

“The Follow Jesus Project”

Monday, Sept. 7

Scriptures to read: Matthew 19:16-22, Mark 10:17-22
Luke 18:18-23

Thoughts to consider:

The central character in today’s meeting with Jesus is unnamed but described with three adjectives: rich; young; ruler. He was probably a leader in a local synagogue and highly respected by his peers. He claimed to have kept all the commandments from his youth. His self-evaluation was exalted. At this time the Old Testament law was still in effect. You will note that Jesus loved him; however Jesus saw into his heart and saw that his deficiencies were central in his relationship with his fellowmen. It was necessary to remove the obstacle that kept him from trusting in Jesus. He was reluctant to do what the Lord required. Contrast his enthusiasm as he came running to Jesus, falling on his knees, with his exit when he “went away sorrowful.” Remember we lay up treasures in heaven only after we lay down our treasures on earth.

Tuesday, Sept. 8

Scriptures to read: Matthew 19:23-30, Mark 10:23-31
Luke 18:24-30

Thoughts to consider:

After the departure of the rich young ruler, the disciples were confused. These Scriptures discount the belief that riches constitute evidence of God’s approval of one’s life. There is nothing wrong with wealth in and of itself. A rich person often does not feel the need to trust in God. He feels self-sufficient. Poverty is not a key to Heaven, and riches are not a door to Hell. It is the state of the heart that makes the difference. Salvation is totally the work of God and not gained on the basis of achievement or merit. Salvation is given through the grace of God. Anything which we give up for Christ will seem as nothing compared to the riches of His kingdom.

Wednesday, Sept. 9

Scriptures to read: Matthew 20:1-16, Ephesians 2: 8-10, 2 Timothy 4:7,8

Thoughts to consider:

Salvation is a free gift bestowed by God. This parable does not justify death-bed repentance. It reminds us that we are not rewarded by how hard we have worked or how long we have followed Christ. Eternal life is a wonderful gift, more than any man is worthy to attain. No one in Heaven will be discontent. Serving the Lord is a distinct privilege and we should work diligently that all may become Christians as well as we. Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!

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Thursday, Sept. 10

Scriptures to read: Matthew 20:17-19, Mark 10:32-34, Luke 18:31-34

Thoughts to consider:

Note that in Jesus' predictions He included the entire gamut from His betrayal to His resurrection. It is interesting to also note that His death had been predicted many centuries previously. Jesus took His twelve apostles aside to give them these words. He did not want to stir up the crowd of pilgrims into riot and bloodshed. Jesus understood that even though death awaited Him, it would not be the conclusion of His life. It would set the stage for His greatest miracle. He was trying to give hope to the disciples who would be devastated at His crucifixion. Only later did the full significance of His prediction dawn upon them. Jesus' words should give us comfort in our times of suffering and cause us to look for eternity. May we endure them with cheerfulness and courage.

Friday, Sept. 11

Scriptures to read: Matthew 20:20-28, Mark 10:35-45

Thoughts to consider:

Jesus had told His apostles that they would sit on twelve thrones in Heaven. Perhaps this caused James and John (and/or their mother) to request the most important seats. Peter had already been granted an important role in Jesus' kingdom (Matthew 16:19). They may have felt that they were a part of the "inner circle" and entitled to these seats. The figurative use of a cup to represent sorrow can be found in the Old Testament. Jesus had used the figure of baptism to represent immersion in sorrow. We know that James was martyred and John was exiled. Jesus again reminded the apostles (and us) that in His kingdom ministering and serving are the key to greatness. Verse 45 should remind us of the price Jesus paid for our redemption.

Saturday, Sept. 12

Scriptures to read: Matthew 20:29-34, Mark 10:46-52, Luke 18:35-43

Thoughts to consider:

Matthew mentions two men whereas Mark and Luke mention one, Bartimeus. Perhaps they mention only him as he may have served as spokesman for the two of them. Blind beggars outside the city gates would have been a common sight. Some items of interest: 1) the title, Jesus, Son of David; 2) Jesus' compassion; 3) the blind men's faith caused their healing; 4) the blind men praised God; 5) the spectators also praised God. Jesus as the Light of the World has given light to the world and erases darkness and sin. We see that prayer should contain both faith and fervency. We should give praise to God for His mercies to others as well as for mercies for ourselves.

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