

# Mark 10:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

## Analysis

After teaching about wealth's danger, 'Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!' (περιβλεψάμενος ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγει τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ, Πῶς δυσκόλως οἱ τὰ χρήματα ἔχοντες εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ εἰσελεύσονται). Jesus 'looked round about' (perilepsamenos, περιβλεψάμενος), scanning His disciples to ensure they heard. The phrase 'they that have riches' (hoi ta chrēmata echontes, οἱ τὰ χρήματα ἔχοντες) literally means 'those having possessions.' Jesus repeated (from v. 23) that entering God's kingdom with wealth is difficult (dyskolōs, δυσκόλως). Wealth creates obstacles: self-reliance, material comfort, divided affections. The rich young ruler's departure illustrated this—unable to forsake riches for Christ. Jesus' warning challenges prosperity gospel and calls for radical evaluation of our relationship with money.

## Historical Context

This teaching followed the rich young ruler's rejection of Jesus' call (vv. 17-22). The man had great possessions and went away sorrowful—unwilling to sell all and follow Jesus. Jesus used this as teaching moment. First-century Jewish theology equated wealth with divine blessing, making Jesus' warning counter-cultural. The disciples' amazement (v. 24, 'astonished at his words') reveals how radical this teaching was. Wealth was considered evidence of God's favor; Jesus taught it often hinders salvation. Early church practiced economic sharing (Acts 2:44-45;

4:32-37), with wealthy members supporting poor. James condemned favoritism toward rich (James 2:1-7) and pronounced woes on oppressive wealthy (James 5:1-6). Throughout church history, tension exists between accumulating wealth and Jesus' teaching. Contemporary prosperity gospel contradicts Jesus' clear warning about riches' spiritual danger.

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does wealth create spiritual obstacles of self-reliance, comfort, and divided affection that hinder kingdom entrance?
2. What does Jesus' warning about riches require regarding our relationship with money and possessions?

## Interlinear Text

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Καὶ περιβλεψάμενος ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγει τοῖς μαθηταῖς  
And looked round about Jesus and saith disciples  
G2532 G4017 G3588 G2424 G3004 G3588 G3101

αὐτοῦ Πῶς δυσκόλως οἱ τὰ χρήματα ἔχοντες εἰς  
G846 How hardly G3588 G3588 riches shall they that have into  
G4459 G1423 G5536 G2192 G1519

τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ εἰσελεύσονται  
G3588 the kingdom G3588 of God enter  
G932 G2316 G1525

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 Corinthians 1:26** (Parallel theme): For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:

**Mark 3:5** (Parallel theme): And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

**Luke 18:24** (Kingdom): And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

**James 2:5** (Kingdom): Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

**2 Peter 1:11** (Kingdom): For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

**Mark 5:32** (Parallel theme): And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing.

**Mark 10:15** (Kingdom): Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

**Matthew 18:3** (Kingdom): And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

**John 3:5** (Kingdom): Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

**James 4:4** (References God): Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.