



Lessons for Disciples - The Kingdom and Wealth

Key idea:

Disciples of Christ must recognize and reject the temptation to trust in riches, look to God alone as their source of identity and salvation, and use their wealth to be a blessing to others.

Key text:

Mark 10:17-31

As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. “Good teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”¹⁸ “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good — except God alone.”¹⁹ You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.’”²⁰ “Teacher,” he declared, “all these I have kept since I was a boy.”²¹ Jesus looked at him and loved him. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”²² At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.²³ Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!”²⁴ The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God!²⁵ 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.”²⁶ The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, “Who then can be saved?”²⁷ Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.”²⁸ Peter said to him, “We have left everything to follow you!”²⁹ “I tell you the truth,” Jesus replied, “no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel³⁰ will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields — and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life.³¹ But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”

Key points:

1. A young man came to Jesus wanting to know what he had to do to inherit eternal life (be part of God’s kingdom), and Jesus showed him his false hope in his own works and wealth - and the young man walked away and did not follow Jesus.

2. Jesus taught that wealth brings a great temptation to trust in riches rather than God.
3. The Bible teaches that wealth is a blessing, but warns of the great danger it presents, including becoming a rival god.
4. A key antidote to the dangers of wealth is realizing that we are blessed to be a blessing and therefore cultivating a grateful soul and generously sharing with others.

Questions for discussion/application:

1. What part of Sunday's teaching stood out most to you? Why?
2. Why does Jesus focus on the wealth of the man? Is this because of something specific about this man or something that is true of all humans?
3. Why does Jesus add the command about not defrauding since it was not part of the 10 Commandments? What might this imply regarding the actions and responsibilities of this man?
4. Why does Jesus tell the man to sell everything he has, give it to the poor, and follow Jesus? Does this apply to every disciple? Why or why not? Can I give examples to support my position?
5. The Scripture presents wealth as both a blessing and a danger. Which is foremost in my thoughts - the blessing of wealth or its dangers? Why?
6. In the teaching of Jesus, does He focus more on the blessing of wealth or its dangers? Why?
7. Do I think I am among those the Scripture would call "rich"? Why or why not?
8. How strong a grip does wealth have on my heart and life? How can I tell?
9. What practices can I make a regular part of my life to ward off the dangers of wealth?
10. Who can I reach out to this week to serve and bless?

For Further Study:

[Greed](#) (Part of a series on the Seven Roots Vices) - March 11, 2018