

## Trust Not In Riches

Mark 10:24-26  
Charlie Brackett

On the occasion of this text, Jesus was teaching His disciples regarding the difficulty of those who are rich. He said, "Children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God!" To explain just how hard He added, "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."

This expression: "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle," or one like it - "It is easier for an elephant to go through the eye of a needle" - was not uncommon in that day to show the impossibility, or near impossibility of a thing. It is, of course, a figurative expression. Jesus used it to emphasize for His disciples the impossibility of trusting in riches and entering the kingdom of heaven.

The disciples were greatly astonished. "Who then can be saved?" they wanted to know. They, as we, were prone to measure spiritual success in terms of physical success and well-being. Such a notion is not without Biblical precedent. Some of the faithful men of the Old Testament were rich men. They put their trust in God, and God blessed them materially. Abraham, Joseph, Job, Solomon, and Daniel are all examples. Of course, the key is: they put their trust in God, not in anything this world has to offer, whether riches, power or fame. When Jesus said, "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," He was speaking of the man who *trusts* in riches.

But it is a mistake to conclude that because one is rich God is blessing him. Many evil people are rich. The Bible recognizes that fact. Many of the Psalms and Proverbs refer to riches of the wicked. And Psalm 37:16 says, "A little that a righteous man has is better than the riches of many wicked."

There is a lot of evidence in the world of Christianity today that well-meaning people make the same mistake the disciples made. TV evangelists appeal to listeners on the basis of gain in this life. They promise success in business or marriage if you submit to Jesus. Yes, I've even heard them promise a fatter bank account if you will just give yourself to the Lord. Dear Reader, that is not a Biblical promise.

Jesus' words here call us from trusting in riches, and go on in verse 27 to redirect our trust to the Lord. (We'll look at that next time.) But, if you trust in God there are no guarantees you will be either rich or happy, in this life. Read Hebrews 11 where some, because of their faith, were delivered from disaster, and others, because of their faith, suffered in this life or even lost their lives. The message of Hebrews 11 is whether your life is filled with success or disaster, remain faithful. There are no guarantees for this life. The Lord's guarantees to the faithful have to do with the life to come.