

TOUGH CHOICES

Most of our choices should not be made the way we pick an ice-cream flavor—

Just what we feel like. God should always come first. Give advice to these kids to help them decide what to do in each situation.

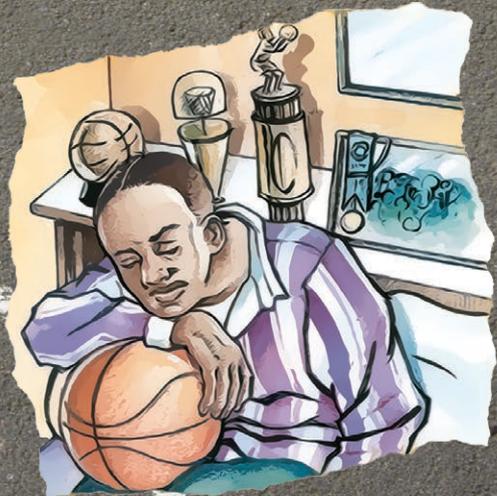


It takes me so long to get ready for school! After choosing an outfit, ironing, and doing my hair, I can't find time for my Bible reading anymore.

She could

The slam dunk competition is this Sunday morning. I've just gotta be there! Is it okay to miss church?

He could



If I give God a tenth of my lawn mowing money, I won't have enough for a new model!

He could



Each of these kids might need to give up something. What might they gain as a result of giving that up?

FIRST THINGS FIRST



¹The young man was probably a member of an official council or court.

One day a young ruler¹ came to Jesus. He asked, “What good thing must I do to get eternal life?”²

Read Matthew 19:17. Who is the One who is good? Why do you think Jesus told the young man to obey the commandments to “enter life”?

The man asked which commandments³ he should obey. Jesus answered by naming some of the commandments He knew the young man had really tried to obey.

Read Matthew 19:20. How did the young man answer? Do you think he had obeyed every commandment? Why or why not?

Even though the young man felt he had kept all the commandments, he still was not sure he had eternal life. He knew in his heart it was

not enough. So did Jesus.



Matthew 19:21-24

Jesus answered, “If you want to be perfect, go,

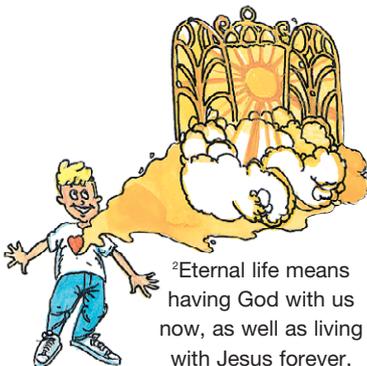
sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

Put yourself in the young man’s place. How would you feel if Jesus told you the same thing He told the young man?

When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.

Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Truly I tell you, it is hard for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I

³God wrote the Ten Commandments on stone tablets and gave them to Moses for the people.



²Eternal life means having God with us now, as well as living with Jesus forever.



tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle⁴ than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”

What did Jesus mean by His statement about the camel and the eye of a needle? How might being rich make it harder for the young man to follow Jesus? Read Exodus 20:3. What do you think was the young man’s “idol”?

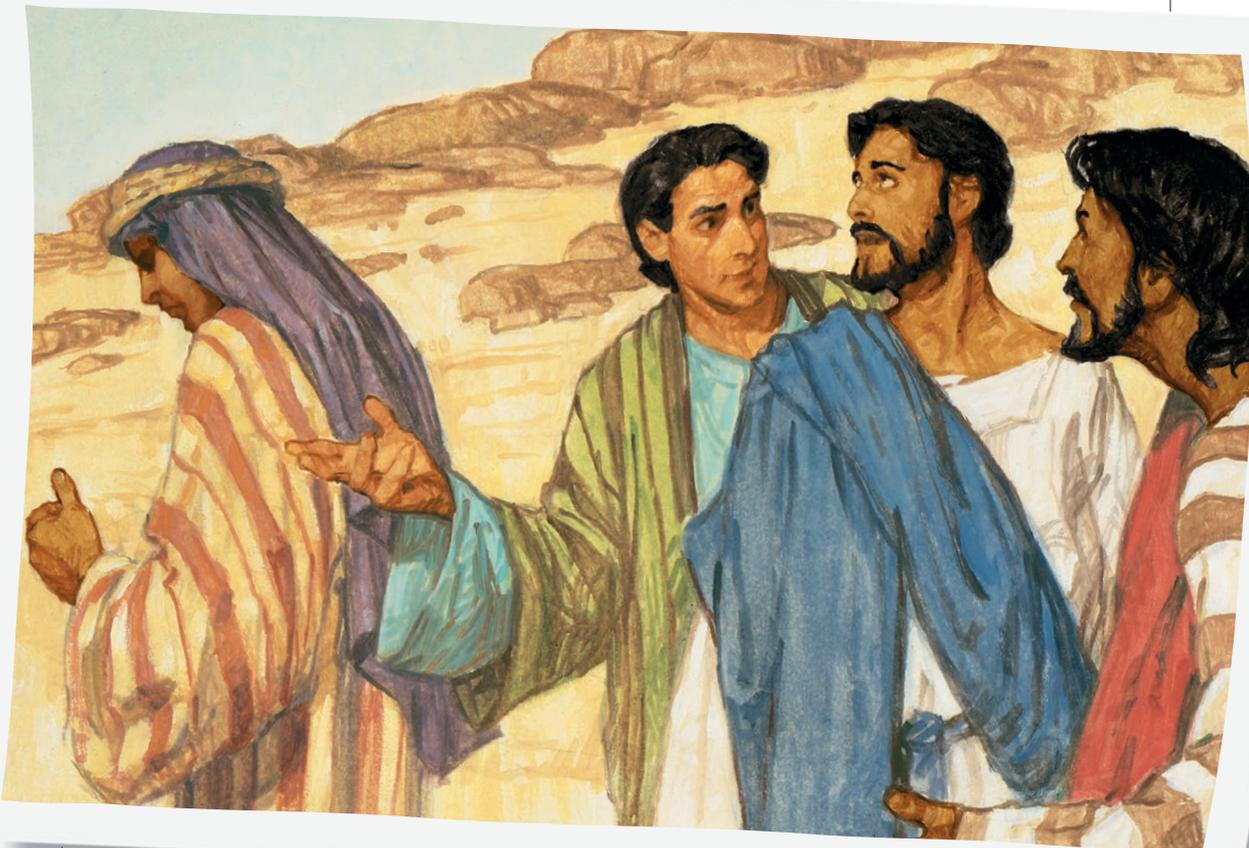
The disciples were puzzled by what Jesus said. “Then who can be saved?” they asked in astonishment. Jesus explained that

people can’t save themselves by doing good works. But God can save anyone who comes to Him and trusts Him for forgiveness.

Read Matthew 6:19-21. What advice would you give the young man based on these verses?



“Jesus may have been talking about the eye of a simple sewing needle or about a very small door in Jerusalem’s city wall called the “Needle’s Eye.” It would be impossible for a camel to pass through a needle, and very difficult to go through the door.



Lighten UP!

God has a high goal for you—a life full of joy and giving. But when you love other things more than you love God, that can “weigh you down” and keep you from soaring. As you fill in the blanks below, think prayerfully about what might be keeping you earth-bound.

KEY VERSE

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.” Mark 12:30

Lord,
help me not
to spend too much time on

Lord,
help me not
to care too
much about
getting

Lord,
help me not
to be
too concerned
about becoming
