

POSSESSIONS & THE KINGDOM

Mark 10; Isaiah 51:17; 1 Peter 4:13

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When we began to look for a preschool for my son, all the women in the neighborhood said, “It’s too late. You should have applied when he was first born to get him on the waitlist. Now you’ll never be able to get into the school you want.” My son was only two at the time! How was I to know getting into preschool would be almost impossible?

There were so many ways I wanted to solve the problem. *Should we see if we have any connection to the school? Should we tell them we’re really nice people, so they will accept our son? What would it take to get us in?*

Similar questions were raised in Mark 10, when the disciples were concerned about getting into heaven. In this chapter, a rich young ruler asked how to inherit eternal life (vv.17–22). He seemed to be doing all the right things, but he could not give up his affection for wealth in order to follow Jesus. And then Jesus said that it’s easier for “a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God” (v.25). At this, the disciples grew worried. *How would they ever be able to enter heaven? What more could they do to get into the kingdom of God?*

Whether we’re aware of it or not, we often try to prove ourselves worthy of our spot in the kingdom. We want to be seen giving to charity, praying the best prayers, and reading our Bibles daily so our salvation seems credible. If our salvation rested on us alone, though, we would also need to reconcile our sin, much like the rich young ruler. What comforts do we still cling to? What idols are we still resistant to rid ourselves of? Do we really want God more than anything or anyone else?

Thankfully, our ability to follow Jesus does not rest on our strength. Like James and John, who wondered how they could get a seat of honor in heaven, we may think we can earn our way into God’s kingdom. The truth is, redemption is an act only God Himself can accomplish. “With man it is impossible, but not with God, because all things are possible with God” (Mark 10:27).

God opened the gates to His kingdom through Jesus’s death and resurrection. There are no waitlists in God’s kingdom. There are no impossible standards of holiness to attain—only the perfect righteousness Jesus already achieved and extends to us.

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