

Here is today's scripture passage in language that may be easier to understand.

As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him. He fell on his knees before Jesus. "Good teacher," he said, "what must I do to receive eternal life?"

"Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good except God. ¹⁹You know what the commandments say. 'Do not murder. Do not commit adultery. Do not steal. Do not be a false witness. Do not cheat. Honor your father and mother.'"

"Teacher," he said, "I have obeyed all those commandments since I was a boy."

Jesus looked at him and loved him. "You are missing one thing," he said. "Go and sell everything you have. Give the money to those who are poor. You will have treasure in heaven. Then come and follow me." The man's face fell. He went away sad, because he was very rich.

Jesus looked around. He said to his disciples, "How hard it is for rich people to enter God's kingdom!" The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, "Children, how hard it is to enter God's kingdom! Is it hard for a camel to go through the eye of a needle? It is even harder for someone who is rich to enter God's kingdom!"

The disciples were even more amazed. They said to each other, "Then who can be saved?" Jesus looked at them and said, "With people, this is impossible. But not with God. All things are possible with God."

Then Peter spoke up, "We have left everything to follow you!"

"What I'm about to tell you is true," Jesus replied. "Has anyone left home or family or fields for me and the good news? They will receive 100 times as much in this world. They will have homes and families and fields. But they will also be treated badly by others. In the world to come they will live forever. But many who are first will be last. And the last will be first."

Mark 10: 17-31

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



Here are some questions to think about as you listen to the sermon.

1. Many people think that in order to go to heaven, you just have to be a good person. But what does it mean to be a good person? Can anyone *really* be good enough to follow God's law perfectly?
2. A lot of people put their trust in money to keep them safe and to protect them from hard times. What's the problem with putting our trust in something like money to save us?
3. Think about what Peter says to Jesus. He and the rest of the disciples have given up all of their possessions to follow Jesus. Does that earn them the right to go to heaven?
4. What do you think Jesus means when he says the first will be last and the last will be first?

Sometimes people forget that Jesus had a sense of humor. He often used jokes or funny stories to get his point across. Consider the joke he uses in this passage from Mark.

Can a camel EVER fit through the eye of a needle?

Jesus is telling us that NO ONE can get to heaven on their own efforts—you can't buy your way in, even if you had all the money in the world, and you can't earn your way in through good behavior. The only way in is through Jesus himself!

