

“Through the Needle’s Eye” Sunday School Lesson from Mark 10:17-31

 ministry-to-children.com/eye-of-needle-lesson

October 13, 2015

This free Bible lesson is based on Mark 10:17-31 when Jesus speaks about the rich. It is designed for children’s church or Sunday School. Please modify as best fits your ministry. If your church follows the Revised Common Lectionary, this teaching plan would correspond to Year B – 20th Sunday after Pentecost, Gospel Reading – Mark 10:17-31.

Opening Activity – Through the Needle’s Eye – Can it Fit?

Supplies – dry ingredient measuring cup (any size), clear containers with water, large tray or bin

Pre-Class Prep – Fill your clear containers with water. Use the measuring cup to fill a few so they will be an exact fit, then fill others with a little bit less, a little bit more, a lot less, and a lot more. Try to use different types of containers so the kids can’t simply compare the waterline.

Place your supplies on a table so everyone can see. Then, choose one container of water and a volunteer. Ask the volunteer whether or not they think the water will fit in the measuring cup, or if it will be too much, or too little, and ask the rest of the class if they agree. Then, ask the volunteer to hold the measuring cup above the tray or bin, and slowly pour the water into the measuring cup. Continue until you have made it through each container of water.

Lesson – Through the Needle’s Eye

Supplies – sewing needle, thread, thick yarn, small piece of woven cloth with raw edges
Raise your hand if you got all of them right. Raise your hand if you got most of them right.
Raise your hand if you got half of them right. I think all of you did a fantastic job!

When we were guessing to see what would fit, it was hard to tell on a few of those. It would look like it was going to be a perfect fit, then spill over. But a few of those were really easy to figure out. Those cups had a TON of water in them, and there was absolutely no way it was going to fit. I want to try a few more of these, but they are going to be a little bit different.

This time we have hole, and we need to guess if an object can fit through that hole.

Are we ready to play “Can it Fit?”

Before we can begin guessing, we need to have our hole. And here it is, our hole! Can you see it? This hole is really teeny tiny. All the way on this end of the needle there is a little hole. It is so small you probably can't see it, but I promise you it's there.

First up, I have a piece of thread. What do you think, can it fit? It fits! Thread is exactly what this hole is made for, so it is a perfect fit.

Next up we have this piece of yarn. It's a little bit bigger, but it's still pretty small. So, can it fit?

Nope. It won't fit. It's just a little bit too big.

And last up, we have this piece of fabric. What do you think, can it fit? I try, and try, and try, but there is NO WAY this is ever going to fit. It's just too big.

Jesus actually talked about this in the Bible, only instead of trying to fit yarn and fabric through the hole, He talked about something MUCH bigger.

A rich man came to Jesus one day and asked what he needed to do to be able to get to heaven, and Jesus said he needed to follow the 10 Commandments. The rich man told Jesus he already did that, so Jesus asked him to do one more thing. "Go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor." The rich man wasn't ready for that answer. Maybe if Jesus wanted him to give a little bit to the poor, but all of it? Everything he owned and worked so hard for? Then he would be even poorer than the poor. The rich man couldn't do it, and he left very sad and upset.

Then Jesus turned to His disciples, who had all seen what had happened. Jesus told them that it was easier for a camel to fit through the hole of a needle, than for a rich man to make it to heaven. A camel! The huge, tall, animal that likes to spit and lives in the desert. A camel, through this teeny tiny hole. What do you think, can it fit?

Do you want to know why Jesus said it was so hard? The rich man's greed. Greed is when you love money and things more than you love God and people. And loving God and people is actually what the 10 Commandments are all about.

The disciples didn't like hearing this. How was anyone supposed to make it to heaven? Why would God want to make it so impossible? But Jesus told them it wasn't impossible, because with God ALL things are possible. If the rich man would turn to God and allow God to change him, he would make it to heaven. No matter how greedy he was, God could make it possible.

Let's look at our fabric again. I'm going to try one more time to see if I can make this fit. I mean, didn't we just say that with God all things are possible?

Still no. It just isn't going to happen. Unless...

What did we just say about the rich man? What did he need to do in order to make it into heaven? The rich man needed to let God change him.

I wonder if that would work for this fabric. Do you think we could change it somehow and make it fit?

You know, fabric is actually just a whole bunch of thread woven together. And what was the only thing so far to fit through the hole in the needle? Thread! If we were to change it by taking it apart into individual threads, this piece of fabric should make it through that hole.

Let's try it. I'm going to start with a thread from the outside, and I'm going to smooth it out really good. (If it is frayed, dampen the ends to get the fibers to lay down.) Are you ready?

Here it goes...

It worked! Let's do another one.

This is actually working! If we took this whole piece of fabric apart, we would be able to fit the whole thing through the hole in the needle. And it's still the fabric. We didn't turn it into mustard, or make it disappear; we changed it, but it's still the same piece of fabric we started with. It's just like how God can change the rich man. The rich man is still the same man. If his name was Anthony James and he was 6 feet tall with brown hair and green eyes, even after God changed him, he would still be 6 foot tall Anthony James, with brown hair and green eyes. God just changed his heart to make the impossible, possible.

No one can make it to heaven on their own. Even if they try really hard, follow all the rules, give away their money, and preach all day every day, it is still not enough. Without God, it is impossible to get to heaven. We all have to let God change us, to turn us into who He wants us to be. We will still be the same people, we will just be the kind of person who gets to go to heaven. Because with God all things are possible.

Activity A – Through the Needle's Eye – Bible Verse Challenge

Supplies – Bibles

Verse – Mark 10:27

Pass out Bibles to students. Bibles should be closed and sitting on the table face up in front of each child. When you say go, have the kids look up this week's Bible verse. As each child finds the verse, have them stick one finger on the verse and quietly raise their other hand.

The first one to find the verse gets to read it to the rest of the class.

Help younger kids and new kids find the verse by following these steps.

Look in the Table of Contents for the book you are looking for. Make an effort to show them if it is found in the Old Testament or New Testament to help them in the future. Then open the Bible to the page number listed in the Table of Contents.

Show them the large numbers in the text, known as the chapters. Flip through pages until

you find the large chapter number you are looking for.

Then scan through the text with them pointing out the smaller verse numbers until the correct number is found.

Activity B – Through the Needle’s Eye – Nothing is Impossible

Supplies – plain white paper, scissors

Give each child a single piece of paper and a pair of scissors. Give them five minutes to fit through the paper, keeping it a single piece and not using any tape, glue, staples, folds, etc. to hold ends together. While they are working on theirs, take a single piece of paper, fold it in half lengthwise, then alternating sides, make cuts roughly 1 inch apart, stopping roughly 1 inch from the opposite edge. Leaving the ends intact, cut along the fold line.

When the five minutes are up, stretch your paper apart to create a giant ring, and step through it.

Remind the kids that nothing is impossible with God. The piece of paper is still the piece of paper, you just changed it to make it big enough to for you to step through.

Closing Prayer – Through the Needle’s Eye

Ask for a volunteer to pray for the class before leaving, and encourage them to ask God to change them, so that they can be the person He wants them to be.

***Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible,
but not with God; all things are possible with God."
Mark 10:27 ESV***



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Mark 10:17-31

S	N	N	E	S	S	H	E	E	G	O	S	G	G
T	E	E	E	I	M	S	O	J	M	O	A	E	I
N	L	G	R	L	C	L	N	A	M	C	D	S	V
E	B	M	V	E	D	I	N	M	O	S	T	E	E
M	I	O	S	U	H	E	A	V	E	N	E	E	T
D	S	J	E	S	V	O	E	C	E	F	U	N	N
N	S	E	R	O	O	P	I	N	O	E	R	M	S
A	O	S	L	D	B	R	K	I	N	G	D	O	M
M	P	U	F	O	L	L	O	W	S	P	N	E	E
M	I	S	C	S	A	T	O	H	R	E	D	H	C
O	T	R	E	A	S	U	R	E	L	I	F	E	A
C	E	D	L	M	T	T	E	A	C	H	E	R	M
C	G	R	N	O	O	B	L	S	G	N	M	R	E
E	T	E	R	N	A	L	D	M	P	E	D	U	L

CAMEL
 GIVE
 POOR
 TEACHER
 JESUS
 FOLLOW
 TREASURE
 GOD
 NEEDLE
 LIFE
 POSSIBLE
 HEAVEN
 COMMANDMENTS
 ETERNAL
 KINGDOM

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S	N	N	E	S	S	H	E	E	G	O	S	G	G
T	E	E	E	I	M	S	O	J	M	O	A	E	I
N	L	G	R	L	C	L	N	A	M	C	D	S	V
E	B	M	V	E	D	I	N	M	O	S	T	E	E
M	I	O	S	U	H	E	A	V	E	N	E	E	T
D	S	J	E	S	V	O	E	C	E	F	U	N	N
N	S	E	R	O	O	P	I	N	O	E	R	M	S
A	O	S	L	D	B	R	K	I	N	G	D	O	M
M	P	U	F	O	L	L	O	W	S	P	N	E	E
M	I	S	C	S	A	T	O	H	R	E	D	H	C
O	T	R	E	A	S	U	R	E	L	I	F	E	A
C	E	D	L	M	T	T	E	A	C	H	E	R	M
C	G	R	N	O	O	B	L	S	G	N	M	R	E
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Mark 10:17-31

S	N	N	E	S	S	H	E	E	G	O	S	G	G
T	E	E	E	I	M	S	O	J	M	O	A	E	I
N	L	G	R	L	C	L	N	A	M	C	D	S	V
E	B	M	V	E	D	I	N	M	O	S	T	E	E
M	I	O	S	U	H	E	A	V	E	N	E	E	T
D	S	J	E	S	V	O	E	C	E	F	U	N	N
N	S	E	R	O	O	P	I	N	O	E	R	M	S
A	O	S	L	D	B	R	K	I	N	G	D	O	M
M	P	U	F	O	L	L	O	W	S	P	N	E	E
M	I	S	C	S	A	T	O	H	R	E	D	H	C
O	T	R	E	A	S	U	R	E	L	I	F	E	A
C	E	D	L	M	T	T	E	A	C	H	E	R	M
C	G	R	N	O	O	B	L	S	G	N	M	R	E
E	T	E	R	N	A	L	D	M	P	E	D	U	L

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Fit Through a Needle?

Craft Ideas from Mark 10:17-31 on Jesus and the Rich Young Ruler

How can we focus on the most important things? In this story, Jesus met a rich young man who thought he could save himself, and was unwilling to part with his earthly possessions. Encourage children to contemplate the most important things in life and think about what it means to put Jesus first. Craft a coin bank to save money to give away. A "sewing heart" uses the "eye of the needle" element while practicing creative coordination and coming up with servant activities.



Bible Verses or Craft Captions to Consider... (Mark 10:17-31)

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." -Mark 10:25

But many who are first will be last, and the last first." -Mark 10:31

A camel won't fit through a needle...But God can sew up my heart!

I can show my servant's heart for Jesus by... Prayer. Listening and obeying. Caring for others

The world loves "shiny things"... but Jesus gives me all I need!

I can share with those in need.

More Teaching Ideas:

- Watch the video demonstration of this [children's sermon](#) and related [Bible craft ideas](#)
- Download our complete [Sunday School lesson on Mark 10:17-31](#)
- Compare the [Mark 10:17-31 children's sermon](#) from rfour.org

Craft one: “Sew it Up and Serve” Heart

You will need:

- Yarn or ribbon
- Hole punch
- Scissors
- Glue or tape
- Markers and/or crayons
- Construction paper or cardstock

Procedure:

1. On one paper plate, describe the various stages of Christ’s journey to Earth, coming down from Heaven to live and die for us, and returning to Heaven. Add pictures and decorations.
2. On the second plate, cut a quarter “wedge” out of the top. Decorate this plate with a title announcing the journey of Jesus.
3. Add a cross shape or popsicle sticks in the shape of a cross.
4. Carefully place a brad fastener through the center of both plates.
5. Attach a hanger if desired. Spin the “wheel” to recall how Jesus traded our sins for new life!



Craft Two: “Give it Away Coin Bank”

You will need:

- Container (empty coffee or oats can, tissue box, etc.)
- Markers/crayons
- Cardstock/paper
- Glue or tape
- Aluminum foil
- Scissors
- Additional decorations (glitter, sequins, etc.)
- Captions/verses



Procedure:

1. Wrap the container in aluminum foil (if desired for extra “sparkle”).
2. Create verses and captions to attach to the container.
3. Attach extra decorations and stickers as preferred.
4. Cut a slit in the top of the container lid to use as a collection “bank” for coins.



Thank you for downloading these free materials. Our team is grateful for your trust and pray that God will bless your ministry.

This resource was prepared by [Kristin Schmidt](#) (pictured right). She serves at the Epiphany Lutheran Church in Castle Rock, CO. She has shared her teaching gifts through *Ministry-To-Children* since 2014 and now serves as our lead curriculum writer.



Every week she writes new [Sunday School lessons](#), [Bible crafts](#), and [children's sermons](#).

Kristin has a professional background in elementary and pre-school education. A graduate of Biola University, she holds a Master of Education and will receive the Master of Theology degree from Concordia University, Irvine, California, in May 2020. Kristin grew up in southern California and lived the past 10 years in Georgia. She is a long-distance runner and voracious reader.

My name is Tony Kummer (pictured below). I started Ministry-To-Children.com in 2007 as a free resource for anyone sharing Jesus with kids. It is my personal honor to share these resources with churches around the world.



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May God continue to bless your ministry!

Tony Kummer

What Does It Cost?

Children's Sermon from Mark 10:17-31 on Jesus and the Rich Young Ruler

What would you give up? This children's message focuses on the story of Jesus and the rich young ruler, who thought he could earn himself salvation but missed out on the most important asset available, Christ! This message challenges kids to consider how we can become distracted by wealth or "stuff", and forget about the most important things in life.



Law/Gospel Theme: Many times, when we look at this passage, we focus on the wealth element, emphasizing how it can be hard to worship God when we are distracted by money. That is certainly true; however, there's more going on in this story. The rich man thought that he could earn himself salvation by doing enough good works. He didn't understand that salvation comes through following Jesus, and was disappointed at the prospect of foregoing treasure to rely on someone else. If all we have is Christ, we have more than enough!

Optional Materials: Items that would be considered treasured or valued, whether personally or economically.

Bible Passage: Mark 10:17-31

Message Note: As with most messages, the details of how you choose to communicate this are adaptable and should cater to timing as well as to your audience and student needs. Use your judgment and ideas to best serve students.

More Teaching Ideas:

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Children's Sermon (Mark 10:17-31) Jesus and the Rich Young Ruler

Greet children, carrying some sort of items of worth; sewing needle (optional).

Hello, children of God! Do you have a lot of fun toys and treasures at home? Would you say that you have some items that are your favorite, or most prized possessions? Or maybe something that you think is worth a lot? I want to share with you some of my favorite things. *Take a moment to share a few valued items, whether due to monetary worth (pictures) or sentimental value.*

Now, what would you think if someone asked you to give up those special things? If you had to give them away or even throw them away? What if someone asked you to get rid of ALL of the things you have?

That might seem pretty crazy, but it's actually what happened in our Gospel lesson. There was a rich man who came to Jesus and asked how he could get himself into Heaven. Well, that was his first problem...He thought he could get himself into Heaven! Jesus reminded this man of the commandments, which he said he had kept his whole life. Jesus invited this guy to do one more thing: sell his possessions, and give his money to poor people. That sort of shook him up. He had a lot of wealth! Why would he want to give it all away?

So, the man left, and Jesus talked to His disciples about how challenging it can be to have a lot of "stuff." He said that it would be easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter God's kingdom. What does that mean? *(Hold up needle)* This is a needle...it's hard enough to get thread through this thing, but a CAMEL? With a hump on its back? That seems rather impossible. Jesus was saying that without God, it would be impossible for anyone—rich or poor—to make it to Heaven. The problem with the young ruler was not so much that he was rich, but that he wanted to rely on his riches and his own good deeds for support, rather than on the Lord. He valued his things more than other people or God.

There's nothing wrong with having things. We need a certain amount of money to survive, after all. But God wants us to depend on Him. Our help, hope, and salvation come from Jesus. There's nothing we can have or do that will do what His death did: He takes away our sins and grants us grace and new life. We want to remember to share that good news with people, just as we share our things or

money with them. So just remember that no matter what kinds of fun toys or beloved treasures you have, nothing is worth more than Jesus. We can appreciate things, but don't get distracted from the number one thing!

Why don't we say a prayer to thank God and ask for His help in relying on Jesus?

Children's Prayer Moment:

(Have kids repeat each line)

Dear God,

Thank you for blessing us with all we need

Help us to trust in you

And not depend on our things for joy

You are worth more than any treasure!

Thank you for your love

We love you, God!

In Jesus name, Amen!

Bible Verses/story to Reference: Mark 10:17-31

As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

18 "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone. 19 You know the commandments: 'You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honor your father and mother.'"

20 "Teacher," he declared, "all these I have kept since I was a boy."

21 Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

22 At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.

23 Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!"

24 The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, "Children, how hard it is[e] to enter the kingdom of God! 25 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."

26 The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, "Who then can be saved?"

27 Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God."

28 Then Peter spoke up, "We have left everything to follow you!"

29 "Truly I tell you," Jesus replied, "no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel 30 will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—along with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. 31 But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

[-Mark 10:17-31 ESV](#)



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