

# Threading Salvation's Needle

Matthew 19:16-30

- I. **THE QUESTION OF GOODNESS** (16-21) —“What good thing must I do to get eternal life?”
- A. **Who Is Good?** (17; Rom 3:10, 23; Ecc 7:20)—*Only God*
- B. **What Is Good?** (16, 21; Dt 12:23; Ps 119:9; Js 2:10-11)—*Complete Moral Perfection as commanded in the Law of God, which reflects God's Holy Character*
1. **All the Right Things**—doing everything commanded, avoiding everything forbidden
  2. **For the Right Reasons**—love of God and neighbors, sincerely and from the heart
  3. **All the Time**—consistently
  4. **In Thought, Word, and Deed**—all of us (heart, soul, mind, strength)
- C. **What Is Good Enough?** (18)—*Only the perfect righteousness of Christ will do*  
 ➔ *Lowering the standard of God's Law insults the holiness of God's character and demeans the necessity of Christ's death on the cross.*
- II. **THE QUESTION OF RICHES** (21-23)—“Sell your possessions and give to the poor...”  
 (Diagnostic Test)
- A. **A Clarification of Condition** (20; Lk 2:34-35) —“All these I have kept,’ the young man said.”
1. **Knowledge of Self** (Jer 17:9)—self perception unsubstantiated by the evidence  
*He went away sorrowful.*
  2. **Knowledge of Scripture** (Heb 4:12-13)—Scripture reveals and judges us
    - a. **Understanding the Commandments** (Rom 3:20)—*Jesus always goes for the heart.*
    - b. **Allowing Them to Convict Us** (2 Tim 3:16 & 4:2)—*teach, rebuke, correct, train*

**B. A Conflict of Interest — *idolatry of the heart***

1. **Temporal or Eternal** (Mat 6:19-21; Ps 49:10; Heb 11:24)—*Question of Value*
2. **Self and Neighbor** (Ex 20:12-17; Lev 19:18)—*Question of Love*
3. **God or Money** (Mat 6:24; 1 Tim 6:10; Heb 13:5)—*Question of Worship*

**III. THE QUESTION OF SALVATION (22-26) — “Who then can be saved?”**

**A. The Use of a Metaphor (24)—*a camel going through the eye of a needle***

1. **The After-Hours Gate in the Wall**—must be stripped of everything to enter
2. **The Literal Picture**—completely humanly impossible; requires a miracle

**B. The Reality of the Situation**

1. **Impossible** (Josh 24:19; Isa 64:6; Jer 13:28 & 17:9; Rom 3:10)—*humanly speaking, no chance; salvation requires a miraculous act of God* (We are the blind, the lame, the prisoners, the dead...)
2. **Possible** (Jer 17:14; Ezek 36:26-27)—*nothing is impossible for God; Jesus is willing and able to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves* (Jesus’ miracles are the sign of a greater salvation.)

**C. The Cost of Eternal Life (21)**

1. **Leave Everything**
2. **Follow Jesus**

**IV. THE QUESTION OF REWARD (27-30) — “What then will there be for us?”**

**A. Everyone is seeking a reward. (Gen 15:1)**

**B. Seeking a reward is evidence of worship. (Heb 11:6, 26)**

*What are you seeking and from whom are you seeking it?*

**C. Jesus promises superior rewards. (Mat 6:4, 6, 18, 20, 33; 10:41-42; 16:27; 19:21, 29)**  
*Compensation in this world; Eternal Life in the world to come*