

Luke 18:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.

Analysis

Jesus tells the rich ruler: 'Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.' The ruler claimed to have kept all commandments (v. 21), but Jesus exposed the one thing missing—his wealth was his god. The command 'sell all' addresses this specific idol. 'Distribute unto the poor' demonstrates genuine concern for others versus hoarding. 'Treasure in heaven' contrasts earthly treasure—secure, eternal, far better. The climactic command 'come, follow me' reveals what Jesus truly desires—disciples, not merely moral people. The man 'was very sorrowful: for he was very rich' (v. 23), choosing wealth over Christ.

Historical Context

Rich rulers rarely sought religious teachers, making this encounter unusual. His question 'what shall I do to inherit eternal life?' (v. 18) revealed works-based theology—'do' to 'inherit.' Jesus directed him to commandments, which he claimed to have kept. Yet something was missing—his wealth, which violated the first commandment (no gods before God) and tenth commandment (no coveting). Jesus' command to sell all was surgical strike at his specific idol. Not all believers must sell everything, but all must prioritize Christ above possessions. The man's sorrow

showed he loved wealth more than eternal life—tragic choice revealing money's enslaving power.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. Was Jesus' command to sell all universal requirement or specific diagnosis of this man's particular idol?
2. What does the ruler's sorrowful departure teach about the enslaving power of wealth and difficulty of entering God's kingdom when trusting in riches?

Interlinear Text

ἀκούσας	δὲ	ταῦτα	οὐ	Ἰησοῦς	εἶπεν	αὐτῷ	Ἐτι	
heard	Now	these things	G3588	when Jesus	he said	unto him	Yet	
G191	G1161	G5023		G2424	G2036	G846	G2089	
ἔν	σοι	λείπει·	πάντα	ὅσα	ἔξεις	πώλησον	καὶ	διάδος
one	thou	lackest	all	that	thou hast	thing sell	and	distribute
G1520	G4671	G3007	G3956	G3745	G2192	G4453	G2532	G1239
πτωχοῖς	καὶ	ἔξεις	θησαυρὸν	ἐν	οὐρανῷ,	καὶ	δεῦρο	
unto the poor	and	thou hast	treasure	in	heaven	and	come	
G4434	G2532	G2192	G2344	G1722	G3772	G2532	G1204	
ἀκολούθει	μοι							
follow	me							
G190	G3427							

Additional Cross-References

Luke 12:33 (Parallel theme): Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

Matthew 19:21 (References Jesus): Jesus said unto him, 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.

Luke 16:9 (Parallel theme): And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

Luke 10:42 (Parallel theme): But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

Psalms 27:4 (Parallel theme): One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.

2 Peter 3:8 (Parallel theme): But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

Luke 9:23 (Parallel theme): And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

Philippians 3:13 (Parallel theme): Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,
