

Concordia Lutheran Conference

Daily Devotions

By Carl M. Zorn

for the

Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity

-SUNDAY-

*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.*

– Matthew 19:24; Mark 10:25; Luke 18:25

When the rich young man had decided in favor of his riches and against the Savior, Jesus sorrowfully said to His disciples: *"How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God"* (Mark 10:23)! His disciples were astonished at His words. But the Lord now said: *"Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God"* (vv. 24-25). The disciples were exceedingly amazed and said among themselves: *"Who then can be saved?"* (v. 26). The Lord said: *"With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible"* (v. 27). It is said that one can buy anything for money; yes, **almost** anything that can be bought. Therefore riches have a powerful charm. Whoever sets his heart upon them is charmed by them; his riches can become his god. The Apostle Paul, in I Timothy 6, gave us these changeless truths: *"They that will be rich [that's their main desire and goal in life] fall into temptation and a snare [a trap], and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the [a] root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith [lost their saving faith], and pierced themselves through with many sorrows"* (vv. 9-10). Only God, the Holy Spirit, working through His living, powerful "Law" (Romans 3:20b), can bring the rich (as well as the poor) to see their sins against God and against their fellow human beings, to "confess" (James 5:16a) their sins and have a truly "broken and a contrite heart" (Psalm 51:17), and then through the living, powerful, and truly comforting Gospel, God, the Holy Spirit, announces to the rich contrite sinner (as well as to the poor contrite sinner) that there is finished and free "forgiveness" (Psalm 130:4a) from God, "according to the riches of His grace" (Ephesians 1:7b), "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:24), that Christ Jesus who was, is, and will always be the only "propitiation [the only fully adequate payment to God] for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world [including the rich, the poor and everyone in between]" (I John 2:2). With God, all of this is very possible for the rich (and for the poor). God's grace in Christ, received and enjoy by "faith" (Romans 3:28) in that only Savior for sinners, makes all believers in Him truly and everlastingly rich, as the Apostle Paul reminds us in II Corinthians 8: "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich" (v. 9

PRAYER – My gracious and forgiving God, help me to grow in remembering the big difference between those blessings which are ever-lasting (especially Thy priceless forgiveness, given to us on account of the perfect obedience and the sinless sacrifice of Thy Son for us and for all) and those blessings which are not ever-lasting, but only temporary (such as our money, our car, and our home). We need Thy help each day. Amen.

Scripture reading for Sunday: Epistle – Ephesians 6:10-17 Gospel – John 4:46-54