

▼ **The Rich Young Ruler**

Rocklyn Clarke Sr. - Sunday August 17, 2025

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<http://www.LifeChurchBoston.org/>

▼ **Opening Material**

▼ **Welcome!**

- Praise the Lord!
- Welcome to another Life Church sermon!

▼ **Transition**

- Welcome to another Sunday at Life Church.
- The QR code (also available on our song sheets) links to our Visitor Landing Page.
- Use it to access our notes, share your contact information, and access our giving page.
- Questions? If you took the time to visit us, you deserve to get answers!
- Email: Questions@LifeChurchBoston.ORG
- We are starting Luke 18.
- We will have life group after the message.

▼ **Thoughts**

- ...

▼ **Overview**

▼ **In today's message we will do the following:**

- Moralistic Therapeutic Deism
- ▼ **Why are we here?**
 - Acts 2:36-39
 - Acts 17:29-31
- Review passage - Luke 1:1-4.
- Review passage - Luke 4:14-21.
- Review our passage - Luke 18:18-30
- Explore what Jesus is asking of us.
- Transition to Life Group.

▼ **Opening Material**

▼ **Moralistic Therapeutic Deism**

▼ Principal Elements

- 1) A God exists who created and ordered the world and watches over human life on earth.
- 2) God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, as taught in the Bible and by most world religions.
- 3) The central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself.
- 4) God does not need to be particularly involved in one's life except when God is needed to resolve a problem.
- 5) Good people go to heaven when they die.

▼ Comments

- Introduced in the 2005 book “Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers” by the sociologist Christian Smith with Melinda Lundquist Denton.
- Result of the National Study of Youth and Religion.
- ▼ According to Kenda Creasy Dean, author of the 2010 book “Almost Christian: What the Faith of Our Teenagers Is Telling the American Church”:
 - “The problem does not seem to be that churches are teaching young people badly, but that we are doing an exceedingly good job of teaching youth what we really believe: namely, that Christianity is not a big deal, that God requires little, and the church is a helpful social institution filled with nice people . . .”

▼ **Why are we here?**

• Acts 2:36-39 - Spoken to Jews

“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off —for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

• Acts 17:29-31 - Spoken to Gentiles

“Therefore since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill. In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.”

▼ **Welcome to Luke!**

▼ Video

- [Bible Project: Luke 1-9](#) - YouTube (00:08:16)
- [Bible Project: Luke 10-24](#) - YouTube (00:07:48)
- Luke 1:1-4

Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

▼ Embrace Jesus' Mission

▼ Luke 4:14-21 (NIV) - The Lord's Spirit Is Upon Me

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.

He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to set the oppressed free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.”

Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

▶ Setting the Stage

▼ Feed on the Life of Jesus

- Are you “worded up”?
- Eat his flesh; Drink his blood - John 6:53-59; 2 Samuel 23:13-17
- Does the Word of Christ dwell in you richly (Colossians 3:16 - KJV)?

▼ What if you read a Gospel every month - a chapter a day?

- The Gospel of John in August (8/1 – 8/21)
- The Gospel of Matthew in September (9/1 - 9/28)
- The Gospel of Mark in October (10/1 – 10/16)
- The Gospel of Luke in November (11/1 – 11/24)

- The Gospel of John in December (12/1 – 12/21)

▼ **For August this means:**

- Read John 16 on August 16 (yesterday).
- Read John 17 on August 17 (today).
- Read John 18 on August 18 (tomorrow).
- etc.

- **As you read, write down any questions you have.**

▼ **Ask yourself the following questions:**

- What did this chapter teach me about how Jesus viewed himself, his mission, his relationship to God, and his relationship to others?
- What would I like to better understand about this chapter?
- What did I find challenging about this chapter?
- What did I learn as I tried to apply this chapter to my life?
- Would an outsider who read this chapter recognize that I was trying to apply it to my life?

▼ **Jesus explained his teaching to his disciples:**

With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything. – Mark 4:33-34 (NIV)

- Did you grow up in church without getting your questions answered?
- Did you grow up apart from church wondering what all the fuss was about?
- Either way, don't be afraid to start from scratch or start over from scratch with someone who can walk you through the Bible so that you can understand God's Kingdom.
- Read and listen to God's Word in community!

▼ **Luke 18:18-30**

A certain ruler asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

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

"All these I have kept since I was a boy," he said.

When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "**You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.**"

When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was very wealthy. Jesus looked at him and said, "**How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! Indeed, 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.**"

Those who heard this asked, "Who then can be saved?"

Jesus replied, "What is impossible with man is possible with God."

Peter said to him, "We have left all we had to follow you!"

"Truly I tell you," Jesus said to them, "no one who has left home or wife or brothers or sisters or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God will fail to receive many times as much in this age, and in the age to come eternal life."

▼ Parallel / Related Passages

• Matthew 19:16-29

Just then a man came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?"

"Why do you ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, keep the commandments."

"Which ones?" he inquired.

Jesus replied, "'You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, honor your father and mother,' and 'love your neighbor as yourself.'"

"All these I have kept," the young man said. "What do I still lack?"

Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly I tell you, it is hard for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, 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."

When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished and asked, "Who then can be saved?"

Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Peter answered him, "We have left everything to follow you! What then will there be for us?"

Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life."

• Mark 10:17-30

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?"

"Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone. 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.'"

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

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."

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

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

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

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

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

Then Peter spoke up, “We have left everything to follow you!”

“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 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.**

▼ The Rich Young Ruler

▼ Narrative - Luke 18:18-30

- A ruler, referring to him as “good teacher”, asks Jesus what he can do to inherit eternal life.
- Jesus challenges him on the implications of his use of the term “good teacher”.
- Jesus refers him to the commandments.
- The ruler responds that he has kept them from his youth.

▼ Jesus tells him he lacks one thing:

- sell his possessions and distribute the money to the poor and receive treasure in heaven.
- come follow Jesus.
- The ruler becomes very sad because he was extremely wealthy.
- Jesus sees this and declares how hard it is for the wealthy to enter the Kingdom of God.
- Those who heard (his disciples - Matthew, Mark) asked who can be saved?
- Jesus replies that things that are impossible with people are possible with God.
- Peter points out that they have left their own homes and followed Jesus.
- Jesus replies that those who leave house, wife, brothers, parents, or children for the sake of the Kingdom will receive many times as much at this time and in the age to come, eternal life.

▼ Observations / Background

- In all three accounts, this takes place immediately after story of Jesus and the little children.

▼ Who?

- Luke: a ruler
- Matthew: someone; young man
- Mark: a man

▼ Addresses Jesus as:

- Luke: “Good Teacher”
- Matthew: “Teacher - “What good thing?”

- Mark: “Good Teacher”
- ▼ Jesus’ initial response:
 - Luke: “Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.”
 - Matthew: “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good.”
 - Mark: “Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.”
- ▼ What does the Bible mean by “eternal life”?
 - [Bible Project: Eternal Life](#) - YouTube (00:05:31)
 - Treasure in heaven
- ▼ Ruler’s response
 - Luke: became very sad
 - Matthew: went away grieving
 - Mark: deeply dismayed, went away grieving
- ▼ The rich and God’s Kingdom:
 - Their cultural assumption was that wealth was a sign of God’s favor.
 - Jesus undermines this assumption and shocks his disciples.
 - “Who then can be saved?” gives us context for the word “saved”.
 - ▼ The Kingdom of God is saving people from “exile”.
 - [Bible Project: Exile](#) - YouTube (00:05:11)
- ▼ Lessons
 - Sometimes people come to Jesus looking for him to validate their lifestyle and life choices.
 - ▼ We need to take Jesus’ identity seriously:
 - Jesus is usually called teacher, but here he is called “good teacher”.
 - Jesus challenges the young man with the implications of the phrase.
 - Contrast this with the Roman centurion (Luke 7:1-10).
 - ▼ Jesus’ response makes clear what the young ruler needs:
 - Jesus validates the importance of the commandments.
 - “You lack one thing” - validates his claim to have kept them since youth.
 - The “one thing” he lacks poses a challenge he is unwilling to embrace.
 - ▼ It’s hard for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God.
 - The Kingdom of God is God’s plan to rescue people from their sinful destiny.
 - Apart from God’s Kingdom, we are in exile - headed for destruction.
 - Those who are “saved” are those who are in God’s Kingdom - a Kingdom of Jesus followers.

- ▼ What's in it for us?
 - The disciples want to know what's in it for them.
- ▼ Those who lose their possessions for the Kingdom will receive:
 - “You who have followed me” will sit on 12 thrones judging the tribes of Israel (at the renewal of all things - Matthew)
 - many times more (in this life)
 - persecutions (in this present age - Mark)
 - eternal life (in the age to come)
- What are we “in it” for?

▼ **Life Group**

▼ **Welcome (5 - 10 minutes)**

- [Icebreaker](#)

- **Worship (optional for life group meetings during Sunday service)**

▼ **Word - Discussion Questions**

For each question, spend 1 – 2 minutes in silence before you begin to respond.

- **What did this passage mean to the people who first received it?**
- **What does this passage mean to you?**
- **How will you apply this passage this coming week?**

▼ **Witness**

How will we work together as a team to be "good news" to the people around us?

▼ **Explore the Harvest Skills in the Training Page “Big Blueprint” diagram.**

▼ What level are you at with these?

- Are you a “wanderer”, “follower”, “achiever”, or a “leader”?
 - What's your plan for developing these skills?
- **Pray for the unchurched people you've been identifying.**



The Rich Young Ruler

Sunday August 17, 2025



Welcome!



Visitor Page

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The QR code (also available on our song sheets) links to our Visitor Landing Page.

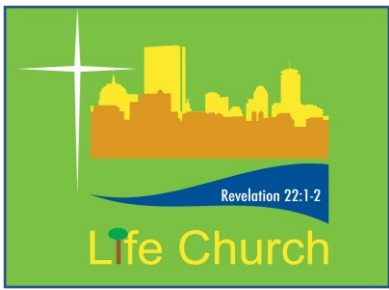
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We are continuing through Luke 18.

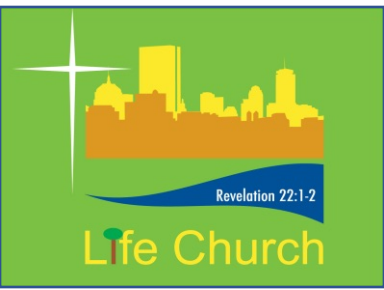
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Thoughts



• . . .



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- Moralistic Therapeutic Deism
- Why are we here?
- Review passage - Luke 1:1-4.
- Review passage - Luke 4:14-21.
- Review our passage - Luke 18:18-30
- Explore what Jesus is teaching us.
- Transition to Life Group.



Moralistic Therapeutic Deism 1 of 2



Principal Elements (sounds good, but this is NOT Christianity):

1. A God exists who created and ordered the world and watches over human life on earth.
2. God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, as taught in the Bible and by most world religions.
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4. God does not need to be particularly involved in one's life except when God is needed to resolve a problem.
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Moralistic Therapeutic Deism 2 of 2



Comments

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- According to Kenda Creasy Dean, author of the 2010 book “Almost Christian: What the Faith of Our Teenagers Is Telling the American Church”:
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Why are we here?

Acts 2:36-39 – Spoken to Jews

Acts 17:29-31 – Spoken to Gentiles



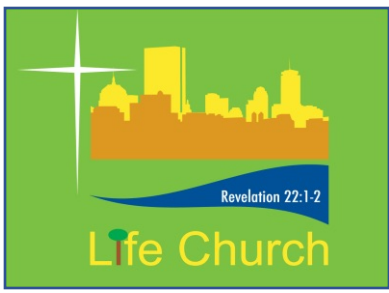
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Welcome to Luke!



- Video: Bible Project: Luke 1-9
- Video: Bible Project: Luke 10-24
- Luke 1:1-4 – Luke’s Introduction
- Luke 4:14-21 – Embrace Jesus’ Mission



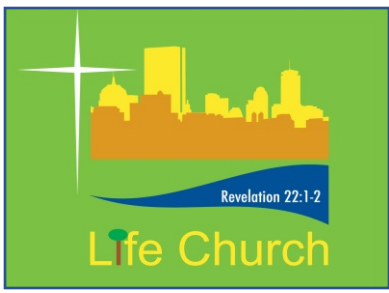
Bible Project: Luke – Part 1 of 2





Bible Project: Luke – Part 2 of 2

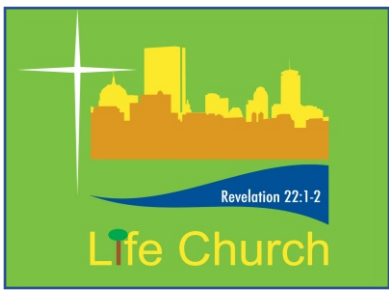




Luke 1:1-4 – Luke’s Introduction



Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.



Embrace Jesus' Mission: Luke 4:14-21



Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.

He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

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Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”



Feed on the Life of Jesus (1 of 4)

Are you “worded up”?

Eat his flesh; Drink his blood – John 6:53-59; 2 Samuel 23:13-17

Does the Word of Christ dwell in you richly (Colossians 3:16 - KJV)?

What if you read a Gospel every month - a chapter a day?

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Feed on the Life of Jesus (2 of 4)

For August this means:

- Read John 16 on August 16 (yesterday).
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- etc.



Feed on the Life of Jesus (3 of 4)



As you read, write down any questions you have.

Ask yourself the following questions:

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- What would I like to better understand about this chapter?
- What did I find challenging about this chapter?
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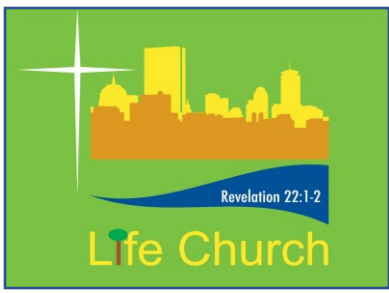
Feed on the Life of Jesus (4 of 4)



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With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything. – Mark 4:33-34 (NIV)

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- Either way, don't be afraid to start from scratch or start over from scratch with someone who can walk you through the Bible so that you can understand God's Kingdom.
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Luke 18:18-30 (NIV) 1 of 2



A certain ruler asked him, “Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

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

“All these I have kept since I was a boy,” he said.

When Jesus heard this, he said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”



Luke 18:18-30 (NIV) 2 of 2



When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was very wealthy. Jesus looked at him and said, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! Indeed, 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.”

Those who heard this asked, “Who then can be saved?”

Jesus replied, “What is impossible with man is possible with God.”

Peter said to him, “We have left all we had to follow you!”

“Truly I tell you,” Jesus said to them, “no one who has left home or wife or brothers or sisters or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God will fail to receive many times as much in this age, and in the age to come eternal life.”



Matthew 19:16-29 (NIV) 1 of 2

Just then a man came up to Jesus and asked, “Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?”

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Jesus replied, “ ‘You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, honor your father and mother,’ and ‘love your neighbor as yourself.’ ”

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Matthew 19:16-29 (NIV) 2 of 2



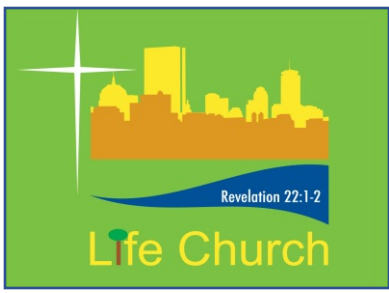
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Mark 10:17-30 (NIV) 1 of 2



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The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! 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.”

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Narrative – Luke 18:18-30 1 of 2



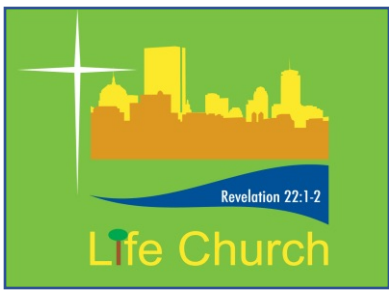
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 - sell his possessions and distribute the money to the poor and receive treasure in heaven.
 - come fellow Jesus.



Narrative – Luke 18:18-30 2 of 2



- The ruler becomes very sad because he was extremely wealthy.
- Jesus sees this and declares how hard it is for the wealthy to enter the Kingdom of God.
- Those who heard (his disciples - Matthew, Mark) asked who can be saved?
- Jesus replies that things that are impossible with people are possible with God.
- Peter points out that they have left their own homes and followed Jesus.
- Jesus replies that those who leave house, wife, brothers, parents, or children for the sake of the Kingdom will receive many times as much at this time and in the age to come, eternal life.



Observations / Background 1 of 3



This takes place immediately after the story of Jesus and the little children.

Who?

- Luke: a ruler
- Matthew: someone; young man
- Mark: a man

Addresses Jesus as:

- Luke: “Good Teacher”
- Matthew: “Teacher - “What good thing?”
- Mark: “Good Teacher”



Observations / Background 2 of 3



Jesus' initial response:

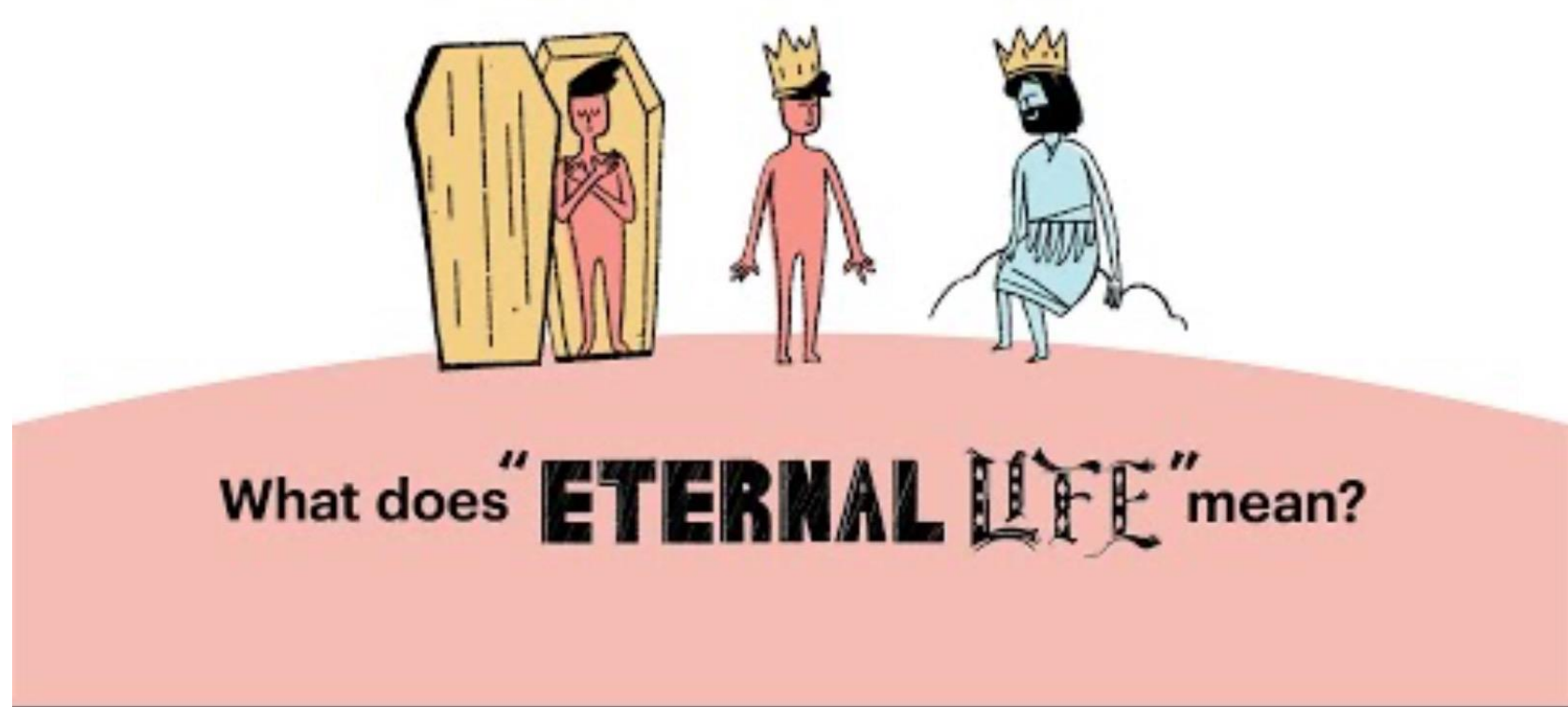
- Luke: “Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.”
- Matthew: “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good.”
- Mark: “Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.”

What does the Bible mean by “eternal life”?

- [Bible Project: Eternal Life](#) - YouTube (00:05:31)



Bible Project: Eternal Life





Observations / Background 2 of 3



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What does the Bible mean by “eternal life”? - [Bible Project: Eternal Life](#)

Treasure in heaven

Ruler's response

- Luke: became very sad
- Matthew: went away grieving
- Mark: deeply dismayed, went away grieving



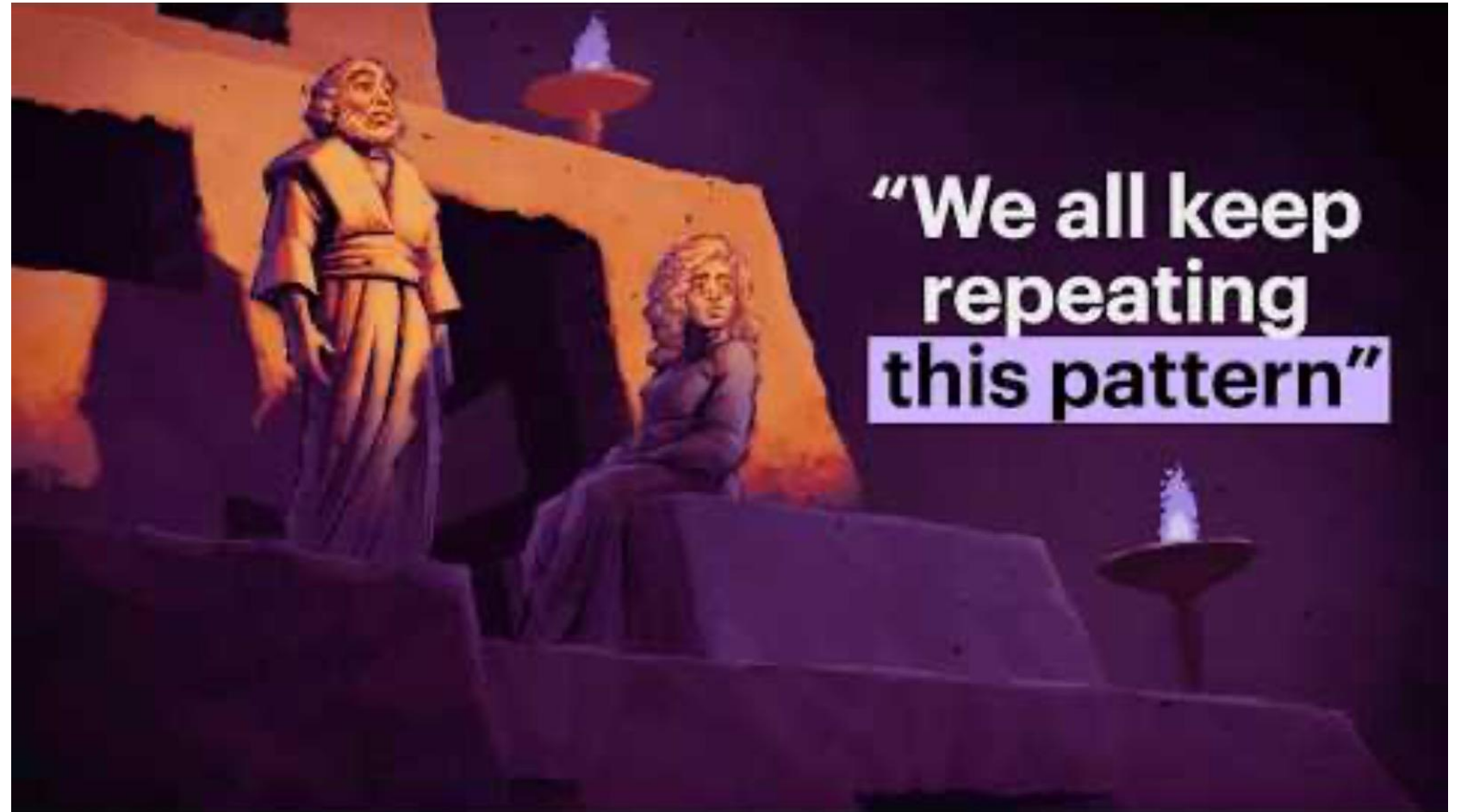
Observations / Background 3 of 3

The rich and God's Kingdom:

- Their cultural assumption was that wealth was a sign of God's favor.
- Jesus undermines this assumption and shocks his disciples.
- "Who then can be saved?" gives us context for the word "saved".
- The Kingdom of God is saving people from "exile".
- [Bible Project: Exile](#) - YouTube (00:05:11)



Bible Project: Exile





Lessons 1 of 3

Sometimes people come to Jesus looking for him to validate their lifestyle and life choices.

We need to take Jesus' identity seriously:

- Jesus is usually called teacher, but here he is called “good teacher”.
- Jesus challenges the young man with the implications of the phrase.
- Contrast this with the Roman centurion (Luke 7:1-10).

Jesus' response makes clear what the young ruler needs:

- Jesus validates the importance of the commandments.
- “You lack one thing” - validates his claim to have kept them since youth.
- The “one thing” he lacks poses a challenge he is unwilling to embrace.



Lessons 2 of 3



It's hard for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God.

- The Kingdom of God is God's plan to rescue people from their sinful destiny.
- Apart from God's Kingdom, we are in exile - headed for destruction.
- Those who are "saved" are those who are in God's Kingdom - a Kingdom of Jesus followers.



Lessons 3 of 3



What's in it for us?

- The disciples want to know what's in it for them.
- Those who lose their possessions for the Kingdom will receive:
 - “You who have followed me” will sit on 12 thrones judging the tribes of Israel (at the renewal of all things - Matthew)
 - many times more (in this life)
 - persecutions (in this present age - Mark)
 - eternal life (in the age to come)
- What are we “in it’ for?



Life Groups

Word - Spend 1 – 2 minutes in silence before you begin each question.

- What did this passage mean to the people who first received it?
- What does this passage mean to you?
- How will you apply this passage this coming week?

Witness (How we work as a team to be "good news" to others)

- Explore the Harvest Skills in the Training Page “Big Blueprint” diagram.
- What level are you at with these?
 - Are you a “wanderer”, “follower”, “achiever”, or a “leader”?
 - What’s your plan for developing these skills?
- Pray for the unchurched people you’ve been identifying.



Announcements



Visitor Page

- Sunday Service August 17, 2025
- Following Jesus Class Fri (8/22) 5pm & 6pm - via Zoom
- Sunday Service August 24, 2025
- Following Jesus Class Fri (8/29) 5pm & 6pm - via Zoom
- Sunday Service August 31, 2025
- Men's Bible Study Wed (9/3) 7pm - 8:30pm - via Zoom
- Sunday Service (Communion) September 7, 2025
- Sunday Connection September 7, 2025 12n - 2pm
- Men's Bible Study Wed (9/10) 7pm - 8:30pm - via Zoom



Life Groups



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Benediction, Life Groups



Announcements

Benediction

Life Groups

Leave Service From Life Groups