



A John and Eileen Sala Prison and Teaching Ministry

www.littlelambsinc.org

Little Lambs

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This month's devotion begins with a question: When does twelve inches equal a mile? Be forewarned. This head-scratcher is not left over from the t.v. quiz show, "The \$64,000 Question!" Which if you can remember that show, you are really old. Nor is this riddle part of the crippling New Math that was foisted upon the American school children in those "enlightened" 1960s. No. In fact, this equation is a major tenet of New Testament theology. Here's how.

To uncover our first clue, let's turn to a favorite Bible story, The Rich Young Ruler. Told in three Gospels, the Gospel of Mark will be our home base today. A young man of considerable affluence confronted Christ Jesus, perhaps hopeful of gaining a private audience. Luke calls the fellow a "ruler" which adds to our intrigue. In a moment of weakness, the man lays aside his rank and file to ask a very important question, in fact, the question of the ages.

"What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" (Mark 10:17b, KJV).

Was the question sincere or was the man just showing off his chumminess with Jesus to impress the crowd? Or was he honestly seeking the truth—the blueprint for immortality? Either way, he got more than he bargained for.

Of course, Jesus welcomed this encounter, always ready for a teachable moment. And at first, the gentleman must have been encouraged as Jesus ticked off six Commandments. We can almost feel the man's excitement as he proudly boasted that he had observed these Commandments from his youth. But his confidence quickly waned as Jesus continued: ". . . go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven"

(Mark 10:21). This extra step resulted in a sorrowful parting of the ways as the man ". . . went away grieved: for he had great possessions" (Mark 10:22).

Now a novice might read into Mark 10 that the ticket to heaven compels selling everything and giving to the poor. Not so. We must understand that that "special condition" will not be the same for everyone. But Jesus knew this man's heart. He knew what made him tick. And he knew that this young man would not give up his riches to become a follower. The cost of "followship" was just too high. With our would-be champion in full retreat, Jesus turned back to His disciples to drive home His point. "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God" (Mark 10:25). This now famous hyperbole astonished the disciples. Bible scholars generally agree that at least one wall of every fortified city had a small wicket gate just big enough for a man to walk through, akin to the modern-day doggie door. That pocket-sized door was called "the eye of the needle." For a camel to enter there, the beast must be unloaded, unsaddled and forced to kneel, to belly crawl through. Not impossible, but almost. Point made. Nothing competes more directly with a personal decision to follow Christ than a man's wealth.

As we close, let's give credit where credit is due. The man came to the right source, the Lord Jesus Christ. And he asked the right question "What shall I do . . ." And of course, he got the right answer. But he made the wrong decision, blinded by his wealth. He must have owned a boat. Or a boat owned him.

Which brings us back to our original question: When does twelve inches equal a mile? This rich young ruler was no dummy. He had plenty of head knowledge. Perhaps he had studied under a learned rabbi. He certainly knew the Commandments and most probably the Messianic prophecies. But sadly, tragically, he had never allowed his head knowledge to percolate down and take root in his heart. A distance of about 12 inches. And so for want of those 12 inches, he missed the mark—"the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Only 12 inches!!! But he missed the mark by a mile.

- Mike Rider

In search of a flute: One of the men in Second Chance Ministries is searching for a flute. He enjoys playing worship music. If you have a flute to donate it would be very appreciated. Thank you for your generosity.



Volunteer Corner

I heard about Little Lambs Ministry from Bible Fellowship Church. I started grading lessons at Little Lambs on Tuesdays sometime in 2004. The atmosphere and the ladies were so wonderful to work with that I looked forward to coming every week. I also took lessons home to grade.

Eileen and John were great leaders in the Prison Ministry and Eileen still is an inspiration to many. She became a mentor to me and encouraged me to become a helper in other areas of the ministry. We served a meal for the Volunteer Appreciation Day at Avon Park Prison. On January 11, 2006, Eileen and I started a Codependency Meeting for ladies upstairs at the ministry. Sometimes we had 20 ladies attending! I felt like this was where God wanted me to serve Him. These classes continued until after the first year of the pandemic. We even met outside for a time. I worked in the office throughout the pandemic to keep the lessons going to the inmates.

Several volunteers had to stop coming to help, so this is when I became involved in coming to Lambs on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday. Learning other jobs of the Ministry.



I am so grateful that The Lord sent me to Little Lambs years ago. I have never doubted my purpose or plan God had for my life. God has blessed me with the desire to help hurting, wounded people, whether they are in prison or in everyday life.

Dear John & Eileen,

I just want to thank you both for your lessons. I always look forward to receiving them in the mail. I recently rededicated my life to Christ(2/16/24) and was baptized on Good Friday(3/29/24). I started doing these courses in November 2022, just to pass the time. But as time went by, I found myself wanting more and more of God's word. I have become so hungry and thirsty to know more of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I am reading God's word daily and I'm also attending a class here, "Growing In Christ", taught b two great gentlemen from United City Church here. Their mission pastor is the one who baptized me. It's been a wonderful journey so far even though I'm incarcerated. I know Savior loves me and He continues to bless me in many ways. It's not always a bed of roses so to speak but I know I'm not alone and I talk to my Lord daily, sometimes a couple of times a day.

I was wondering if by chance your ministry provided any kind of literature on how to minister to others about Jesus, as I am new at this and afraid, not knowing how to approach others about their salvation. Also, anything on Spiritual Battle?

Thank you both so much and to the others behind the scenes. My God continue working through you and blessing you in many ways.

In Christ H.S, in TX

To Whom it may concern,

Your bible studies are my favorite and I learn a lot. I have been a part of your program for a while and I have learned so much. My desire for God and to learn more continues, plus I find that when I do my little lambs lessons it helps ,e stay hopeful and lifts my spirit everyday. Please find it in your heart to send me what's next, thank you so much for your time and help, have a blessed day. - B.

I am preparing for my back surgery next week. I'm spending time with my daughters before and after the surgery. Your prayers for a speedy and peaceful recovery are appreciated.

Thank you for your continued generosity and encouragement. Thank you to our volunteers who keep the wheels ever-turning.

Eileen Sala