

# Eye of the Needle

One day a rich man came and asked Jesus “what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?” He responded by saying “If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.” At this response, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

Jesus then turned to his disciples saying, “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.” When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, “Who then can be saved?” But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, “With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.”

For years I have heard theologians expound on this statement. Usually it has gone something like this: In Jerusalem there was a gate called the “eye of the needle”. It was a very small gate and if someone had a camel and wanted to go through this gate the camel would have to go down on its knees in order to go through it. It is then said that we have to go to Christ on our knees in order to get into heaven. Or that only praying Christians will get to heaven. This is partly true. No one who hasn’t spent time on his knees will enter into heaven. But simply getting on one’s knees will not get you into heaven. Millions do this every day.

I personally believe that Jesus was referring to the real eye of a real needle. Let me explain. Can Jesus save us if we won’t acknowledge that we need saving? When we come to Christ, what are we to acknowledge about ourselves before He can save us? How much can we do in the process of our salvation? How much are my good works worth outside of Christ? “Behold, they are all vanity; their works are nothing: their molten images are wind and confusion.” Isaiah 41:29 If Christ were to remove his sustaining power from my life, what would I be? “All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.” Isaiah 40:17 “Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, even them that contended with thee: they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought.” Isaiah 41:12

How much are we worth without Christ? Jesus said, “Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.” Matthew 5:13 Without Christ’s power in our lives we are good for nothing!

Sometimes God has to allow us to get pretty low before we will acknowledge that we are nothing and that we can do nothing without Him. We must come to the understanding that trusting in riches or the works of our own hands is useless and will only keep us from seeing and acknowledging that we of ourselves are nothing. In fact pride, the worst sin in God’s eyes, goes hand in hand with self sufficiency. In fact, you can’t have one without the other.

Once we realize that without Christ we are nothing and that we can trust in nothing but Christ. We can then come to the cross (eye of the needle) acknowledge that we are nothing and let go of all the “things” that we have trusted in. How hard is it for us (nothing) to pass through the eye of a needle? You’re probably thinking, but what does it have to do with a camel? Spiritually speaking, what is a camel? Does a camel have a soul? Did Jesus come to die for camels? Spiritually speaking, a camel is nothing, so it has no problem passing through the eye of a needle. In fact all animals, spiritually speaking, are nothing. Jesus used the camel as an illustration because it was the largest commonly known animal to the Jews.

When we come to Christ, acknowledging our nothingness, our utter helplessness without Christ, we can then pass through the eye of the needle and be born again. We will then become everything in Him. When we give ourselves to Him, without reserve, we have nothing to fear. “What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” Romans 8:31, 32. Daniel and his three friends knew this, and it gave them strength to stand in the face of death. “When the human will cooperates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent.” Our High Calling p. 298 Isn’t this incredible! When we cooperate with God and allow Him to control our will, He makes our wills all-powerful, omnipotent. This means we can do anything He asks of us. “As the will of man co-operates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent.” “Whatever is to be done at His command may be accomplished in His strength. All His biddings are enablings.” Christ’s Object Lessons p.333. Also, nobody can hurt us without His permission. “Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.” Luke 10:19 We are invincible as long as we realize our nothingness without Him and stay connected to Him. We can then live as 1 John 3:2-12 says we should. “I can do **all things** through Christ which strengtheneth me.” Philippians 4.13

It is only when we realize that we are nothing and always will be nothing without Christ that we have any hope of salvation. It is only as we allow God through His Holy Spirit to be in control of our lives that we are anything, and that our value is found in Christ alone.