

The Gospel of Matthew

“The Difficulty & Reward of Following Jesus”

Matthew 19:23-30

Jesus said to him, “If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”

But when the young man heard this statement, he went away grieved; for he was one who owned much property.

— Matthew 19:21-22

Jesus calls for supreme allegiance to Himself as the means of obtaining eternal life


And Jesus said to His disciples, “Truly I say to you, 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.”

And when the disciples heard this, they were very astonished and said, “Then who can be saved?”

And looking upon them Jesus said to them, “With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

Matthew 19:23-26



Difficulty & Reward

The Impediment of Riches

1. The Danger of Affluence

- wealth is a would-be god, usurping God’s place in our affections and trust
- the pursuit of wealth and following Jesus are fundamentally incompatible

“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or hold to the one and despise the other. *You cannot serve God and riches.*”

Matthew 6:24

Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men to ruin and destruction

For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang.

1 Timothy 6:9-10



Difficulty & Reward

The Impediment of Riches

2. The Necessity of God's Work

- it is impossible to naturally overcome the innate idolatry of riches and enter the kingdom
- God can and does effectually enable people to leave their riches and follow Jesus

Then Peter answered and said to Him, "Behold, we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?"

And Jesus said to him, "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you shall also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

"And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, shall receive many times as much, and shall inherit eternal life.

But many who are first will be last; and the last, first."

Matthew 19:27-30



Difficulty & Reward

The Abundance of Reward

1. Position of Unique Authority

- in the renewed creation, the twelve will reign with Jesus and will judge Israel
- all followers of Jesus will reign with Him in the new earth (c.f. 2 Tim. 2:12; 1 Cor. 6:2-3)



Difficulty & Reward

The Abundance of Reward

2. Manifold Recompense

- all sacrifices made for Jesus will be abundantly compensated by Him
- in following Jesus there is no ultimate sacrifice or loss of any good thing