



As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.  
~ Jesus (John 20:21)

## Part 3: *Bridging the Goodness Gap*

The story of the rich young ruler is one of the most famous and poignant stories in the Gospels.

~ Michael Green, *The Message of Matthew*

It was a common belief in Judaism, not a little reinforced by the book of Job, that riches were a mark of God's favour. Many Christian sects and individuals have both taught and acted on the same assumptions. But once again Jesus springs a surprise.

~ Michael Green, *The Message of Matthew*

The matters dealt with in the conversation between Jesus and the rich young ruler are more than individual concerns to be decided by each person. Christ's perspective calls for Christians to understand themselves as belonging to a community, so that no decision is purely personal and individual.

~ M Eugene Boring  
*The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary*

Don't miss the thrust of this passage: You cannot save yourself. Not through the right rituals. Not through the right doctrine. Not through the right devotion. Not through the right goose bumps. Jesus' point is crystal clear: It is impossible for human beings to save themselves.

~ Max Lucado, *Cast of Characters*

Just as in the encounter with the Bible teacher, or lawyer, in Luke 10, we see in this story how important it is to learn to ask questions.

~ Jerram Barrs, *Learning Evangelism from Jesus*

The kingdom demands more than merely keeping many commandments; if a disciple would recognize Christ as his king, that disciple must surrender to him possessions, live, and even identity. Whether Jesus then allows the disciple to use some of what the disciple has surrendered is Jesus' choice.

~ Craig S. Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew*

Resisting the pressures of a consumer culture, which generates perpetual needs for more and newer possessions, is difficult for many Christians today. Our excess consumption may deprive others of resources they need just to survive. It is a hidden form of structural greed that wastes the world's resources and creates suffering for others we may never meet.

~ PHEME PERKINS  
*The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary*

There are plenty of warnings in Jesus' teaching about the seductive and spirit-killing qualities of wealth. The question is will we understand they apply to all disciples, including us wealthy North Americans today, or will we continue to practice selective obedience to the call to discipleship. If we do that, we are more like the rich young man who went away sad than like those who gave up all and followed Jesus.

~ Ben Witherington III  
*Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary*

**How hard it will be for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God.**

~ Jesus