



# Daily Reflections

**August 21, 2018**

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## Scripture

### **Matthew 19: 23-30**

Jesus said to his disciples:

"Amen, I say to you, it will be hard for one who is rich to enter the Kingdom of heaven.

Again I say to you,

it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the Kingdom of God."

When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished and said, "Who then can be saved?"

Jesus looked at them and said,

"For men this is impossible, but for God all things are possible."

Then Peter said to him in reply,

"We have given up everything and followed you.

What will there be for us?"

Jesus said to them, "Amen, I say to you that you who have followed me, in the new age, when the Son of Man is seated on his throne of glory, will yourselves sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

And everyone who has given up houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands for the sake of my name will receive a hundred times more,

and will inherit eternal life.

But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first."

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## **Our Scripture Reflection**

Please note: Jesus said that it is difficult for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God, but He did not say it was impossible. Jesus never condemns wealth or possessions. It's the attitude of the heart towards one's wealth and possessions that He calls into question. We are all called to remove whatever we have that blocks or hinders our relationship with Jesus. "Renunciation" is a spiritual discipline to be carried out by all who desire entry to the Kingdom of God.

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## **Food for your Journey**

In his book, *They Could Not Stop the Music*, Ron Owens tells the story of Georgy Slesarey in Russia. He was a leading violinist in Moscow, playing first chair in the renowned Bolshoi Theater Orchestra.

Georgy was arrested one night at his home after completing another night of music and Christian witness during intermissions at the Bolshoi Theater. He never returned to his home. The Soviet Secret Police interrogated him with no chance for defense.

Then they shipped him to a Siberian prison. For a while he was given special privileges as he played violin in the prison ensemble as a propaganda tool. Georgy used it as an opportunity for ministry and sharing the gospel with others as well as encouraging the few Christians that he found. But when he refused to renounce and give up his faith even when offered release if he would do so, Georgy was put to the work of digging out iron ore.

It ruined his hands so that he would never be able to play a violin again. Finally, after a brief time, he was executed by a firing squad.

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## **A Prayer from the Heart**

Dear Jesus, There are so many distractions in this life. So many "things" compete for my attention and loyalty. I pray that my love for You will lift me up far above the distractions. May the first love of my heart always be for You alone. Amen