

ETERNAL LIFE

Jesus's Gift of Salvation Demands Humility and Surrender

Matthew 19:16–30

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

Matthew 19 is all about what it truly means to follow Jesus.

Leading up to this moment:

- Jesus teaches about **commitment in marriage** (19:1–12)
- He welcomes **children**, showing that the Kingdom belongs to those with humble, dependent faith (19:13–15)

Then a rich young man approaches Jesus.

On the outside, he looks like the perfect candidate:

- Moral
- Successful
- Respectful

But Jesus exposes something deeper: You can look spiritually strong and still not be surrendered.

This passage is not just about money, it's about **what you trust for salvation**.

And when you zoom out to the bigger story of Scripture:

- Jesus is on His way to the cross
- He will die and rise again
- Eternal life will become a gift, not something earned

Which means:

Following Jesus requires **humility (I can't save myself)** and **surrender (I give Him everything)**

EXPLORE THE TEXT (KEY WORDS & IDEAS)

“Eternal Life” (v.16)

More than living forever, it's a restored relationship with God now and forever. It's about knowing God personally.

“Good” (v.17)

Jesus challenges the man's definition of “good.” Only God is truly good, so no one earns salvation through behavior.

“Follow Me” (v.21)

This is the core of discipleship. Not just believing facts about Jesus, but surrendering your life to Him.

“Treasure in Heaven” (v.21)

What lasts forever vs. what fades away. Your priorities reveal your heart.

“Camel...Eye of a Needle” (v.24)

A shocking image of impossibility. You cannot save yourself, no matter how successful you are.

“With God all things are possible” (v.26)

The Gospel in one sentence. Salvation is a miracle of grace.

“First...Last” (v.30)

God’s Kingdom flips worldly values upside down. It’s not about status, it’s about surrender.

5-DAY DEVOTIONAL

DAY 1: You Can’t Earn Eternal Life - Matthew 19:16–17

This young man asks a question a lot of people are thinking:

“What do I have to *do* to get eternal life?”

That’s how most people see God:

- Do more good than bad
- Be a decent person
- Try your best

But Jesus immediately shifts the focus. He basically says: “You don’t understand what ‘good’ really means.”

If only God is truly good...Then where does that leave us? Not good enough.

That’s not bad news, that’s the *starting point* of the Gospel.

Because until you realize: “I can’t earn this...” You’ll never fully receive: “Jesus already did this for me.”

Supporting Scripture:

- Ephesians 2:8–9
- Romans 3:23

Application:

- Stop trying to impress God
- Start trusting what Jesus has done

Challenge:

Finish this sentence honestly: "I feel like God will accept me if I _____."

Then replace it with: "God accepts me because of Jesus."

DAY 2: What Are You Holding Onto? - Matthew 19:18–22

The man says, "I've kept all these commandments." But Jesus goes deeper. "Go, sell...give...follow me." And the man walks away.

Why?

Because Jesus touched the one thing he wouldn't surrender.

It wasn't just money. It was control. Security. Identity.

Here's the reality for us:

You might not have millions of dollars...But you *do* have something you don't want to let go of:

- Your reputation
- Your friend group
- Your plans
- Your comfort

Following Jesus isn't about adding Him to your life...It's about giving Him your life.

Supporting Scripture:

- Luke 9:23
- 1 John 2:15–17

Application:

- Identify what matters most to you
- Ask if it's competing with Jesus

Challenge:

What's one thing you'd struggle to give up if Jesus asked?
Write it down. Pray over it.

DAY 3: The Danger of "Having It All" - Matthew 19:23–24

Jesus says something shocking: It's hard for the rich to enter the Kingdom.

Why?

Because when life feels secure... You stop feeling desperate for God. And desperation is where faith begins.

The image Jesus uses is extreme: A camel going through the eye of a needle

Impossible.

That's the point. Anything you trust in more than Jesus, even something good, can become a barrier to knowing Him.

For students, "rich" might look like:

- Being popular
- Being talented
- Having everything you want

None of those are bad... But they become dangerous when they replace dependence on God.

Supporting Scripture:

- 1 Timothy 6:9–10
- Proverbs 11:28

Application:

- Evaluate what you rely on
- Ask: “Do I need Jesus...or just like having Him?”

Challenge:

Take a break from something you depend on this week
Replace that time with prayer or Scripture

DAY 4: Only God Can Save - Matthew 19:25–26

The disciples are stunned: “Then who can be saved?”

Jesus answers with one of the most important truths in the Bible: “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

You don't save yourself.

You don't fix yourself.

You don't clean yourself up first.

God does what you cannot and this is where the resurrection changes everything:

Because Jesus:

- Lived perfectly
- Died in your place
- Rose again

Now salvation is possible, not because of you...But because of Him.

That means:

- No one is too far gone
- No sin is too big
- No story is too broken

Supporting Scripture:

- Romans 5:8
- Titus 3:5

Application:

- Stop trying to “fix yourself” before coming to God
- Trust His power, not your effort

Challenge:

Pray for one person who feels far from God. Ask God to do what only He can do

DAY 5: It's Worth Following Jesus - Matthew 19:27–30

Peter asks the question we all think: “What do we get out of following You?”

Jesus doesn't ignore it.

He promises:

- Eternal life
- Reward
- A place in His Kingdom

But then He flips expectations: “The first will be last, and the last first.”

In God's Kingdom:

- Popularity doesn't win
- Image doesn't matter
- Success isn't the goal

Faithfulness is.

Here's the truth for you: Following Jesus might cost you something now...But it will be worth everything forever.

And because Jesus rose from the grave: Eternal life isn't just your hope, it's your mission. We don't just follow Jesus...We help others find Him too

Supporting Scripture:

- Matthew 28:19–20
- 2 Corinthians 4:17–18

Application:

- Live with eternity in mind
- See your everyday life as a mission field

Challenge:

This week:

- Invite someone to church
- Share your story
- Start a conversation about Jesus

FINAL THOUGHT

The rich young ruler walked away...Not because Jesus wasn't enough, but because he wasn't willing to surrender.

Don't miss what he missed. Because eternal life is a gift...

But it comes through:

Humility — "I can't save myself"

Surrender — "Jesus, You can have everything"

And that changes not just your eternity...But your purpose right now.