

Worship at home – 10th October 2021

Key Scriptures: Mark 10:17-31

Key Themes:

This week we explore what can get in the way of our relationship with God.

Call to Worship:

Lord God, the rich man had obviously been pondering. His thoughts brought him to his knees before you. He thought eternal life was something he could achieve. But he suspected there was more to know. And he was right! We come today with our ponderings, to bow before you. To ask you to meet us here and teach us with words of eternal life.

Amen.

Hymn: All I Once Held Dear

All I once held dear, built my life upon
All this world reveres and wars to own
All I once thought gain I have counted loss
Spent and worthless now, compared to this

Knowing You, Jesus
Knowing You
There is no greater thing
You're my all, You're the best
You're my joy, my righteousness
And I love You, Lord

Now my heart's desire is to know You more
To be found in You and known as Yours
To possess by faith what I could not earn
All-surpassing gift of righteousness

Knowing You, Jesus
Knowing You
There is no greater thing
You're my all, You're the best
You're my joy, my righteousness
And I love You, Lord

Oh, to know the power of Your risen life
And to know You in Your sufferings
To become like You in Your death, my Lord
So with You to live and never die

Knowing You, Jesus
Knowing You
There is no greater thing
You're my all, You're the best
You're my joy, my righteousness
And I love You, Lord
And I love You, Lord
And I love You, Lord

Knowing You, Jesus
Knowing You
There is no greater thing
You're my all, You're the best
You're my joy, my righteousness
And I love You, Lord

Lord we express our love to You
In worship and praise before Your throne
Blessed be Your holy name

Source: [Musixmatch](#)

Songwriters: Kendrick Graham A

Prayers: Adoration:

God of all relationships.
God of solved problems
You care so much for each one of us.

We praise and worship you, O God.

Whether our problems feel tiny and hardly worth bothering you with.
Or huge – just huge
You are always there for us.

We praise and worship you, O God.

All things are possible with you most mighty God,
You are the God of eternal life.
You are always at the heart of all our concerns.

We praise and worship you, O God.

Amen.

Prayer of Confession:

Lord, there are so many things that can get in the way of our relationship with you.
We offer them to you now and ask that you will forgive us and show us new ways to
always put you first. Whatever that may take. Grant us your wisdom, Lord.

Amen

Assurance of forgiveness:

As we bow before you now, our hearts contrite

All things are possible with God

You call us to yourself and bless us with the assurance that our sins are completely
washed away in you.

All things are possible with God.

We thank you for your forgiveness. We bless you, Lord.

All things are possible with God

Amen.

Psalms 90:13-17

¹³ How much longer will your anger last?

Have pity, O LORD, on your servants!

¹⁴ Fill us each morning with your constant love,

so that we may sing and be glad all our life.

¹⁵ Give us now as much happiness as the sadness you gave us during all our years of misery.

¹⁶ Let us, your servants, see your mighty deeds; let our descendants see your glorious might.

¹⁷ Lord our God, may your blessings be with us. Give us success in all we do!

Reading: Mark 10:17-31 – The rich man

¹⁷ As Jesus was starting on his way again, a man ran up, knelt before him, and asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to receive eternal life?”

¹⁸ “Why do you call me good?” Jesus asked him. “No one is good except God alone. ¹⁹ You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit murder; do not commit adultery; do not steal; do not accuse anyone falsely; do not cheat; respect your father and your mother.’”

²⁰ “Teacher,” the man said, “ever since I was young, I have obeyed all these commandments.”

²¹ Jesus looked straight at him with love and said, “You need only one thing. Go and sell all you have and give the money to the poor, and you will have riches in heaven; then come and follow me.” ²² When the man heard this, gloom spread over his face, and he went away sad, because he was very rich.

²³ Jesus looked around at his disciples and said to them, “How hard it will be for rich people to enter the Kingdom of God!”

²⁴ The disciples were shocked at these words, but Jesus went on to say, “My children, how hard it is to enter the Kingdom of God! ²⁵ It is much harder for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle.”

²⁶ At this the disciples were completely amazed and asked one another, “Who, then, can be saved?”

²⁷ Jesus looked straight at them and answered, “This is impossible for human beings but not for God; everything is possible for God.”

²⁸ Then Peter spoke up, “Look, we have left everything and followed you.”

²⁹ “Yes,” Jesus said to them, “and I tell you that those who leave home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and for the gospel, ³⁰ will receive much more in this present age. They will receive a hundred times more houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and fields—and persecutions as well; and in the age to come they will receive eternal life. ³¹ But many who are now first will be last, and many who are now last will be first.”

Meditation: The First will be last.

The Voice of the Rich Man.

I have known for a while that there was something missing in my life, but I couldn't put my finger on it. I had worked hard, in my personal life, my work life and my spiritual life. I had money to spare, lots of it, and I had kept all the commandments laid down by God since I was a child. Yet, something in me knows that somehow I was falling short. I had heard talk of a new teacher in town, who spoke with authority and clarity, so I dressed in my finest clothes and went out in search of the allusive piece of my puzzle.

I didn't have to go far before I saw a huge crowd and as I pushed my way to the front there he stood. Not clothed expensively, as I was, but in a simple robe. Suddenly, I was less concerned about my clothes, and I fell at his feet in front of him. "Good teacher". I said "what must I do to gain eternal life"

I smiled at me and helped me to my feet. He asked if I followed all the commandments, and I told him I did. Then he looked me up and down. "There is one thing left for you to do" he said. "Yes, Yes" I replied for by now I thought I was ready to do whatever it took to follow him. "Go and sell all you have and give the money to the poor, then come and join me."

As his words hit my ears my heart sank. What did he mean, sell everything? I am a man of means, Can't I buy my way in, or offer a bribe. I am not a bad man, just a rich one, surely that's enough. Yet now he says sell everything, give it to the poor and come to me with nothing. I don't think so. He'd rather have me poor and with him, than rich and with him - what kind of thinking is this. I left, angry and frustrated, but more than that, disappointed at myself. I wanted something for nothing, I wanted to serve God, but was unwilling to give up my love of money. I was not able to put others before myself, and this Jesus saw straight through me.

Later, I heard him talking to his disciples. "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God" he said. "When the new realm comes the first will be last and the last first."

In the years to come I remembered that time and again. In this life, I was first, I had money, and possessions to spare, but what did I have to show for my existence? I was alone, and empty. However, those with no material good, were happy, fulfilled and whole. They had said "Yes" to following him and had given all of themselves wholeheartedly. How foolish I was to put my love of money above my love of him, and his love for me. Is it too late? Could I have a second chance? Is the invitation still on the table? Will the opportunity come again? I hope and pray that it will, and this time I will make a different choice.

Pause for thought:

- Once again, Mark presents a moment of decision that squeezes the heart of an unnamed man, Peter and the disciples and, indeed Jesus himself.
- It begins with a seemingly simple question.
- what must I do to receive eternal life?"
- Jesus' initial response is abrasive though not unsympathetic.
- However, the second part of the answer is crushing and cost far too much for the rich man.
- The man's response and his subsequent actions expose his concerns and his unwillingness to go the whole way with God.
- Also, his anxiety is for himself, for what he thinks he will lose.
- The middle part of the story might suggest that Jesus rejects all wealth.

- The saying about the camel and the eye of a needle is of a proverbial type and is intended to be absurd in order to heighten the response:
- “Then who can be saved?”
- The answer of course is in the final statement:
- “For God all things are possible”
- The last word is with the disciples who did give up everything to follow Jesus.
- Jesus’ response is to remind them that they already have their reward.
- Their reward is not monetary but becoming members of a new community in the extended family of God’s people.
- For the rich man, he had kept all the laws and commandments required of him, but his money got in the way of him having a true and meaningful relationship with God.
- I wonder what gets in the way of us having true and meaningful relationships with God.
- Maybe our pride, our money, the grudges we might carry, the hurt we might hold, the unspoken words of forgiveness that perhaps might need to be said.
- Then, we like the rich man are asked to give up what stands in the way.
- To allow God to stand in the gap.
- Jesus asks the rich man to give up all he had to follow him.
- Jesus asks us to give of our very selves to follow him, are we willing to do that or are we. like the rich man, going to walk away?

Intercessions:

“Good Teacher, what must I do to win eternal life?”

Judge of all, we pray for those whose lives fall short of your standards and who need your help and guidance. Of course, we are all in this place but in particular today we pray for governments who have failed their people. Families full of disagreement and misery. Churches without vision or joy. Women and men whose lives are empty and meaningless.

Good Teacher, show us what to do to win eternal life.

Help us to seek good and not evil: **That we might live.**

“I have kept all the commandments since I was a boy.”

Ruler of all, we pray for those whose lives are ruled by observance of duty, and not by love, we recognise that this is all of us, but we pray today for:

Government who executes justice without mercy. Families who care for but do not delight in one another. Churches where doctrine matters more than people. Women and men who judge and condemn others.

Good Teacher, show us what to do to win eternal life.

Help us to seek good and not evil: **That we might live.**

“Go sell everything you have and give to the poor. Then come and follow me”.

Saviour of all, we pray for those who long to let go of all that holds them back from following you, yet are afraid, sometimes we are all like this but today we pray for: Governments under the thumb of the wealthy and the powerful. Families burdened by the materialism of society.

Churches unwilling to use their resources to alleviate need. Women and men who dare not give their lives to you.

Good Teacher, show us what to do to win eternal life.

Help us to seek good and not evil: **That we might live.**

We continue to pray for: 0Good Teacher, show us what to do to win eternal life.

Help us to seek good and not evil: **That we might live.**

Sarah and Brain Margetts – Dalwood

Gill and Geoff Nicholas – Axminster.

In the name of Christ, your Word made flesh.

Amen

Hymn: When I Survey written by Isaac Watts

When I survey the wondrous cross

On which the Prince of glory died

My richest gain I count but loss

And pour contempt on all my pride

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast

Save in the death of Christ my God

All the vain things that charm me most

I sacrifice them to His blood

See from His head, His hands, His feet

Sorrow and love flow mingled down

Did e'er such love and sorrow meet

Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of Nature mine

That were an offering far too small

Love so amazing, so divine

Demands my soul, my life, my all

Were the whole realm of Nature mine

That were an offering far too small

Love so amazing, so divine

Demands my soul, my life, my all

Source: [Musixmatch](https://www.musixmatch.com)

Blessing:

Loving God, we commit to following you this week into corners of the community we usually prefer to ignore. Help us to pray and speak and act for change.

Amen