

## **WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO TO ENTER HEAVEN?**

A rich person who does not act as Jesus teaches is gambling with their inheritance and claim of eternal life. All of us are rich, until such a time that we allow Jesus to reign our lives. If our hearts are attached to something that is not God, then we are rich in sin. Unless we begin to empty ourselves of our sinful pride and selfishness, and begin to genuinely care and give to those who are less-off than ourselves, then we will not enter heaven. Jesus is asking us to become poor in the Gospel sense, remembering that He gave everything up for us. The spiritual life is about giving our life away, and this is why our many possessions can become a problem. When Jesus says, "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God", He uses an exaggerated image to stress the difficulties wealth can present in pursuing the spiritual life. I don't think Jesus was condemning wealth in itself but warning us about the attachments and distractions it can create. Those with material wealth can become consumed by their possessions, status, and comfort, making it harder for them to focus on the values of humility, generosity, and dependence on God.

### **RICH IN WORLDLY WISDOM**

There are also people who are rich in worldly knowledge and wisdom which ends up becoming an obstacle for them to get into heaven, because they think they know better than God. These people are easy pickings for the devil to control. Adam and Eve, because of the temptation of the devil, suffered from this false wisdom which resulted in a separation from God. We must be careful that our human affection for each other does not outweigh our loving affection for God. He is to be loved first and foremost with all our hearts, all our souls, all our strengths and all our minds. People often say that after their death, they are looking forward to spending all eternity with their family in heaven, but with no mention of God. They are delusional and wrongly assuming that heaven is an extension of earthly life, which it is not.

### **LIVE BY THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST**

Our desire to go to heaven should be focused on spending eternity with Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and with the communion of saints, angels and Our Blessed Mother Mary. This is our true family and it will be an extra blessing to spend time in holiness and chaste love with our friends and biological family, provided they get to heaven. Living a holy and charitable life must begin now or we will not be found worthy to enter heaven. Sunday Mass and repentance for our sins has to be the source and summit of our lives. Jesus tells us that 'it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God'. The eye of a needle resembles the narrow opening left by the lance in the pierced side and heart of Jesus. We must become small and humble to enter through this narrow opening of His Sacred Heart. The sacraments of the Church are sourced from this heart and provide the only stairway to heaven. Divine wisdom (7:7-11) teaches us that step by step, in perseverance, prayer and obedience to the teachings of Christ, we will successfully climb our way to Heaven. The first door into heaven is actually the door of the Church on earth. St John Paul II compared the 'narrow gate' to ourselves, when we practice self-control and narrow ourselves down into the shape and likeness of the humble Christ. Hebrews 12-13, teaches us that the Word of God is 'alive and active'. This is why the Priest kisses the Word at the end of every Gospel. We will be accountable on the last day of judgement to see if we lived by the Word and actually practiced the Ten Commandments, by living in the faith of Jesus Christ. God bless, Fr. Brendan.