

# TheChildrensSermon.com

Proper 23B - Ordinary 28B - Pentecost +19  
Sunday, October 11, 2009  
Mark 10:17-31

## The Eye of a Needle...

As he was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" <sup>18</sup>Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. <sup>19</sup>You know the commandments: 'You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; You shall not defraud; Honor your father and mother.'"

He said to him, "Teacher, I have kept all these since my youth." <sup>21</sup>Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, "You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." <sup>22</sup>When he heard this, he was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions.

Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!" <sup>24</sup>And the disciples were perplexed at these words. But Jesus said to them again, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! <sup>25</sup>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." <sup>26</sup>They were greatly astounded and said to one another, "Then who can be saved?" <sup>27</sup>Jesus looked at them and said, "For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible."

Peter began to say to him, "Look, we have left everything and followed you." <sup>29</sup>Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields, for my sake and for the sake of the good news, <sup>30</sup>who will not receive a hundredfold now in this age—houses, brothers and sisters, mothers and children, and fields with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. <sup>31</sup>But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first."

(Note: For today's sermon you will need a sewing needle.)

I brought something to show you today – it's a needle, for sewing. I'll walk it around so you can take a look. One end is very sharp and the other you'll notice (if you look very closely) has a tiny hole in it. We call this hole the "eye" of the needle. It's where you put the thread. The eye of a needle is awfully small – and it has to be - because the whole needle needs to be small enough to pull right through the cloth that you are sewing.

I brought this to show you because today's Gospel lesson includes one of Jesus' most famous sayings – and it's about the eye of a needle.

A rich man comes to Jesus and asks him how to enter heaven. One of the things Jesus tells him is that he should sell his things and give the money to the poor. The man is a little surprised by this and goes away unhappy because he has a lot of special things.

After he goes, Jesus explains to the disciples that it would be easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. Do you think a big animal like a camel could fit through this tiny hole? Sounds impossible to me. So why do you think that Jesus would tell them

this? Why would he tell them that it's impossible for a rich man to go to heaven? (Solicit children's answers.)

I think you've figured it out. Jesus often tells us about how we should behave and treat others, especially others who need our help. Jesus is talking about greed – and reminding us that when we are lucky enough to have money that we should use it for more than ourselves. That doesn't mean that we don't have clothes to wear, or a place to live, but that helping to take care of others is more important than having more and more and more things.

Let's pray.

Dear God,

Thank you for blessing us with the things we need in life – and for helping us to remember that sharing these blessings with others is our responsibility.

Amen

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