

# THE KING OF KINGS: A STUDY OF MATTHEW

## The King's Ministry: A Study of Matthew 14–20

### STUDY SEVENTEEN

## Who Has the Most Toys?

*Matthew 19:13–22*

*I speak to you who are building your collection of toys. I urge you to stop. You'll never have enough to satisfy you, and you'll never find enough to stop the throes of death. Only Jesus can give you the kind of peace you need.*

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

**T**HE world constantly screams, “Get more stuff . . . AND GET IT NOW!” Many assume that wealth reflects greatness. Badges of vintage jewelry, new technology, sleek cars, and sprawling homes “show” that someone has made it. Sadly, some even think the accumulation of fancy stuff proves that someone has earned God’s favor.

A mountain of cash, however, can’t buy everything. It can buy a bed but not a good night’s sleep. A luxurious house but not a home. Comfortable clothes but not comfort for the soul. Global fame but not a genuine friend. Plus, everyone eventually faces the same fate through the great equalizer: death. And whoever dies with the most toys . . . *still dies!*

So when we inevitably meet our end, what will our possessions mean to God? Should we use our belongings to assess what Jesus thinks about us and how He will receive us into His kingdom?

In this *Searching the Scriptures* study, we will stand beside a rich man who posed a similar question to Jesus: “What good deed must I do to have eternal life” (Matthew 19:16)? Jesus’ answer upset the man. It might even trouble us too. But it gives a necessary challenge to the world’s shouts and our impulses, to teach us the way to true blessing and greatness.



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Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application

## Who Has the Most Toys?

*Matthew 19:13–22*



### PREPARE YOUR HEART

Right now during this study, get rid of any distractions your possessions might cause. Open God's Word and cling to Him in prayer, like Jacob (Genesis 32:22–30), and don't let go until He blesses you. Ask for that blessing now, and ask Him to prepare your heart to receive what He has to say on this vital topic.



### TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

The news of the arrival of Jesus' kingdom had hit Judea hard. Yes, this was *good* news. Jesus healed many people's diseases, demon-possession, and sinfulness. But it also was *challenging* news. The gospel of the kingdom called people to a radically new way of life in which "those who are last now will be first then, and those who are first will be last" (Matthew 20:16).

In Matthew 19:13–22, we see this upside-down kingdom in the back-to-back encounters during Jesus' interactions with small children and a rich man. Society would have shooed away the little ones while fawning over the wealthy . . . but not so with Jesus.



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### Observation: A Test on Divorce

In his book *Searching the Scriptures: Find the Nourishment Your Soul Needs*, Pastor Chuck Swindoll guides us in the excavation of life-giving truth from the quarry of God's Word. Extracting that spiritual gold begins with observing what the text says.<sup>1</sup> Read [Matthew 19:13–22](#) and summarize your most important observations.

### Jesus and the Children—Matthew 19:13–15

How did the disciples react to the parents bringing their children to Jesus in [Matthew 19:13](#)? How did Jesus' response in [verses 14 and 15](#) differ from theirs?

### Jesus and the Rich Man—Matthew 19:16–22

What did Jesus initially say in [Matthew 19:17–18](#) the rich man needed to do to receive eternal life?



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According to Jesus in *Matthew 19:21*, what three additional commands did this rich man need to follow to be “perfect,” and why? What kind of reward would he receive if he did these things?

How did the rich man respond in *verse 22* to Jesus’ answer? What reason did Matthew give for the rich man’s response?

*What an interesting thing to say. Why does being rich mean sadness? It doesn't have to mean that. But of course, he doesn't have things; things have him. He doesn't own toys; toys own him. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll*

By selling his earthly treasures, this man would’ve seen just how fleeting worldly wealth truly is and learned to set his heart on something far more valuable and lasting: the kingdom of heaven. Yet, giving up all the possessions he had spent his life accumulating was *unthinkable*, so his heart couldn’t let go of his wealth when Jesus gave Him the opportunity.



### Interpretation: A Rich Man with a Hidden Agenda

Now, we’ll dig a little deeper into Jesus’ words to see more of what He intended to teach this rich man and what He wants all His followers to know as well.



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By including Jesus' interaction with the children prior to His conversation with the rich man, Matthew contrasted a person society would have greatly valued with children whom many considered essentially worthless. What did the rich man lack that Jesus valued so highly in the children? (Hint: Jesus discussed children and the kingdom back in [Matthew 18:1–4](#)).

What did the rich man mean in [Matthew 19:16](#) when he asked what “good deed” he needed to do to receive eternal life? What did Jesus suggest in [verse 17](#) when He said, “There is only One who is good”? See pages 112–114 of Pastor Chuck's commentary *Insights on Matthew 16–28*. Also, you can check out [Constable's Notes](#) at [netbible.org](#) for some helpful insights.<sup>2</sup>

How did the rich man's response at the end of this conversation reflect the true attitude of his heart? What can Christians today learn from his example?



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*That's why this man is walking away sad. It isn't that he doesn't understand. It's that he doesn't want to put first things first. What a tragic addiction! That path is strewn with a litter of people who have nothing but their toys. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll*



### Correlation: The Heart of Giving

Jesus didn't merely tell the rich man to sell his possessions so he would have less stuff. Jesus wanted him to cut all the excess so he would give to those in need. This picture of generosity reveals God's heart, and many portions of Scripture discuss the importance of generosity.

Read [2 Corinthians 8:1–15](#). Were the Macedonian Christians rich or poor? What did they do, despite their circumstances, to receive Paul's commendation? See [8:1–5](#).

According to the apostle Paul in [8:8](#), what does our generosity reflect about our hearts? What truth in [8:9](#) should motivate our generosity?



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What other timeless truths does this passage teach about wealth and generosity?

Jesus' teaching on this topic of wealth is both profound and incredibly convicting. How can we take these challenging teachings and apply them to our lives today?

### **Application: What's Our Agenda?**

To guide us through the application of this passage, Pastor Chuck helps us understand certain realities about how we view our possessions. To do so, he compares the perspective of a child with the perspective of an adult.

Growing up, life was simple and uncomplicated. We didn't compare ourselves with others or have an insatiable desire for more things. *We loved people, but we simply used our possessions.* By the time we were grown, we had allowed the stuff we've acquired to become more important than others' needs. *We'd discovered how easy it is to love things and to use people.*

Does this comparison resonate with you in any way? If so, how? In what ways do you sense God leading you to forsake the self-imposed worries and societal pressures of adulthood for a childlike posture of humble faith?



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How quickly we get caught up in the competition for acquiring the most stuff! But Jesus has shown us that our material possessions will not help us possess the greatest gift: eternal life. We can't take our toys with us when we die, but we can begin investing today in heavenly treasures that endure eternally.



### A FINAL PRAYER

*Father, thank You for all the gifts You have given me. I ask You to give me the strength to hold onto my possessions loosely—to keep them from owning me as I remember that You have given me everything I have and that I belong to You. Help me to use my resources to help those around me for Your glory. I pray in Jesus' gracious name, amen.*

### ENDNOTES

1. For helpful instruction from Pastor Chuck, consult our online instructional Web page, "[How to Study the Bible for Yourself](#)." This page provides you an introduction to four important skills in Bible study—observation, interpretation, correlation, and application—along with other helpful study tips. You can also follow the link to purchase a copy of Pastor Chuck's book, *Searching the Scriptures: Find the Nourishment Your Soul Needs*, on which our studies are based.
2. Other tools we recommend are a whole-Bible commentary, such as the two-volume *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament* and *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*. Pastor Chuck's favorite Bible dictionary is the *New Unger's Bible Dictionary*. A variety of versions of the Bible are available at [BibleGateway.com](#), and an excellent online Bible commentary by Thomas L. Constable is at [netbible.org](#).

