

# JESUS: THE SERVANT AT WORK

## VOLUME TWO

### STUDY TWENTY

## Let's Get These Things Straight

*Mark 10:17–31*

---

*A kingdom mentality completely rearranges all of our cherished priorities. It puts first things first. It puts last things last.*

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

**M**ORE, more, more! Just a little bit more and you'll be satisfied!" This is the message the world sends us every day. And at times, it's a message we even hear in churches! In some congregations, prosperity masquerades as a sign of spiritual favor. Flamboyant teachers flaunt their wealth and use gimmicks and manipulative techniques to pander to the greed of their followers. Over time, the pulpit—the place for expositing the Holy Scriptures—becomes a platform for shameless materialism paraded as faith.

During His earthly ministry, Jesus warned against greed. He told His audience, "Beware! Guard against every kind of greed. Life is not measured by how much you own" (Luke 12:15).

Our fleshly desires, however, tell us the opposite—that life can be measured by how much we own. We start calculating our worth in dollars, appraising our success by the square footage of our house, and rating our happiness by the amount of stuff we can buy.

Eventually, money becomes our idol. We look to money to meet our needs for security, protection, hope, meaning, and purpose. But idols always ask for more from us and never deliver what they promise. That's why Jesus warned us about greed. He knew how the love of money eats away at our souls as we sacrifice ourselves, our relationships, and our principles to feed greed's voracious appetite.

So, if life is *not* measured by how much we own, then how is life measured? How can we acquire the eternal, soul-satisfying, abundant life Jesus offers?

In the passage for this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study, Jesus encountered a wealthy man who wanted to know how to acquire this kind of life. Jesus took time to address his question because He truly loved him—just as He loves us. And just as He helped the man, He can help us straighten out what's important so we can satisfy the deepest longings of our hearts.



INSIGHT FOR LIVING



Scan to listen to  
Chuck's message.

The Bible-Teaching Ministry of Chuck Swindoll  
Study 20 • Page 1

SEARCHING  
THE  
SCRIPTURES  
BIBLE STUDIES

# Let's Get These Things Straight

*Mark 10:17–31*

---



## PREPARE YOUR HEART

*Give me an eagerness for your laws  
rather than a love for money!  
Turn my eyes from worthless things,  
and give me life through your word. (Psalm 119:36–37)*

Pray the psalmist's prayer, and boldly ask God to turn the eyes of your heart toward His Word to apprehend truths that will transform your thoughts, attitudes, and actions.



## TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

“Jesus was starting out on his way to Jerusalem” (Mark 10:17). The winding path of Jesus’ three-and-a-half-year ministry was leading Him down this final highway to the cross. While on the road, He met a man who was eager to ask Him a question. Matthew’s account tells us that he was a “young man” (Matthew 19:20), and Luke’s account says he was “extremely wealthy” (Luke 18:23 NASB).

In the previous passage, Jesus blessed the children and declared a vital truth about faith:

*“For the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children. I tell you the truth, anyone who doesn’t receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it.”*  
(Mark 10:14–15)

In contrast to the children’s openhearted trust, this rich young man came to Jesus with arrogant self-confidence. Turn to the account in the gospel of Mark and hear the man’s response when Jesus gave him an answer neither he nor the disciples expected to hear.



## Observation: Jesus, the Rich Man, and the Kingdom of God

Use your skills of observation to see how Mark describes the encounter.<sup>1</sup> Picture the young man in his fine attire and impressive appearance as he runs up to Jesus, kneels, and begins to talk.

# Let's Get These Things Straight

*Mark 10:17–31*

---

## Jesus' Encounter with a Rich Man—Mark 10:17–22

Read [Mark 10:17–22](#). What self-confident question did the man ask Jesus in 10:17? How did Jesus respond in 10:18–19?

What self-assuring answer did the young man give in 10:20?

How did Mark describe Jesus' heart toward the rich young man in 10:21–22? What was this man lacking? What self-incriminating reaction do you observe in this rich young man?

*See the words “looking at him”? They’re words for a penetrating gaze. Perceiving him at his core being, Jesus felt a love for him. Hear the brakes? All of a sudden, he’s off his knees. “Wow. You realize how hard I’ve worked for this?” He went away grieving. Why? Look at the little word for. Because “he owned much property.” —Pastor Chuck Swindoll*

## Jesus' Discussion with Some Very Confused Disciples—Mark 10:23–31

Read [Mark 10:23–31](#). What did Jesus say to His disciples in 10:23–27? Why were the disciples astounded that this man didn't merit the kingdom of God? What fear might they have felt?

# Let's Get These Things Straight

*Mark 10:17–31*

---

What promises did Jesus make in Mark 10:28–31 to reassure them?

*Isn't that true? Your brother at home probably doesn't understand your walk with Christ. If he does, you're twice blessed. Most family members don't get it when we really sell out to Christ. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll*



## **Interpretation: Jesus Speaks About Salvation and God's Kingdom**

The young man assumed personal goodness could unlock the door to God's kingdom. Jesus corrected his assumption by defining the *infinite standard*: “Only God is truly good” (Mark 10:18)—and by stating the *impossible requirement*: God's law summed up in the Ten Commandments.

What did the young man fail to grasp? Why is it impossible to enter heaven by being a good person? What was the point of Jesus' illustration of the camel and the eye of a needle?

The right question isn't “What must I *do* for eternal life?” but rather, “In whom must I *trust*?” How did Jesus' instruction to the young man to sell his possessions and follow Him reveal the man's idol? In what did his hope and security rest? Why is it so hard for some people to trust in Jesus?

# Let's Get These Things Straight

*Mark 10:17–31*

---

What did Jesus mean when He said the first in this age will be last in the next age? How did Jesus sum up His message about the kingdom of God with this paradox?

*Do you realize this is the essence of the whole thing? What a grand, grand promise! A kingdom mentality completely rearranges all of our cherished priorities. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll*



## **Correlation: God's Kingdom and the Love of Money**

Let's correlate our passage with other passages of Scripture to gain a comprehensive view of the kingdom of God and the love of money. Compare our passage with Jesus' teaching in [Matthew 6:19–24](#) and [Luke 12:14–21](#). How would you summarize Jesus' teaching about money, possessions, and God's kingdom?

What warnings must we heed from [Ecclesiastes 5:10](#); [1 Timothy 6:9–10, 17–19](#); and [Hebrews 13:5](#)? What will happen to people who long to be rich? What command did Paul give to those who are rich in this present world?

*Jesus used these words to describe a battle between two gods. "You cannot serve God and Mammon." Mammon is an Aramaic word meaning "money." And when using it in that sentence, He personifies money. Mammon is a power that seeks to dominate us. It seduces us. It wins our hearts. It drives us with its own spiritual forces. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll*

# Let's Get These Things Straight

*Mark 10:17–31*

---

What should every Christ-follower prioritize according to [Matthew 6:25–33](#)? What rewards await those who prioritize God's kingdom?

*Don't you love that! A missionary who decides, "God's calling me from where we have been living to go to a place that I realize isn't that comfortable, and we're selling the house." Those whose hearts have been driven like that never say, "We regret selling the place." They say, "Oh, the doors that have been opened."*  
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll



## Application: Get These Things Straight

When you're tempted to put your confidence in anything or anyone other than Jesus, remember Jesus' encounter with the rich young man, and heed the following principles from our passage.

First, *when you want to get rich, prepare yourself for the dreadful consequences.* The money idol will steal your soul! How can you run to Christ when you sense greed stalking you? What guardrails has the Holy Spirit led you to put around your heart so that God alone is worshiped?

*If you really drive yourself to get rich, you're going to ruin your family. You're going to ruin your home. You're going to ruin your life. Your whole world will be twisted because you are serving a rival god.* —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Second, *when you're weary of sacrificing, remind yourself of the numerous rewards.* What Scriptures come to mind as you think about the rewards that await those who serve the Lord faithfully? How have you kept or how will you keep these passages in your heart?

# Let's Get These Things Straight

*Mark 10:17–31*

---

*I'm not telling you how many houses to own. I'm not telling you what your salary ought to be. I'm not telling you what kind of car to drive. I'm just saying it all needs to be kept in perspective. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll*

Third, when you wonder about eternal life, force yourself to remember Jesus' words. Think of those you know who have not placed their trust in Jesus. Take some time to pray for their salvation. Ask God to soften their hearts to Jesus' offer to receive true wealth that will never pass away.

Close your study in prayer, telling the Lord that He is the center of your life and no earthly idol will ever take His place!



## A FINAL PRAYER

*Heavenly Father, thank You for Your precious Word. May the throne in my heart be exclusively Yours. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.*

### ENDNOTE

1. To learn more about Pastor Chuck Swindoll's *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, go to the web page "*How Does Pastor Chuck Swindoll Study the Bible?*" at [insight.org](https://www.insight.org).

For the 2026–2027 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study was developed by Mirlenda Noëlliste in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages. Copyright © 2011, 2026 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

[insight.org](https://www.insight.org)

Insight for Living  
Study 20 • Page 7

[illegible]