

# Jesus & the Rich Young Ruler

Matthew 19:16-30; Mark 10:17-27; Luke 18:18-27

## PPT Title

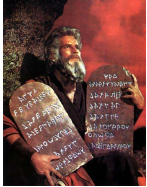
### Jesus & the Rich Young Ruler

**Main Point:** We must put God's kingdom first in our lives.

**Key Verse:** *But put God's kingdom first. Do what He wants you to do.* - Matthew 6:33a

**Prop:** A can of Coke and a large cup

### BACKGROUND/REVIEW:



**Say:** The culture that Jesus lived in believed that they could live forever in heaven with God if they were "good enough" and kept all of God's laws. God gave the law, the 10 Commandments, to show people that no matter how good they were, they could never measure up to God's perfect holiness. The law was given to show people their need for a Savior. Teacher, show and read the 10 Commandments.

**Say:** As the people heard these rules and then tried to live by them, they soon realized that it was impossible to keep them all. And it's impossible for us too!

The Bible says that if we've broken even one of God's laws, it's the same as breaking them all! James 2:10 *Suppose you keep the whole law but trip over just one part of it. Then you are guilty of breaking all of it.*

God is perfect and holy. His holiness cannot tolerate even a hint of sin.



For the most effective lesson, demonstrate this: Pop open a can of Coke, and pour it all into a large cup. Ask for a volunteer who would like a nice, cold Coke. When volunteer is about to take it, say, "Wait a minute." Teacher, SPIT into the cup and then offer it. (Of course, DO NOT let the child take it!) **Ask:** Now, do you want the Coke? *No!* Why Not? *Because it's ruined!*

For young kids, you could just *explain* the situation. **Say:** Suppose you are about to drink a nice, cold Coke. (Hold up a can of Coke.) Just as you're about to take a big sip, your friend tells you that another kid put a drop of his SPIT in your Coke. Would you want to drink the coke? *No!* Why not? *Because even though I love Coke, I would not ever want to drink another person's spit!*

**Say:** The nice, pure Coke is spoiled. Just as one drop of spit ruined the entire Coke, so one sin breaks the perfect relationship that God had with people.

God gave the 10 Commandments to show us that we are NOT good enough to be accepted in God's sight. We are sinners, and we need a Savior.

### Our Need

Most people agree that they have sinned by doing or thinking wrong things. But few people admit that they are **HELPLESS** sinners. Many people think that they can "do something" to take care of their sin. They have the wrong idea that the good things



they do can outweigh the bad things they do. But it does not work that way. Hold up the cup of Coke. Is there more Coke or spit in my cup? There is much more good Coke than icky spit in here. But that does not make this okay to drink. The tiny bit of spit ruined the entire cup of good Coke. The Coke is no longer pure. That's the way it is with our lives. Because we sin (even one time), we are no longer pure like God is pure.

The Bible teaches that there is NOTHING we can do to make ourselves acceptable to God. No good deeds can undo the sin in our lives (just like I could never get all the spit molecules out of the Coke.) In fact, even the good things that we do are viewed as filthy rags.

Isaiah 64:6a says: *All of us have become like someone who is "unclean." All of the good things we do are like polluted rags to (God).*

God wants to save everyone from their sin, but only those who understand that they are helpless to "fix" their own sin can be saved. It's like the person must realize this Coke is completely ruined - I need a new Coke!

### THE RICH YOUNG RULER



**Say:** One day, a young (Matthew 19:22), rich ruler came to Jesus and asked Him a very important question. He asked, "What do I have to do in order to live forever with God in heaven?"

At first, it may look like Jesus gave him a very unusual answer, but you will see how Jesus is helping this man understand his NEED for God.

The Bible says that **Jesus looked at him and LOVED him** (Mark 10:21). Jesus told him, "Keep the commandments: don't kill, don't steal, don't lie, and honor your parents."

The young man told Jesus that he had been keeping all of these rules since he was a child. **Ask:** At this point, do you think this man was saw his NEED for God? *No, not yet. He thought he had earned a place in God's kingdom by keeping the commandments.*

Then the young ruler asked Jesus if there was anything else he should do. Jesus told him that he needed to sell everything he owned and give all the money to the poor, then follow Jesus. NOW the rich man heard a commandment that he couldn't keep.

God should have been #1 in his life. But God wasn't first in the man's life; all of his stuff was more important to him. All of his stuff was blocking the way to his relationship with God.

People often misunderstand the point of what Jesus said here. **Having** money is not a sin! **Loving** money is a sin.

**Love for money** causes all kinds of evil. Some people want to get rich. They have wandered away from the faith. They have wounded themselves with many sorrows. - 1 Timothy 6:10

Jesus knows every person's heart. He knew how much the young man loved being rich. Jesus knew that the young man trusted his money more than he trusted God. The man believed that no matter what problem came his way, he had enough money to help him through. For example, if he got sick, he could pay the best doctors. If there was a shortage of food, he could pay more than anyone else to buy what was left. The man loved and trusted his money.

But Jesus knew better! Jesus knew that money does not last and it leads people into sin. People who love money want more and more and more of it.

*Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. - Ecclesiastes 5:10a*

Even more importantly, Jesus knew that money cannot buy things like peace and joy. And it certainly cannot buy a place in God's kingdom. Jesus **loved** the man, so Jesus wanted what was best for him. Jesus wanted the man to trust God, not money. God **does** satisfy us. And unlike money, God will never leave us!

Jesus wasn't merely telling this man to give up his money, Jesus was telling this man that money was blocking his way to God. God was not #1 in his life, and He should be!

**Say:** When the rich ruler first came to Jesus, the man thought of himself as a pretty good guy. He thought he had kept every one of God's rules. But when Jesus told him to sell everything he owned and give the money to the poor, he realized that he had **not** kept every commandment! He did not love God above all other things.

So, how did the man respond? Did he sell everything and feel great relief because he no longer had to worry about how much money he had? Did he give up everything to simply trust God and put God first?

*When the young man heard this, he went away sad. He was very rich. - Matthew 19:22*

**Ask:** Why do you think he was sad? *Because Jesus asked him to give up what was most valuable to him. Because he was turning down Jesus' offer of eternal life in God's kingdom.*



**Say:** The young man was called a **ruler**, but truly he was a **slave**. He was enslaved to his stuff, and this kept him from having a loving relationship with God. Jesus told him that to be a true disciple, a true follower of Jesus, all this stuff would have to go because God would have to be first in his life. Luke 16:13 says, "You cannot serve both God and money." The sad ruler chose money.

As the man walked away, Jesus told His disciples that it was really difficult for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven, but it was **possible** with God (Matthew 19:23-26). (**Teacher Note:** Knowing this is the case, why do we ever long for more money?)

**Application:** When the love of money (or the love of stuff) grabs onto your heart, you find yourself walking away from Jesus.

Ask yourself if there is anything in your life "blocking the way" to a deep relationship with Jesus. Is there anything or anyone that you love more than God? Do you trust any person more than you trust God? Do you spend way more time thinking about soccer or ballet than about God? If so, ask God to change your heart!

The Bible teaches us that we are to love God MOST, above all other things (Exodus 20:3). This is actually the very first commandment! And this was the one thing that made it so hard for this young man to be a true follower of Jesus.

Just like with the young ruler, **Jesus offers you the opportunity to be freed from the slavery of money and things to find true freedom, peace, and joy in God.** Those who love money or stuff are constantly worried that they will lose it! **We can never lose the love of Jesus!!!**

**PPT Verse**

**Key Verse:** *But put God's kingdom first. Do what He wants you to do. - Matthew 6:33a*

**PPT Main Point**

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