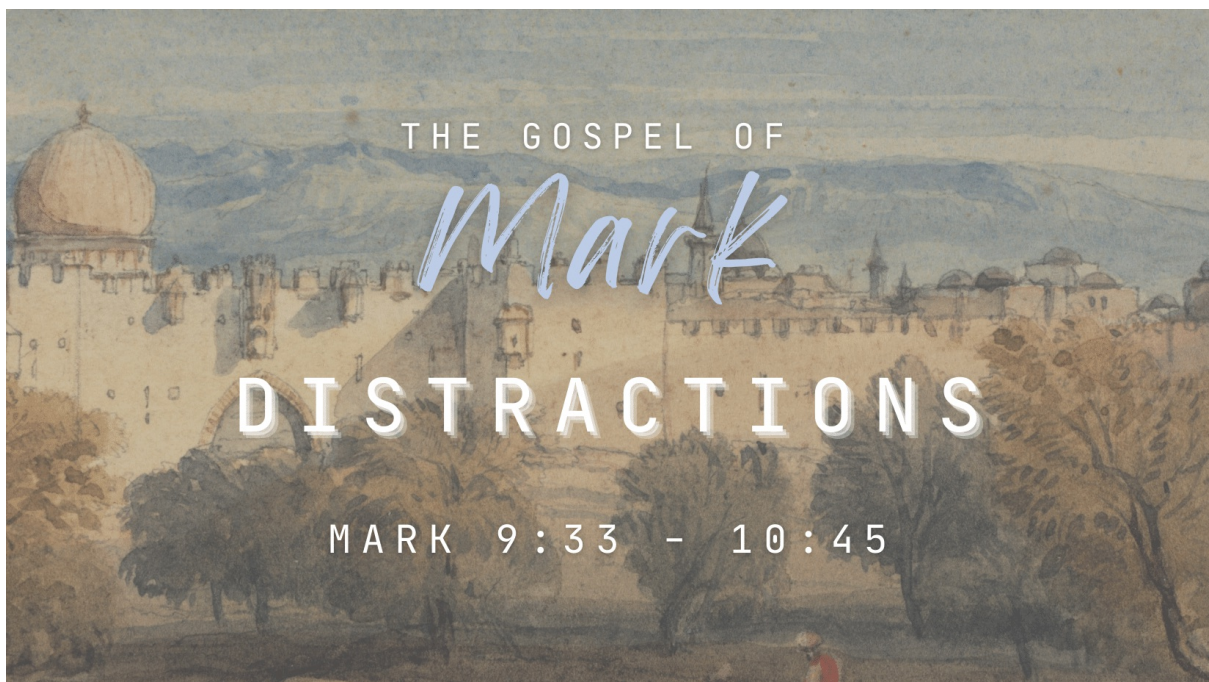
THE GOSPEL OF MARK: DISTRACTIONS - Part 2

The Rich Young Man

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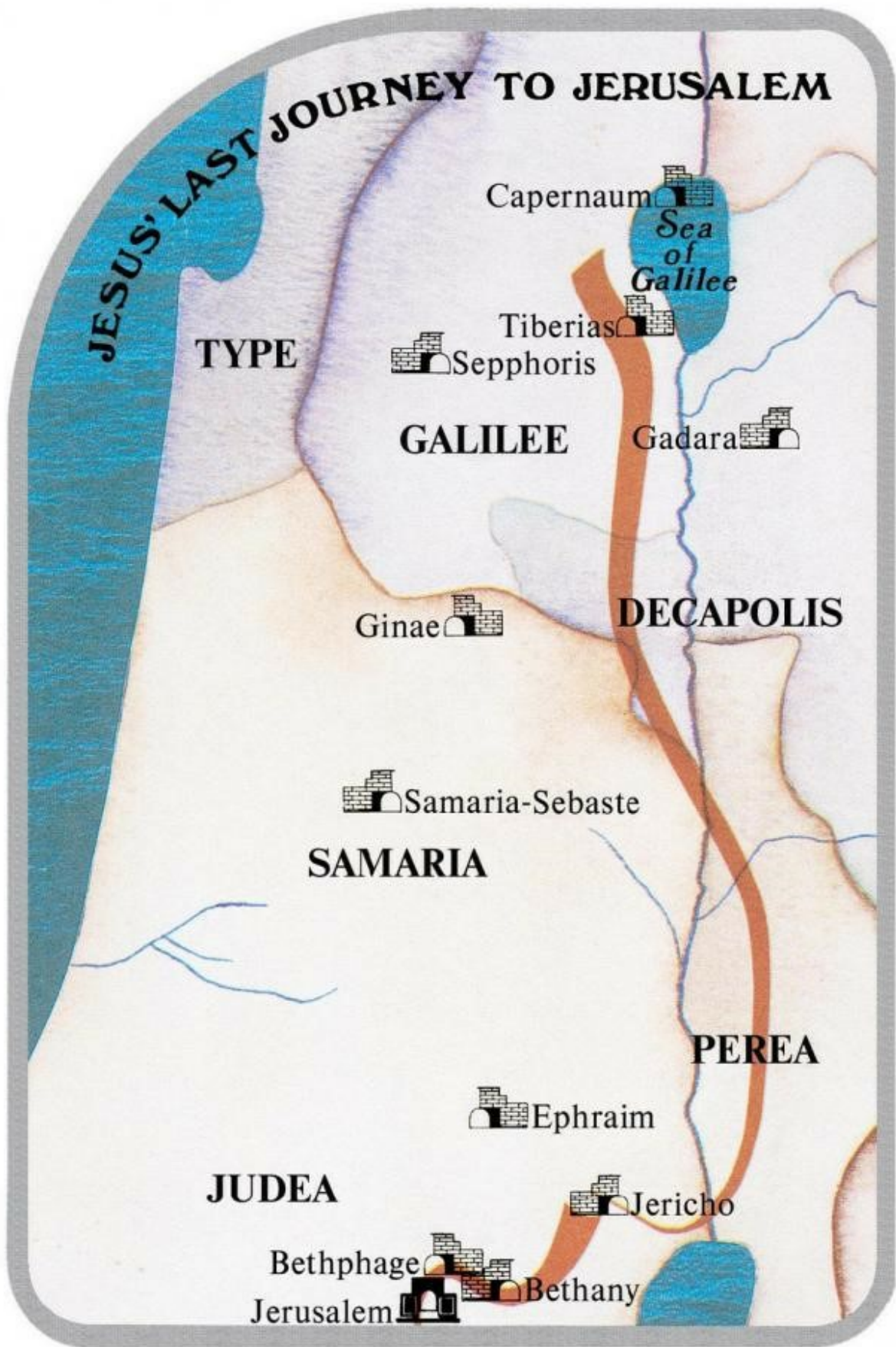
Part of The Gospel of Mark Distractions

November 13, 2022



Then Jesus left Capernaum and went down to the region of Judea and into the area east of the Jordan River. Once again crowds gathered around him, and as usual he was teaching them.

—Mark 10:1 (NLT)



As Jesus was starting out on his way to Jerusalem, a man came running up to him, knelt down, and asked, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

—Mark 10:17 (NLT)

The rich young man's question reveals his Jewish understanding of righteousness, that it was something he could *do* to earn it, but Jesus taught that eternal life, as in life in the kingdom of God, is a gift that can only be received.

"Why do you call me good?" Jesus asked. "Only God is truly good."

—Mark 10:18 (NLT)

From the young man's vantage point, he's not seeing Jesus as the Son of God but as a faithful teacher who has earned this title.

"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. Honor your father and mother.'"

—Mark 10:19 (NLT)

"Teacher," the man replied, "I've obeyed all these commandments since I was young."

—Mark 10:20 (NLT)

The young man is confident and he's probably sincere, because, for him, keeping the law was a matter of external conformity, and in good conscience he believed he had done that, as many pious Jews of his day also believed.

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

—Mark 10:21a (NLT)

As wonderful as sincerity is, it's not enough, because any of us can be sincere and yet, still be wrong.

... "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."

—Mark 10:21bcd (NLT)

Jesus asks of the young man what equates to the first of the Ten Commandments - will he put Jesus first above all else in his life.

Whatever is *first* in our heart is our *god*, and if it's not the Lord God, it's an idol that promises a future, a hope, but it's really a distraction that can never deliver because it wasn't *created* to do that - only God in Christ can *do that!*

To make Jesus our Savior and Lord means we *put him first* in our lives and obey him - that's the whole point of him being our Lord!

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

—Mark 10:22 (NLT)

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

—Mark 10:23 (NLT)

Money and wealth have a way of causing many who have it to feel safe, that they can take care of themselves, and consequently, though they may have an *interest* in Jesus, they aren't truly committed to him.

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

—Mark 10:24-25 (NLT)

Jesus may be using hyperbole, exaggeration, but his point is still true - it is impossible for the rich, or *anyone*, for that matter, to enter the Kingdom of God based on their own abilities and virtues.

The disciples were astounded. "Then who in the world can be saved?" they asked.

—Mark 10:26 (NLT)

Jesus looked at them intently and said, "Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But not with God. Everything is possible with God."

—Mark 10:27 (NLT)

Salvation is totally and completely a work of God's, graciously offered to all, including the wealthy, but only on *His* terms, not ours.

Then Peter began to speak up. "We've given up everything to follow you," he said.

—Mark 10:28 (NLT)

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

—Mark 10:29-31 (NLT)

Jesus is saying that the community of faith the disciples are becoming a part of, what would later be called the church, served as an extended family, where Christians thought of each other as family members, as brothers and sisters in Christ.

As wonderful as all these spiritual benefits are, Jesus tells his disciples that all this will come with a cost - there will be "persecution," too.

Have I been holding something back from Jesus, and if so, will I ask him to help me release it to him, take up my cross and follow him wherever he leads me?

Jesus: "Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where

thieves break in and steal. Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.”

—Matthew 6:19-21 (NLT)

Next Week - Distractions: The Request of James and John
(Mark 10:35-45, 9:33-37)