

Treasure In Heaven

Mark 10:23, 24
Charlie Brackett

Jesus asked a rich, young ruler to sell all he had, give to the poor, and come follow him, but the young man refused because he was very rich. Having watched as the young man walked away, Jesus turned and looked around at His disciples. His expression must have been one of sadness. He came to seek and save the lost, but His offer of salvation had been rejected in favor of this world's wealth. Many have made the young man's choice, and it must always be a source of great sadness for the Savior.

Then Jesus said to His disciples, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!" Jesus didn't say a rich man *cannot* enter the kingdom of God, but that riches make it hard. Riches must be guarded lest they slip away, and having riches tempts one to seek more. Whether by honest or dishonest means, tending to and striving for wealth focuses attention on this world and away from heaven. Desire for this world's goods are increased and spiritual desires grow cold. Jesus said in Matthew 6:21 "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Jesus would have us lay up our treasures in heaven, not here on earth.

Further, the wealthy are tempted to pamper fleshly desires. Having and enjoying nice things is not necessarily wrong, but when there is plenty of money how easy it is to indulge physical senses. Spiritual appetites suffer when fleshly appetites are given full reign.

Such are the temptations of those who are rich. But those of us who must work for a living should also give heed. Anyone, no matter how much or little of this world's goods he has, can be guilty of the danger Jesus spotlighted for His disciples. In verse 23 He restated His warning changing the emphasis from those who *have* riches to those who *trust* in riches. Listen. "Children, how hard it is for those who *trust* in riches to enter the kingdom of God." Do you trust in riches? This is a piercing test of our commitment we would do well to administer from time to time lest in the judgment day we find we have laid up no treasures in heaven.