



## LC STUDY GUIDE

### “Life Beyond”

The Passage: Mark 10:17-31

April 29 – May 12

### How to use the LC Study Guide

Hello Leaders! Thank you for your ongoing commitment to pursue Christian community and the study of Scripture—study that leads to life transformation in Christ and strives to serve “the other.”

These studies have been designed with the following aspects in mind:

1. To facilitate a discussion on the passage of Scripture that was preached that particular Sunday using the Inductive Bible Study Method (not necessarily on the themes of that particular sermon). In summary, this method stresses “Observation” (what the reader can see from the text), “Interpretation” (what we can learn when we study the text with various tools, commentaries, and resources), and “Application” (how we can apply the Scripture to our lives).
2. Groups using this study range from the new leader to the highly experienced. Groups themselves have their own context. This study attempts to hit the middle. The stronger studies require about an hour or two of leader preparation to contextualize this resource to the needs and personalities of your group.
3. In addition to prep time, please spend time in prayer during preparation and before and after the study. It’s the power of the Holy Spirit that illuminates the Word of Scripture and we are humbled that He uses our combined efforts as part of this work. (For more tips on using this study, please see the endnotes.)

As always, we are so grateful for you, your gifting, your servant leadership, and all that you do for the cause of Christ. Please let us know if we can help you in any way.

Grace and peace,  
Pastor Tim, on behalf of the LC Team

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We hope you had a meaningful Lent and a beautiful Easter celebration of the risen Jesus. This past Sunday, we began a new series called “Life Beyond” and this week Pastor Bryan preached about the rich young ruler and his desire for eternal life.

Today we’ll discuss Jesus’ answer to him, the young ruler’s reaction, and the disciples’ and our reactions to all of them – that’s a lot of reaction! But our greatest hope today is that we will take away a greater understanding of what Jesus is calling all people to, regardless of social status and how we might apply that to our lives.

<sup>17</sup> As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. “Good teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

<sup>18</sup> “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone. <sup>19</sup> You know the commandments: ‘You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honor your father and mother.’”

<sup>20</sup> “Teacher,” he declared, “all these I have kept since I was a boy.”

<sup>21</sup> Jesus looked at him and loved him. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

<sup>22</sup> At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.

<sup>23</sup> Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!”

<sup>24</sup> The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! <sup>25</sup> It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”

<sup>26</sup> The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, “Who then can be saved?”

<sup>27</sup> Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.”

<sup>28</sup> Then Peter spoke up, “We have left everything to follow you!”

<sup>29</sup> “Truly I tell you,” Jesus replied, “no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel <sup>30</sup> will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—along with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life.<sup>31</sup> But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”

### **Mark 10:17-31**

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**O** – Spend few moments and re-read this passage in a way that allows your heart to embrace the story. As you do so, what features and details come alive for you? Share what resonates with you.

I – To appreciate the details of the Gospel writers, Matthew tells us that the man was young, Luke tells us he was a ruler, Mark cuts to the heart of the story and John doesn't mention this scene ☺ In any case, this man finds Jesus in order to ask him about "eternal life" or in other translations, "the life of the age to come."

If someone came to you with that exact question, what would you say in your own words? How close is your natural answer to the one Jesus gave?

**Bridging the Passage:**

The "rich young ruler" who has faithfully kept the commands represents the ideal Jewish man – *this* is who everyone wanted to be like and *this* is who parents hoped they would have raised. And Jesus says, even *this* is not enough to inherit "eternal life."

What's happening here is not a vindictive punishment from Jesus to guilt the young and powerful man for being wealthy and moral. Instead, there's a greater teaching that needs to be discovered, understood, and lived out.

Consider the explanation from N.T. Wright's commentary on this section of Mark:

"A long Christian tradition, of course, has assumed that he (the rich young ruler) wanted to know how he could be sure of going to **heaven** when he died, but that wasn't how he would have put it. God was going to make the whole world a new place; when that happened, you wouldn't want to be away in a disembodied heaven, but here on earth to enjoy the great blessing.

"A further word of explanation is needed here. When Jesus says 'You will have treasure in heaven', he doesn't mean that the young man must go to heaven to get it; he means that God will keep it stored up for him until the time when, in the Age to Come, all is revealed. The reason you have money in the bank is not so that you can spend it in the bank but so that you can take it out and spend it somewhere else. The reason you have treasure in heaven, God's storehouse, is so that you can enjoy it in the Age to Come when God brings heaven and earth together at last. And 'eternal life', as most translations put it, doesn't mean 'life in a timeless, otherworldly dimension', but 'the life of the Age to Come' (the word 'eternal' translates a word which means 'belonging to the Age').<sup>1</sup>"

**O/I** – The astonished and confused disciples rightly ask, "Who then can be saved?" And Jesus succinctly explains the scene: to receive the kingdom of God, rich, young, influential men do not save themselves any more than poor, older, less influential people save themselves. **Only God can save and give the Kingdom of God.** In fact, in this Kingdom, many of the last will actually be first.

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<sup>1</sup> Wright, T. (2004). [\*Mark for Everyone\*](#) (p. 135). London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

Spend some time processing this teaching moment together. What reactions do you have? Does it give you peace? Does it create a different set of anxieties? How might this teaching deepen your faith in Jesus?

**A** – The phrase “kingdom of God” is another way of talking about “the Age to Come,” the period of time in which God is at last ruling the world as he always wanted to. There is a vision of the Kingdom in this life and the ultimate fulfillment is yet to come. Until it comes in all its glory, how we can be people of the “Kingdom of God” and how can we live out the truth of what Jesus was trying to explain to the rich young ruler?

**A** – Pastor Bryan gave us an excellent and empowering framing of the end of this passage when he said, “You don’t have to walk away from home or work or family or any of the good things God gives us to enjoy in this life. You just can’t let them keep you from following Jesus.” Is there anything stopping you from inheriting the Kingdom of God that Jesus is inviting you to take a look at? What difference can this make in your life now?

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- a. Please note that not all these questions are to be asked in a single meeting. Take some time to prayerfully discern what will serve your LC the best. Select and reword the questions that best fit your voice and your Life Community group.
  - b. Complement these questions with “process questions” (what else? what more? what do others think?)
  - c. When you ask questions, give people ample time to think and respond. Wait. Take your time; don’t rush people but encourage participation. Avoid answering your own questions!
  - d. Application: Pace the study to conclude with difference-making application.
  - e. Secondary texts—use other texts sparingly, even if they are relevant. Such texts will push you into “teaching” rather than facilitating, causing people to feel distracted or de-powered.