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The Jesus Identity

Studies in Mark's Gospel

Introduction: Mark 10:13-31

Which of the following do you think is most likely to be found in heaven?

- A. Kevin Rudd
- B. Bill Gates
- C. A poor orphan boy from Ecuador
- D. Mother Theresa

Why is this your choice?

In this second part of Mark's gospel Jesus' focus shifts to those who would commit themselves to being his disciple. In this passage, Jesus raises the question of entry into, and exclusion from, the Kingdom of God.

Read Mk 10:13-16

1. In Jesus' day, the little children were viewed as unimportant. Certainly his disciples thought Jesus was *too* important and busy to spend his time 'blessing' the little children. However, Jesus has other ideas. Put Jesus' response in vv 14-15 into your own words in the space below.

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2. What does Jesus teach us here about entering the Kingdom of God?

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Imagine someone comes to you saying, "I want to enter the kingdom of God." What would you say?

3. How might Jesus teaching here be at odds with the view commonly held by people in our wider community today?

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Read Mk 10:17-31

4. Why might this man have seemed a 'good prospect' for entry into the Kingdom of God?

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5. Why, in verse 19, do you think Jesus refers the man to the Law of Moses?
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6. Jesus does not respond to the man's claim of obedience to the Law. Instead, motivated by love, Jesus calls him to sell up everything and to follow him. Thinking about Jesus' response in verse 21, what do you think it is that this man 'lacks'?
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7. Sadly, this man chooses to exclude himself from the Kingdom of God. He leaves, downcast but still with a fat wallet. How does this event contrast with the small children in verses 13-16?
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8. What does Jesus mean by his 'camel and eye of a needle' expression in verse 25? Will there be no rich people in heaven?
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9. If Jesus were to challenge you to leave something behind in order to follow him, what might it be? How would you respond to his call?
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10. Does Jesus demand that everyone sell all their possessions in order to follow him? What does he demand of all his disciples? (If you find this hard to answer, read Mk 8:34-35)
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11. What comfort do Jesus' words in verses 29-31 bring to his followers? How have you personally experienced the truth of these words?
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Note: In this series of studies we have skipped the passage Mk 10:1-12. For an explanation of this difficult passage, see our church website <http://www.stmarksavalon.org.au/pages/resources/articles/divorce.php>

Pray for each other as you 'carry your crosses' into the Kingdom of God, particularly thanking God for the answers given to Question 11.