KINGDOM of HEAVEN

A SERIES IN THE BOOK OF MATTHEW

Community Group Material

Matthew 19:16-30

Week of Sunday 19th May

What do I lack?

Leader Preparation

- Read through the passage, and through pages 13-14 of the notes.
- Don't neglect to spend some time as you prepare confronting your own situation with God. What has Jesus asked of you that you have felt is too hard? What are you still holding onto that he has asked you to let go? What are you still not able to trust him for in your life? Spend some time asking him to work in you – before you invite him to be present in your group this week.

O Christ,

Your call draws us but never ensnares us;

Show us what it means

to leave self behind

and follow you all our days.

Teach us to trust you enough

to give you everything

as raw material for your work

of healing and reconciliation in the world;

For your love's sake.

Group Time:

The rich young man was focused on ticking off commandments the way some people collect things.

- Have you ever collected anything?
- What is the largest collection you have gathered?
- How did you organize or arrange the things you collected?
- Have you ever had to get rid of things you have collected? How did that feel?

Exploring the Passage

READ Matthew 19:16-30

There is a lot of discussion in this passage about being GOOD, COMPLETE or PERFECT.

- What do you understand by these terms?
- How would you rate yourself and your ability to meet these standards?
- How would most people assess themselves?

People who read this passage are often very critical of the rich young man.

- What are some of the attitudes he got wrong? What should we avoid copying?
- What are some of the attitudes he got right? What should we try to do more?

In terms of this man, Jesus specifically confronted his reliance on his possessions that he was not willing to give up. What things besides money give us a divided loyalty that keeps us from God's Kingdom?

How did Jesus respond when the young man left? Why do you think he doesn't chase after him? Is this a pattern that could be helpful to you sometimes?

Jesus acknowledged Peter's statement about everything the disciples had given up to follow him. What are some ways God has abundantly made up for any "losses" you have incurred in following Christ?

God's kingdom really is topsy-turvy sometimes: from the first being last, to collectors giving up everything:

> "There is something ironic about the way he says it here: If you want to complete the set ...'.In Matthew, being 'complete' -- the same word can mean 'perfect', actually! - is the challenge of the Sermon on the Mount (5.48). It's a way of saying, 'God wants his people to be complete, totally dedicated to his service, not half-and-half people, with one foot in the kingdom and the other in the world' The young man seems to want almost to *collect* commandments he's kept, like one might collect coins or butterflies or antique furniture. All right, says Jesus, this is the one that will complete your collection: give everything away! In order to be complete, you must be empty. In order to have everything, you must have nothing. In order to be fully signed up to God's service, you must be signed off from everything else."
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> *N.T. Wright Matthew for Everyone Part 2*

What do I still lack?

What a wonderful question this man asked! What change in your life might bring about greater spiritual growth? What might God be asking you to do to make you ‘complete / good / perfect’ in him? Spend 10 minutes quietly contemplating, praying or journalling at the end of your group time, allowing God to speak to you personally.