



# Tell me the stories of Jesus

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## Connect group questions

### *Legion and the Rich young ruler*

#### **Legion** - read Mark 5:1-20

1. Why was this man inhabited by a legion of demons?
2. How did the demons know who Jesus is?
3. What do we know about the area given that pigs were farmed?
4. What did Jesus do to the man, and how is this a symbol of Jesus' entire ministry?
5. What wouldn't Jesus allow the man to come with him?
6. Why did Jesus tell this man to go and tell what had happened to him, but in other places Jesus tells people he has healed not to say anything?
7. What was the take home from Susan's message for you?

#### **The Rich young ruler** - read Luke 18:18-30

8. What was Jesus teaching in this phrase 'no-one' is good but alone'?
9. Why did Jesus mention the particular commandments he did and how likely is it that this guy had kept them all? Why are people today under the impression that they keep the commandments?
10. v22 - why did Jesus ask this guy to sell everything he had? Why aren't we all doing this?
11. v24 - why is it any harder for rich people (that's us!) to enter the kingdom of God then for others?
12. How does God make what is impossible, possible?
13. Share how you have been compensated for anything you have given up to follow Jesus?
14. What are the take homes for *you* from this passage?

**Date:** 29<sup>th</sup> September 2019 and 6<sup>th</sup> October  
**Services:** 730am 29<sup>th</sup>, 930am Peregrin, 6<sup>th</sup> Oct  
**Series:** Tell me the stories of Jesus  
**Title:** The rich young ruler  
**Passage:** Luke 18:18-30  
**Outline:**

**6 surprises:**

1. **What must I DO!**
  2. **No one is good**
  3. **He's kept all the commandments**
  4. **Sell everything!**
  5. **How hard for rich people? Impossible!**
  6. **Compensation package**
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## INTRODUCTION

- I shared in a sermon a couple of weeks back, that in my life, the greatest contender for the role of 'god' is **me!**
- **I** am the god I am most likely to serve when I'm not serving the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!
- But one of the **other** great gods in society today – especially in the **west** – a god which gives people **comfort**; a false sense of **security**, the delusion of **power** and **control**... of **self-sufficiency**... is...// **wealth**.
- And it's fascinating to see how Jesus reacts to the young man in our passage who was obviously **very** wealthy... and unwilling to **part** with it...
- This is one of those passages which is full of **surprises**... and at first, raises more **questions** for us than it **answers**...
- So let me dive in and share with you 6 surprises, one by one. First is when the man asks:

### 1. **What must I do?**

- And the surprising thing about this **question** is the **answer**
- I've spent the last 10 years reminding you that inheriting eternal life is **not** about what we **DO**, but rather, what has been **DONE** for us – and in fact the clue is there in the text isn't it? – what must I do to **INHERIT** eternal life – an **inheritance** usually comes as a **gift**, not as something you **earn**.
- But it is Jesus' **answer** which is **surprising**...
- Because Jesus doesn't come back and say – well look young man – you have to understand that eternal life is not about what you **DO** but what is **about** to be **DONE** for you in my **death** and **resurrection**...
- ...no, Jesus goes on to talk about keeping the **commandments**... to talk about what the man must **DO**... we'd rather Jesus didn't that... that messes with our head a bit so we'll need to come **back** to **that**...
- but **before** we do – there is **another** surprise... namely Jesus' initial response and his comment that:

### 2. **No one is good**

- Have a look with me at v19 – "*why do you call me **good**?" Jesus answered. "No is good – except God alone"*.
- Jesus is challenging the young man to think **carefully** about who he is talking too...
- "Do you **see** what you are **saying**? – if no one is good but God **alone**.... are you calling me **God** in calling me **good**?..."
- This is **so relevant** all these centuries **later**.
- How many people **today** will acknowledge that Jesus was a **good man**... but **deny** the **implications** of who he claimed to **be**...?

- how **good** can he be in fact, if he **claimed** to come from **God**, but **didn't**? //
- but the implications of what Jesus is saying for **us** are **also** confronting...
- he's not only saying 'are you acknowledging in calling me '**good**' that I am '**God**'...? //
- ...he is pointing out that **no one IS truly good!**
- we don't **like** being told that.
- And when we think of some people we know in the world – who aren't even Christian – but spend their **life** doing good to others of some kind or another – we **want to ask – really Jesus....?** // **NO ONE** good?? Not **ONE**??
- Do **YOU** beg to **differ** with Jesus on that point?
- Well just **park** that thought **there** while we move to the **next surprise...** the claim from the young man that:

### 3. He's kept all the commandments

- Have a look with me at v20 – *you know the commandments: 'You shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, honour your father and mother.'*" 21 **All these I have kept since I was a boy, he said.**
- Why did Jesus **raise** these at **this point**?
- **Surely** to **ILLUSTRATE** the point that no one **IS good** but **God alone!**
- You know the **commandments...** and **no one can keep them...!** – **no-one** is good but **God alone!**
- But the man responds in the **same way** as most people do **today** – **Teacher** – I **keep** them. I **live** by them. **Have** done all my **life!** //
- You know what to do don't you when someone tells you they live by the ten **commandments?** – you say – **great** – let's **list** them together – **No 1....** and see how they **go...** //
- Mark in Mark's gospel tells us that Jesus **looked** at him and **loved** him. /
- **Why? What** stirred Jesus' emotions for that man that day...?
- I have often felt that **same way** for people who are **honestly believe** that they are doing all that is **right** to make it to **God...**
- they haven't done **anything** major **wrong...**,
- they are **good citizens....,**
- they **live** by the **commandments** (even if they **can't** list them),
- many have good **hearts** and good **wills...**
- and my heart goes **out** to them...
- because with the **best will** in the **world**, they have not understood that it **not** a matter of what they **DO**, it is a matter of **who** or **what** has **first allegiance** in their **life... first call** on their **devotion... first call** on their **time**, their **energy** – their **love**. It's a matter of who is **god** and who is calling the **shots**. //
- And Jesus puts his finger **right** on this issue in our **fourth surprise:**

### 4. Sell everything!

- Have a look with me at v22 *When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."* <sup>23</sup> *When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was very wealthy.*
- Jesus had **brilliantly** put his finger on what was keeping this man from **eternal life**.
- It wasn't a matter of him keeping the commandments at all... for no one can...
- No, Jesus had pierced right to the **heart** of this young man's life, and had **shown** him that he was owned by **another god** – in fact – **enslaved** to another god.

- His **allegiance, loyalty and love**, belonged to ANOTHER.
  - He had in fact **failed** to follow the ten commandments at the most **critical point** – commandment no 1 - *no other gods before Me*.
  - It's interesting isn't it that this man who had everything that **money and power and youth** could give him // nevertheless had wanted **MORE**.
  - There was **something** his wealth **hadn't** been able to **deliver** // eternal life! //
  - And he was **sad** because he was faced with a **choice**... he could **indeed** have what money could **never buy**, but it would **cost** him his **money**... and at **this stage** he wasn't prepared to **part** with that. //
  - Now let me ask you – do you think Jesus asks **everyone** to part with their **wealth** when they come to him... when they want to receive **eternal life**...?
  - **No!** – **unless** of course their **wealth** is their **GOD!** //
  - He **would** ask us to part with **anything** that has become **god** – so that we can serve him **first and only**.
  - **Anything** that would come **BEFORE** Him must **GO**.
  - Anything that would draw us **AWAY** from him must **GO**.
  - there must be **radical surgery** on anything that would **keep** us from **God**... for **THIS young man** – it was his **WEALTH!** //
  - Well – the man went away **sad** – for he wasn't prepared to **pay** that price! ///
  - Notice Jesus didn't run after him and say – look – I may have been overstepping the mark a little – Can you sell just a **little** bit?... that would be fine.... I don't want to **lose** you....! ///
  - Oh **no**...! there's no **compromise** here / and Jesus is prepared for him to walk **away**...!
  - And that leads Jesus to say
5. **How hard for rich people? Impossible!**

- Have a look with me at v24 *Jesus looked at him and said, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! 25 Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."*
- Before we explore **why** it is hard for the rich to enter the kingdom of God // – we need to be **clear** – that by **any world measurement** – **WE** are the rich being **referred** to **here!**
- I think we often look at this passage and think – oh those **poor rich people** – they get so **caught up** in their **wealth**... //
- But any world scale **friends**... **WE ARE** the **rich**...
- I visited a web site some time ago, where you can put in your **annual income** and it tells you where you come in the world... and my annual income puts me in the top **5%** of the **world** of the world's richest people. **95%** of the 7.5 billion people in the world have **less than me!**
- So what is it about **riches** -- **money, wealth, affluence** -- that make it so **hard** to enter the kingdom?
- Wealth creates a concern for **secondary values**.
- **Rich people** (like us) are not worried about where our next **meal** is coming from; we worry about what it will **taste like**, and what the **setting** will be.
- We're not concerned about whether we will have a **roof** over our **head** and **clothing** to **wear**; we are taken up with **fashion** and **style** and **decor**, and what everyone else is thinking about us...
- Furthermore, **wealth** destroys **teachability**.
- The person who has **power** because of their money begins to feel that they ought to be the **teacher**.
- They do not need to **learn** -- they already **know** everything!

- Finally, **affluence** gradually **enslaves** those who are attached to it.
- It builds an increasing **dependence** upon **comfort**, upon "*the good life*," until people reach a point where they **cannot** give it up.
- They are **owned** by their **possessions**.
- Like a **habit-forming drug**, they become **addicted** to **THINGS**... **addicted** to **comfort** and **ease**.
- so it **destroys** the **humility required** to examine their lives and to see the **truth** about **Jesus**.
- **This** is what was **happening** to this **rich young man**; // it's what is **happening** in Noosa – in **Australia** – in much of the **western world today**...
- And that sparks a question among the disciples... perhaps it's **your** question too... have a look with me at v26 *Who then can be saved?*  
*Jesus replied, "What is **impossible** with **man** is **possible** with **God**."*
- **impossible** to enter the kingdom – **impossible** for **men and women**. As **impossible** as for a **camel** through the eye of a **needle**. //
- But **not** with **God**.
- With **people** it is **impossible**, but not with **God**.
- **God** can break that **enslavement** to **riches** // and he **does**.
- And we 60/150 or so gathered here this morning are **testimony** to that.
- How **hard** it is for the rich to enter the **Kingdom** of **God**!! – but **praise** be to **God** – that quite possibly **all** of us here this morning – **have** in fact entered!
- **Entirely** of God's **GRACE** //
- He has **freed** us from the **arrogance** of **wealth**, shown us that we can't **possibly** keep the commandments.... shown us thereby of our need for **Jesus**, and then **drawn** us to **himself**.
- **Praise God!** //
- *What is **impossible** with **man**, is **possible** with **God**.*
- And that brings us to the **final** surprise – the

## 6. Compensation package

- Have a look with me at v24 "*no one who has left home or wife or brothers or sisters or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God <sup>30</sup> will fail to receive many times as much in this age, and in the age to come eternal life.*"
- whatever we have walked **away** from to give our **allegiance** to **Christ**... we will **gain** much **more** of – both in **this** life – and in the **life to come**.
- So **had** this man given **up** his wealth // then his wealth in **relationships** – his wealth in **blessing** – his wealth in **family** – would be **far greater**, as he enjoyed all that it means to be in relationship with the Lord Jesus and with the community of God's people.
- My prayer is for any **here** today – for whom **anything** or **someone else** is more **important** than our great **God**... // ...that by **God's grace**, you would **give it up**...
- // walk **away** – and come **receive** the **kingdom** and **all** its **blessings** which the Lord has prepared for you... for whatever you are called on to **give up** to **follow Jesus** – will be **more** than **compensated** for – both in **this** world and the **next**...
- Some of you will recall the interview I screened last year with this man **Jeremiah**... who came to Australia from Pakistan to study business studies with a view to returning home to take over the family **business**.
- Jeremiah was a devout **Muslim** when he came to Australia.
- He met **Jesus**... and began studying for ordination as an Anglican **minister**... in **this** portion of the interview he was telling me about what happened when he told his **parents** he had turned to **Jesus**...

## • RUN INTERVIEW

- ...and Jeremiah's testimony is that he **now** has a **new** family of **brothers** and **sisters** in **Christ Jesus**... and what a tremendous **blessing** that has been to him...! /
  - And friends, if our riches make it hard to first **ENTER** the kingdom... then we must be absolutely **diligent** to ensure they **never** come **BETWEEN** us and **God**... that we use our wealth **wisely** – that we use it to **give** to the **poor** and to **support ministry** and that we hold on to it **loosely**... //
  - Well six **surprises**... and now six **questions** with which to finish:
1. **What must I DO to inherit eternal life?**  
my **question?** – have you come to understand that inheriting eternal life is not about what you **DO**, but trusting in what has been **DONE for you** by our **Lord Jesus**?
  2. **No one is good**  
have you come to understand that **no one is good** but God **alone**... not even **you**? – and that Jesus is **good** because he is in fact, **God**?
  3. **He's kept all the commandments**  
have you come to understand that **despite** this man's **claim**, no one but **Jesus** has kept **all** the **commandments**...? // Which is why we must **rely** on what Jesus has **done** for **us**?
  4. **Sell everything!**  
Have you come to understand that this man's **problem** was that his **wealth** was his **god**? Is there any other god before the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ in your life?
  5. **How hard for rich people? Impossible!**  
Have you come to understand that **WE** are the rich of this world – and that only by God's **grace** have we been released from wealth's hold on us, along with all its false promises, to trust **entirely** in **Jesus**?
  6. **Compensation package**  
have you come to understand that whatever it is **YOU** may be called on to give up to follow Jesus... you will receive **way more in return** – both in **this** world and the **next**...?