Series: The Gospel of Luke

Sermon: Riches, Camels & Needlepoint

Passage: Luke 18:18-34 (ESV)

Illustration:

Need: Jesus demonstrates how powerfully distracting that earthly riches are to the gospel and faith in Him.

I.   An honest question. (18-22)

- Luke identifies this man as a "ruler" which likely meant he was a member of the Jewish Sanhedrin or one who was moving in that direction since Matthew refers to him as "young."
- This ruler asks Jesus to make clear what he must do to inherit eternal life (enter Messiah's kingdom).
- Jesus points him to 5 of the 10 commandments (#s 7, 6, 8, 9 & 5) which the man believes he has fulfilled.
- To demonstrate the man's failure to "have no other gods before God (#1)" he commands him to sell all his possessions, give the proceeds to the poor and follow Jesus.
- Jesus did not prescribe a saving work but a work that would demonstrate saving faith **(Gal. 2:16)**.
- This man was "extremely rich" and went away sad because following Jesus would cost him too much.

II.   A sad reality. (23-25)

- When it comes to protecting riches or embracing Jesus, riches usually wins.
- The odds favor a huge camel being able to squeeze through the eye of a surgical needle, impossible.
- Earthly riches pose a great obstacle to the message of the gospel for most who have them.
- Earthly riches provide a false sense of security both physical and spiritual.
- Earthly riches become an idol to worship and protect at all cost.

III.   A glorious promise. (26-34)

- What is impossible for man (salvation), however, IS possible with God.
- Entrance into God's Kingdom is impossible apart from God's intervention through Messiah's work and man's obedient response to Messiah.
- Jesus promised rewards to all those who forsake everything to follow Him both now and in the future.

IV. Things to remember and consider:

1. Following Jesus is about confessing Him as the crucified and risen Savior but it also costs you everything.
2. What on earth is more important to you than your pursuit of and obedience to Jesus?