

How The Rich Get To Heaven

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Nathaniel Bronner: Welcome to Brothers of the Word because brother, you need the word. Amen. Amen. Amen.

And today, I am going to tell you how the rich can get into heaven. How the rich can get into heaven. And I know some of you are saying, "Well, I'm not rich." Well, you may be and you need to know if you are rich or if you are headed to being rich, how to get into heaven? You see, most of the time, we have focused a lot even in the gospel on the prosperity, on getting money, of being blessed, of being prosperous. Yet, when you read and truly, truly divide the word of God and the New Testament and what Jesus said, you will find that Jesus said in no uncertain terms, it is harder to get into heaven if you're rich. Plain and simple, I don't -- and anyone that says anything differently, you twisted up the word because Jesus said that very clear in no uncertain terms.

Matthew 19, 23 and 24. Then said Jesus unto his disciples, "Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

I have looked at his verse through every translation, through the King James version, through the new King James version, through the NIV, through the New Living Translation. I went back and looked at the originally Aramaic and the Hebrew and looked at the words and it says the same thing in every translation. Jesus said first of all that hardly will a rich man enter the kingdom of heaven and it is as hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven as a camel the eye of a needle.

Now, we all -- I don't know how many of you have seen camels. I have, I've ridden on a camel. I've seen camels and I've seen needles. And whether or not that was a literal needle or whether it meant the eye gate in the wall of Jerusalem, at any rate, it's hard for that big old hump camel to get through that little thing.

So, what Jesus said and he said this more than once. What Jesus said was if you are rich, first of all, you're not hard to go get in heaven and if you do get in heaven, it's going to be really difficult. Now, the problem is this, it's not that no one

understands that, that's not the problem. Turn to your neighbor and ask him what's the problem.

This is the problem. It's not that people don't understand very clearly. I don't care what translation they read. That's not the problem that we don't understand what Jesus said. The problem is this. Every one wants to be rich. That's the problem. Bought it down on a nutshell, I don't care how you slice it, I don't care who you slice it with. Well, I'm not going to say everyone because that is not true. Most people, the vast majority because I did read about one fellow years ago who didn't follow this and it was a man who won the lottery and I remembered it just like it was yesterday about reading about this man.

It was over 20 years ago, I was still in Florida, I was reading a newspaper. And this man won a million-dollar lottery and he gave every penny of it away and this was his reason. He said, "I'm happy. I drive a forklift. I make \$20,000 a year. I am happy with what I have. I am happy with my job. I don't need this money," and he gave it away. That's the only man that I have ever read about and I don't know anyone personally that has reached that level. Most, the vast majority of people want to be rich. And I am not condemning anyone who wants to be rich because I want to be rich myself. No two ways about it, I don't even want to have just enough.

You see, there are actually three levels of materialism just and they compare to even the children of Israel. See, when they were in slavery they were in the land of not enough.

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When they were in the wilderness for those 40 years, God would send manna down every day but at the end of the day about the next if they try to store any of the manna, it had worms in it. That was the land of just enough. They had just enough but no more.

Then they moved into the promise land which was the land of abundance. It was the land of more than enough. I want to live and always abide in the land of more than enough. I don't want just enough and I sure don't want not enough. I want the land of abundance. But the problem in the land of abundance and

the land of being wealthy and then in the land of rich, the problem with that is Jesus said, "It is as hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven as a camel, the eye of a needle and a hardly will a rich man enter." That's the problem, but you want to be rich.

Is there anyone right now in this congregation who does not want to be rich? Raise your hand, let me shake your hand. Is there anyone who does not want to be rich? I don't see a single -- there, hey man. Let's give her a hand. There's one person who -- Mark Twain put it like this. Mark Twain said, and I'm paraphrasing what he said. He said, "I don't want to be rich, but don't tilt me with it."

And you see, the only way you will really ever be able to honestly know that is when you actually face the temptation. See, you have to actually face the temptation of actually having a pile of money come to you like that forklift driver did and then you turn it away and said, "No, I'm giving every bit of this away, I have enough." But I can truly say that the vast majority, 99.99 percent of people want to be rich.

Well, if Jesus said that it's hard to get into heaven being rich and we want to be rich and yet so many of our gospel doctrines today preach prosperity and God told me this, he said, "Don't you preach to any of the people something you cannot do, I can't do it." I don't look down upon the rich young ruler when Jesus told him to give up everything you have, give it all to the poor and come follow me and he had to walk away. I don't condemn that man because I wouldn't be able to do it and you have to be just real about it. I don't care what people stand up and preach. You have to be real about this thing. I have a heart. I have a very, very difficult heart -- especially if you have some. See, the only answers in the Bible of where someone gave it all up was the widow with two mites where she didn't have much.

See, it's a lot easier if all you have in your pocket is \$5 and you give that all to God, that's a lot easier to do than if you have \$5 million. So, the only one that I can recall in the Bible who gave it all up was the widow with the two mites but she didn't have much. On the other extreme, when you have much, it becomes much more difficult and I'm talking to people, I have always been a practical preacher. I deal with a stuff that you -- that's real and the reality of it is we all want to be rich and if we do get

rich, none of us go give all our money away, that's about the truth, not while you're in good health and strength. Now some people give it away on their death bed, doctor telling they got a year to live and they go to give it all away. But very rarely will you find anyone giving all that money away in their health and strength. Most people would never develop this --

See, first of all, it takes a certain mentality and spirit to get the money in the first place, that's number one. You have to be somewhat commercially oriented to get it in the first place so you have to have a certain degree. You're not rich by accident. Do you now understand that? If you are rich, you have done something so that's why the old proverbial statement, "If you're so smart, why are you not rich?"

You have to have some sense to get rich in the first place. So generally, you have to have a certain drive and a certain business acumen of some form or another to even get rich in the first place. So, the question then becomes, "If you are rich or if you are heading to be rich, how do you get in heaven rich?" See, I'm rich now and I'm not ashamed to tell anyone that, I'm rich. Based on a relative term, I earned multiples of what -- I'm rich by all definitions of the word.

So how do you get into heaven if you're rich? And people, I recognized that heaven is the greatest treasure that you'll ever have and I don't want to lose an eternal treasure based on a temporary temporal thing here on earth.

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I don't want to lose my treasure in heaven because of money but we need to know and there is someone rich listening to me right now and you need to know how to get into heaven, you got plenty of money but you have no treasure in heaven and you need to understand why did Jesus say this and is there a way out? If you're rich, do you have to be poor? I'm telling you, no, you do not have to be poor but I agree with Jesus. It's easier to get into heaven if you're struggling than if you have plenty money. It's plain and simple as that because I'll explain that and I'll get into that but I want to just show you some things.

First of all. From the word, there were only two rich men named in the New Testament who likely made it into heaven and only

one for sure. The first rich man was the rich man who took Jesus' his body and put Jesus' body in his own tomb. He asked the pharisees if he could have Jesus' body and it says that this man named Joseph was a disciple of Jesus and he was a rich man.

You have to have -- be fairly rich to have that type of tomb. Most people when we went to Rome, we saw where people were buried and most of them were buried like most of us in a hole in the ground. When you have a tomb with a little house and made out of stone and kind of a vault, you have to have some money because, you know, a lot of people when they died they can't even afford to get buried in a plain box(ph) but you have to have some money to have one of those big marks so this was equivalent of that in that day.

We went to Israel and we went to Jerusalem and we saw Calvary and we saw what was likely Jesus' tomb. It was the tomb of a rich man. This man was a rich man who was a disciple of Jesus but it doesn't say whether he really got salvation or not because many of the disciples left Jesus when he had those hard sayings.

So, it doesn't say really, I'm assuming that he did. But the Bible -- the only man for sure -- I want you to turn to the Book of Luke, Chapter 19 and this the only rich man for sure who got salvation. And the only rich man where it sure is Zacchaeus, the only one where any detail is given. So if this is a rich man who made it then you have to see what did he do because always in the Bible, God will give you an archetype, he will give you a pattern, he will give you a plan by showing you someone else's life and he'll show you how they did it and if you can look at how they did it, then you'll be able to see how you can do it.

So, in Luke Chapter 19, I want to read these verses beginning at the first through the 28th Verse. "And Jesus entered and pass through Jericho. And, behold, there was man named Zacchaeus, which was chief among the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see who Jesus was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycomore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came

down, and received him joyfully. And when they saw it, all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner. And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

And then Jesus went on to give a parable of the talents.

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And I want to just look at the things that Zacchaeus did, to give us a pattern for those of you who are rich or who are headed to be rich. What did Zacchaeus do to get salvation in his house to become the rich man who will say what did he do? We know that Zacchaeus was rich and rich is really a relative term but basically rich simply means you have enough for all your needs and some left over.

But in this, I really believe it meant beyond, it meant really rich. You know, some people we have our definitions, our nebulous definitions of being -- and it's not really the true rich, I mean someone that is really rich. You all understand what -- this really rich. When Puddin and I, we went on vacation at Las Vegas recently and we stayed in a pretty nice suite but then they had a suite that was \$25,000 a night, that's rich. You understand what I'm saying?

Now, I can look around the suite that Puddin and I had, it was nice, it had a microwave in it and a DVD player, had two rooms, had a nice marble top, had all of that. But that \$25,000 -- and I can say Puddin, this is all we need. We don't need all of that other stuff. All the other suite had a grand piano in it, it had a full time 24-hour butler in, it had all of that stuff. I said, "Puddin, we don't really need all of that. This is a bundle and this is all that we need."

But that \$25,000 is a nice suite, that's the world's definition -- look, you have to be rich to afford that. You understand that? When you can put your credit card and put \$25,000-night room and stay two or three nights and not worry about it, that's rich. That's rich by in a definition, so that's rich.

So, Zacchaeus was by the world's definition a rich man. He had a lot of money. So what did he do? First, he told the Lord, he said, "Lord, half of all that I have, I have given to the poor." Half. Now, he didn't give it all. That's why you need to understand the principle. See, I don't know whether Zacchaeus would have been able to give it all, you all say "all".

See, all is another level. Half is a rough level, but all is another level. See, if you have -- like Bill Gates and he's worth 35 billion and he gave half. He would still have 17.5 half billion left. You can live on 17.5 billion. You can live. If you're rich you can really live half off of half, but it takes a certain elevation of spirit to even give up that half because most rich people are stingy. That's why even in the church when you actually look at the giving pattern, poorer people give a higher percentage of their income than rich people do. It should be the reverse but in reality, it is not. So, when you look at it as a general principle and at a core, rich people are kind of stingy.

So, the first thing that had to happen, Zacchaeus had to break the stingy spirit within him. That's why when the rich man said, "I've look at all of what I have. I'm going to take my ease and I'm going to put my stuff in barns and I'm going to store up myself. I'm going to build me some new banks and build me some new buildings to put my stuff in." Now, understand this, the man didn't say he had done anything evil. He had violated no law that God could had placed anywhere than anyone can see but yet when Jesus said, "Thou fool, this night thy soul will be required," because the man was stingy.

Do you all know anyone stingy? Now, I'm not talking about rich, I'm just thought -- some people are just stingy period. And see, stingy is a spirit that becomes magnified the more you get because if you're stingy broke, you're going to be stingy with plenty of money. Stingy is a spirit, all money does, money magnifies. If you don't give people anything now, you're not going to get -- it's like, I had a person that was telling me that the college that they went through this said, "You know, if I hit the lottery, I'm going to build them a building and I'm going to do all this."

I said, "Man, how much you're giving them now?" I said, "What you would do if you hit the lottery is not worth a quarter. They

would benefit far more by you giving them \$100 a year now than you giving them \$10 million a year if you hit the lottery. What are you doing now because I can just about guarantee you, if you're not given them anything now, you're but not going to do anything if you're getting the big money."

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First, the stingy spirit had to be broken. Half. And people, this is a major key that you must give a major portion of what you have not just in terms -- he said, "Half of all of my goods I bestow unto the poor." That's why when I told you earlier, I had spent -- at one point I was spending a thousand dollars a day just to be build a website that makes no money because that was not the mission.

You're going to have to give up your time and of your resources if you are rich and you ever want to get into the kingdom of heaven. You have got -- see, when you're going to be able -- when you're able to give and you're able to give that amount, you'll become detached from your money and then you have the money instead of the money having you and that's why most rich people can't get into heaven because the money has them.

The next thing that Zacchaeus did, he said, "Lord, if I have gotten any money by falsely accusing anyone, I have given back fourfold any unrighteous money that I got. I've given it back fourfold." Often times we get rich through some mechanisms that's just not quite right. We invest on some stuff that destroys people. And see, I don't have to be just cheating people, it's stuff that's not of God and we put our money and we put our seeds in some things that's not host(ph) and it destroys in one form or another as a spirit, family or body.

And he said, "Any destruction that I've caused, any harm that I cause, anything that I've taken unjustly, I'm going to restore it back fourfold." And there are very few rich people that have done some economic wrong in some form or another and you have to pay that thing back, multiplied. He couldn't just give it back one to one, he had to restore it fourfold and that's a deep one because every rich person along the path has perhaps done something.

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They had an employee that they knew they should have paid more money. There's a lot of ways you can take money from people, you knew you should pay them more money. But an employee, you see, the best business man pays folk the least amount they can get away with, that's the world of principle, that's the principle of business. You don't ever pay anyone more when you have to. You pay them the absolute least amount that you can get away with, that's the world of principle but that is not the divine principle.

And then sometimes to make it up high, you have wrongly paid some people and you have to go back and restore that thing fourfold. Most people are not going to do that. That's why most will never get into the kingdom of God who are rich.

And this next point is a hidden key. It says that Zacchaeus was small of stature, he was a short man. And I searched through the Bible, Zacchaeus is the only short man in the whole Bible. The only short man in the whole Bible. He was a short man. Well, what does that have to do with getting in heaven how tall you are? Because stature in a biblical sense relates to pride.

It's the key word and it's the code word for pride because that is the major thing that happens when you get a lot of stuff, it blows your pride out of whack. You cannot drive a Rolls Royce the same way you drive a Mustang, you just can't do it. You just can't do it. I don't care who you are, you just can't do it. It blows up pride. Zacchaeus was a short man, short in stature. You will never get into the kingdom of heaven full of pride and it's hard to be humble loaded with money. It's hard to be humble with a whole lot of stuff.

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People, I'm just telling you as it is. I've experienced this stuff. I know what I'm talking about. I've been around others with a whole lot of stuff. It's hard to be humble with a whole lot of stuff. Zacchaeus was a short man. Sometimes people, you have to bend down. When you're tall -- you're tall good looking. Tall goes along with -- that's why they said stiff-necked, that's tall. When you are stiff-necked, that's tall.

But to bow is a short man. And Zacchaeus was small in stature. Do you know how hard it is, people, when you have a lot of stuff

to bow? That's why the rich have such a difficult time getting into heaven because we can't bow. You know how hard it is to dress if you have on a fancy suit or dress or even just a hat, just a hat. Some folk can't even handle a hat. You all know what I'm talking? You can't handle a hat, we can't bow.

And these are things that you're going to have to have if you ever going to get into the kingdom of heaven as a rich man. I hope you're listening to me. I hope you hear it and I hope you go to heaven. Thank you for joining Brothers of the Word, because brother, you need the word. Amen. Amen.

God had me deliver this message today because perhaps there is someone here and you're headed to be rich and God wanted you to have this today and he didn't want you do lose your soul over pennies and if we don't understand that, we'll lose it over pennies. And you're headed there on the road to riches, but you'd better be careful because that is a dangerous road. And everyone wants to go, you don't care what Jesus says. They don't care if Jesus does says it's going to make it hard to get in there, they want to be rich and I understand because I'm the same way.

So I have to -- and I have been rationing with this thing for the longest myself because I recognize what the New Testament was saying. I'll understand what the word says and I don't try to dress it up or twist it to fit what I want. So, I understood and as I looked, I said, "Lord, this New Testament here, there's nothing in this New Testament that takes you towards worldly possessions and will. Nothing that I can find. Everything Jesus takes you the other way."

I said, "But Lord, I just don't want to go the other way. I just don't. I just don't want to go to other way." So if I don't want to go -- see, I'm just being honest with you people. I'm just being -- I'm not trying to dress it. I don't want the land of just another. I don't want the land of land not enough. I want to be -- as a matter of fact, I want to make about four times what I'm earning now. And I already have abundance. So how do you that and still get into the kingdom of heaven?

Zacchaeus had a key but unless we look at the only man that I am sure that was rich that made into the kingdom in the New Testament, unless we look at how he did it and I'm not sure

what Joseph had to do because if he was a rich man and he was a disciple of Jesus, the Bible doesn't show us what Jesus told him to do and Jesus may have told him, "Look man, give up half your stuff and give to the poor." We just don't know but I do know what Zacchaeus did and it is a lesson for those of you who would be rich.

Some of you people are hated for some money but God wants you to be able to handle it. That's why God can't give it to some of you, that's exactly why. Keep you out of heaven, absolutely would keep -- why do you think you cannot give your children everything they want? Why? Spoil them, make them weak, they become unappreciative, attitudes, proud, we are the children.

That's why he can't give it to most people, not if he wants to keep them in the kingdom but God wants to take some of you to a different level even economically, but he can't do it until we change spirit and understand some things.

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He can't do it with me. I struggle with it, that's how I knew it so well. I struggled with that stuff. That stuff was -- and people, everyone has flesh and the same feelings and it -- just pride is a mean demon to deal with and we all have it. And you fool yourself to think that you're above it or the devil who's shone up(ph) got you.

If you're fooling yourself to think that you don't have the weaknesses, he already has you because we struggle with him every day. But you cannot battle what you're not even aware of and that's why you have to know. As you come in to money and as things go to flowing in make sure that you have an open gate for it to truly flow out and for you to give. He blesses you for you to be a blessing. And I'm not just talking about you coming just putting all your money in church. There are some strangers that you will meet.

There are those that you will need to help because what Jesus said, if you notice the verse it did not say that Zacchaeus to half his money and went and gave it to the tabernacle. Now you know most preachers won't preach this but that's what the words says. It didn't say he took half his money and gave it to

the church. He said he bestowed it upon the poor. So that's why -- that's why when you really look at the whole -- folk won't preach this and I'm off the air now so I can say this because I don't want to -- but folk will not preach this. He took half of it and gave it to the poor.

So when God takes you to new levels in life, understand the principles that will keep you saved and don't hold up all this stuff like the man who built more barns and lost his soul that very night. Let's go to heaven together people.

It's painful. Do you know it's painful to give up your heart than money because when we -- when it slows in the first thing that happens as our statue rises and the first thing we'll say is, "I've made this money. That's my money. I sweated for this money, that's my idea to produ-- that's mine." And we puff up and swell open, raise up.

And by the time we get to explain and, "God, no way in the picture(ph)," and that's what happens. And when we stop to really look at things, everything we have came from God. Whether we were born into situations, whether we have certain talents or certain opportunities, every bit of it, when you really look at, you may be smart but why are you smart? Who gave you the IQ?

Everything we have when we stopped to really analyze it, comes from God. None of this is -- that's why the Bible says, "It is I who gives thee the power to get wealth." God gives it to you. And when you lose side of it, that's why there are so few rich who can make it into the kingdom. They won't give up that much but I want you to be different. And if you're not different I at least want you to know so you can hoard it and say with full knowledge I'm a bust hell wide open but I will have a good tune.

So at least you will know that's my responsibility. My responsibility is not to make you do anything. My responsibility is to enlighten you so that you know the right thing to do, that's my responsibility. I can't make you do anything. All my responsibility to you is to make sure that you know what is right. So for those of you and you may not even know it now and you are heading for a different economic level, remember this sermon and don't forget Zacchaeus.

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God is speaking to me now and he said, "The message that came today is by no means accidental. There are three people within the sound of my voice, within the next few months that your finances will drastically change for the better." And he says, "To even mark down this day and even do not forget when the blessing comes, God is simply speaking do not forget."

Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you for this message upon this day and I simply pray for the obedience of not just the people but my own. Give me the strength, Dear Father, to follow Zacchaeus. Make me a worthy vessel that you can even trust me with more. And dear father I pray that as painful as it may get sometimes, if I get too high, knock me down. For you are a perfect Father but we are imperfect children and imperfect children need discipline, direction and correction. I thank you, oh Father, for all that you have given but I also thank you for all that you have not given to protect and to preserve. In thy Son, Jesus' name, we pray, Amen.

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