

RICH YOUNG RULER

Scripture:

Matt. 19:16-30/Mark 10:17-31/Luke 18:18-30

Materials Needed:

Pictures of the young ruler/Jesus
List of Last 6 Commandments
Jar with tennis ball in it
Picture of a camel

Memory Verse: *No one can serve two masters...You cannot serve both God and money. Matthew 6:34*

Objectives: As a result of this lesson, I want my students

To Know—When a rich, young ruler came to Jesus asking what he could do to inherit eternal life, Jesus told him to keep certain commandments. After he said that he had done them, Jesus told him to go sell everything and follow Him, but the man wouldn't do it because he didn't want to let go of his wealth.

To Realize—A person can't hang on to something else and follow Jesus, too; he must choose between the two.

Respond by—letting go of anything keeping them from following Jesus.

Setting up the Story:

Have a jar with a ball in it. The mouth of the jar should be large enough for a student to get their hand in, but when they are holding on to the ball, they can't get their hand back out. Have a couple students come and try to take the ball out of the jar. Explain that in some parts of the world, people actually use jars like that to catch monkeys. What would the monkey have to do in order to get away from the trappers? (Just let go of the piece of fruit in the jar.) But the monkey doesn't want to let go of the prize, so he gets caught.

There was a man in today's story who didn't want to let go of something. Let's see what it was.

Scripture

Telling the story:

- I. A Rich, Young Ruler Wants Eternal Life
 - A. Jesus was well-known
 - B. He respects Jesus
 1. Knelt before Jesus
 2. "Good Teacher"
 3. "What good thing do I have to do to inherit eternal life?"
 - C. The man is good

As you tell the story:

This man had an interesting question for Jesus. He knew that Jesus was someone important. Jesus had been doing miracles and was very well-known.

II. Jesus Tells the Man to Keep the Commandments

- A. You shall not commit murder
- B. You shall not commit adultery
- C. You shall not steal
- D. You shall not lie
- E. Honor your father and mother

III. The Man Says He has Kept them all

IV. Jesus Tells the Man to Sell Everything and Follow Him

- A. Jesus cares about this man
- B. "One thing you lack"
- C. Sell everything

He was a very good person who thought that if he was just good enough that God would accept him and he would go to heaven. So for a very long time, he had tried to be a very good person.

Jesus told him, "Keep the commandments."

How many of you know what the 10 Commandments are? Can you name some for me? (have the students name several before showing them your list). Jesus told the man that he should obey the commandments if he wanted to have eternal life. Jesus knew that the man couldn't obey all of them perfectly—but the man thought that he was pretty good. So he asked Jesus, "Which ones?" Jesus didn't give him all 10 commandments, he gave him 5. (Show list and read them to the class.)

The man was very happy when he saw the list. (Read the first one as if you are the man...)

"You shall not commit murder." "I haven't murdered." (Ask: Boys and girls, have you ever murdered? No? Good. Let's put a check next to this one. We've obeyed this command just like the young man! Go down all the list.

This man was pretty good! Maybe he could get eternal life after all. What do you think? Well...Jesus really liked this man and he wanted him to have eternal life, but there was ONE thing that was keeping

- D. Give to the Poor
- E. Come, follow Me

- V. The Man Leaves without Eternal Life
 - A. Man is saddened
 - B. Has lots of stuff
 - C. Jesus said it's hard for rich people to enter God's kingdom
 - D. "Easier for camel to go through eye of a needle."

him from having eternal life. (storytell)

Do you know what commandment Jesus hadn't mentioned to the man? The 10th commandment says, "Don't covet." That means "Don't want stuff that other people have." And the 1st commandment says, "Don't have any other gods except GOD." Was there anything that this man wanted MORE THAN God? More than eternal life?

Yes! He wanted his **stuff!** He was really sad because he **didn't want to let go of his stuff** and follow Jesus.

What do you think he was going to do? Give it up and follow Jesus or hang on to it? He walked away. Did he have eternal life? No. What did he have? His stuff. That man made a very foolish choice. (optional: explain the camel going through the small door in the gate called the "eye of the needle"; it can't get through with all the stuff on its back.)

Concluding the Story:

I asked you if you had kept the commandments and all of you had, like this man. But God says that we can't have anything before him. He doesn't want us to hang on to anything that keeps us from following him.

I told you a story at the beginning about the monkeys getting caught because they don't let go of the prize in the trap. How is that like the man in the story? What had trapped him? His stuff! Let's pray and ask God that our stuff won't keep us from following Jesus!

Close in prayer.