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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

**A1669 ~ The Rich Young Man.**

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*Welcome to Bible Adventures. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow. Jesus is Lord of all.*

Today's *Bible Adventure* tells the stories of two rich young rulers from the Bible.

Many people in life think that having a lot of money would be wonderful. It supposedly brings financial security, buys many expensive possessions and gives a person social status and many friends. Can this really be true?

People who become instantly wealthy through a lottery draw insist at the time of the winning announcement that the money won't change them. However before long, they find wealth has its own problems. They became targeted by people wanting a handout for either themselves or some charity. Family disputes over who gets a share of the money cause divisions and much unhappiness. Most large money winners say that a year after getting rich, they look back and see that they were happier before they received the money. Do we want to hear this? Large amounts of money bring many troubles. In 1 Timothy, Chapter 6, it says: "The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

The Lord Jesus in Luke, Chapter 12 said: "Watch out and guard yourselves from every kind of greed; because your true life is not made up of the things you own, no matter how rich you may be."

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DRAMA - [The Bible In Living Sound.](#)

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After the Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector in Luke, Chapter 18, it's recorded that mothers wanted to bring their tiny children to the Lord that He might touch and bless them. Yet the disciples often misused their authority. Here they tried to stop the children from coming close to the Lord and so He rebuked the disciples.

Jesus said that the kingdom of God belongs to those having the qualities of little children. They are innocent, trusting, humble, without hypocrisy and do not strive for honour and power. Adults have to come to God in the same way in full trust and surrender if they want to enter the kingdom of God. Jesus loved children and we should follow His example by never despising or mistreating any of them.

As the Lord was leaving that place in today's *Bible Adventure*, a young man ran up to Him, knelt down in front of Him and asked what he should do to inherit eternal life. This story, sometimes known as The Rich Young Ruler, isn't a parable and is recorded in Matthew, Chapter 19, Mark 10 and Luke 18.

Although this young man was seeking eternal life, he was thinking in worldly ways. He also thought himself good. He believed that he had followed the law exactly from his youth up. He thought that to obtain eternal life, one had to be 'good' and so asked Jesus if he needed to do any further 'good' work in order to be saved.

Jesus explained to him that no person can be good by his own work. Only God is good and no person can be good enough by his own efforts to merit God's salvation. Jesus reminded the rich young ruler of some of the Ten Commandments. As indicated in Matthew's Gospel, Jesus also added, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." The young man assured Jesus that as far as he knew, he had obeyed all of these commandments since his youth. Yet he still had no assurance of salvation for eternal life.

No one apart from the Lord Jesus has ever been able to obey the law perfectly. This young ruler had broken the first of the Ten Commandments: "You shall have no other gods before me." He had put his possessions as his god. He had also broken the greatest commandment which is: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength."

Although this young man loved God to some extent, he had put his possessions ahead of God and was unworthy of eternal life. However, Jesus loved him and told him that he was lacking in love for God and his neighbours. How could the young man show his love for God? Jesus replied that he had to give up what he loved most – his possessions. Those who give up their dearest possessions for God, will receive eternal treasure in heaven.

In telling the young man to sell his possessions, Jesus wasn't giving the man a new law to follow. Nor was Jesus telling everyone to do the same and sell all their possessions. Jesus knew that love of possessions was preventing this young man from giving his life to God. Whenever we love anything more than God, we must give it up and worship God above all else.

In Matthew, Chapter 6, the Lord Jesus taught that no one can serve two masters. He said, "You cannot serve both God and money." We should keep for ourselves no more money than we need. One well-known preacher gave away the royalties from his books and refused to accept payment for his public speaking engagements. He said he already had enough to live on.

Storing up treasure on earth isn't wise. Many valuable things decay or rust or are stolen. And neither can anyone take anything of this world out when they leave. Worrying about possessions will cause us to put them first in our lives, which displaces our trust in God. When we become slaves to our treasure, Satan is pleased and we have tangled ourselves up with things of the world. However, when we store up treasure in heaven, we give our heart to God.

Some people will say that they are already poor and so this teaching doesn't apply to them. Even poor people can be controlled by the desire to become rich. What's your financial goal in life? What does your heart long for the most? When we turn from worldly treasures to looking to God and His will, we start storing up treasure in heaven that will last forever.

Each person has to choose whether they want to live in the kingdom of God or the kingdom of darkness. There are only two roads a person can walk on: the narrow, difficult road leading to eternal life or the wide, easy road leading to eternal punishment. No one can walk on both roads at the same time. The Apostle John wrote in 1 John, Chapter 2: "Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

When Jesus told the rich young ruler to sell everything he had and give it away, the man left Jesus feeling very sad. It's not only love of possessions that can keep people from following Jesus. It can be a love of family and friends, or a love of work or fame. There can be no greater mistake than to try to build up your treasure on earth.

Sometimes God allows a person to lose a fortune so they will get a new perspective on life. The second rich young ruler lived in Babylon around 634 BC to 562 BC. Nebuchadnezzar was considered the greatest king that the East had ever produced. Through war, he had added other nations to enlarge his kingdom and reigned over a vast empire for 42 years. He was a genius organiser and achieved a huge building program. As king, he could have anything money could buy.

But from the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar was plagued by sleepless nights. He had vivid dreams he couldn't remember in the morning. This condition upset him so much that he demanded his wise men tell him what his dreams were and what they meant. Four Jewish exiles, Daniel and three friends, started praying fervently to God to reveal the dream to them, not only so they could save their own lives but also the lives of all the wise men in the land. And God answered these men's prayers.

Later in Nebuchadnezzar's reign, he rebuilt the city of Babylon with splendid hanging gardens. God gave him another dream and this time, the king called in Daniel to interpret it. This is recorded in Daniel, Chapter 4. Then the king lifted up his heart in pride. One year later, God took from the king his reasoning mind as well as his kingdom for seven years. The king learnt to acknowledge that the Supreme God has power over human kingdoms and He can give them to anyone He chooses.

After his kingdom was restored to him, Nebuchadnezzar praised the Most High God, acknowledging that God alone has control of the affairs of angels and people. The king knew that God's kingdom will last for ever. No one can oppose God's will or question what He does.

The way we handle our money is perhaps the truest indicator of the spiritual condition of our heart. God entrusts what is valuable to those who prove their ability to manage it. We only truly give gifts when it costs us something. It is more blessed to give than to receive, but it is also more blessed to do without, than to have to have.

For those who want to get rich quickly, here's a cautionary story about a man who lived in a country district of Australia many years ago. He owned a large piece of land that wasn't very valuable. He thought up a scheme to divide and sell it. The man had been fattening turkeys to sell at Christmas time. He also had a quantity of tiny pieces of gold picked up along the outback creek banks.

Before selling the turkeys, the man mixed the gold in the turkeys' food. When the turkeys were killed for the celebrations, the purchasers were astonished to see such a large amount of gold inside the turkeys. They drew their own conclusions regarding the land where the turkeys were feeding and bought as much of it as they could.

The original owner gained the money he coveted but soon found out that his gains turned into far greater losses than he had ever anticipated. He had not broken the law of the land or even advertised his property for sale. He hadn't told any lies and all seemed quite clear in the matter. But in effect, he had deceived the people buying the land about its value, even though their greed contributed to a later loss.

In his heart, the man knew that he had taken other people's money by false pretences and his conscience gave him no rest. The conscience is the witness of God in our secret thoughts and motives, as well as in all our outward dealings. As time went by, the man's agitation of spirit affected his mental balance and finally, he had to be put in a mental hospital. If only he had put matters right with God and the people he had cheated! A clear conscience is much more valuable than bags of money. Don't be tempted to sell your honesty and integrity for riches.

In Isaiah, Chapter 55, Verse 7, it says: "Seek the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way; and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, and He will have mercy on him, and to our God for He will abundantly pardon."

*The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.*

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