



Bible Heroes

Story Notes:

The rich man

Mark 10:17-31

Essential Teachers notes:

This is a difficult passage in some ways. The young man's failings are not clear cut, he seems to genuinely want to do what is right but money has become more important to him than his belief. It's important to stress that riches does not stop you from entering the Kingdom of God.

Tell this story or a similar one of your choice from a favourite bible translation or story book. This version is supplied for inspiration, feel free to omit or embellish to give it your personal voice.

Other passages - None specific

It was time for Jesus and his friends to leave. Everyone picked up their things, shook off any dust and placed them into bags if they could. But before they could move, a young man ran up to them. He knelt down in the grass by Jesus's feet and begged to ask just one question.

"Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to live with God in heaven forever?"

Jesus looked down at the man. He looked like someone important. His clothes were very fine and his cloak looked warmer than any Jesus's friends carried. He must really, really want to know the answer to this question if he would run so far and risk making his fine clothes stained.

"You know the commandments," said Jesus.

"Do not kill; do not envy what is not yours; do not steal, do not lie; do not cheat; honor your parents."

"Yes, yes," interrupted the man, "I have kept those commandments since I was a child."

"Then you are missing just one thing," said Jesus sadly, for he could see the man's heart. "Go, sell all you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

The man looked around at Jesus's followers; they travelled with so little. He stood slowly shaking his head. He had worked hard to gain his money, to sleep in comfortable beds and wear fine clothes. He wouldn't give that up.

Some of Jesus's followers had gathered to hear the man's question, and they watched as he walked away.

"How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!" sighed Jesus.

The disciples looked confused; so Jesus tried using a picture.

"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."

"Then who can be saved?" asked one of the disciples.

Jesus's sad face disappeared and was replaced by a cheeky grin.

"With God all things are possible!" he laughed.

"We've given up everything to follow you Jesus," came Peter's voice.

"Yes, and I promise not one thing you have lost won't be repaid 100 times over. But the first, they will come last, and the last will be first."

The disciples had heard that last line before; with Jesus everything seemed upside-down. They picked up their things and left the rich man behind.