

# Detachment & Stewardship

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We know this Gospel well, and one of the first things that Jesus does in this Gospel is He disabuses the disciples of the idea that the rich are favored by God. And we know that because when Jesus says that it is easier for one to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the Kingdom of God, the disciples were greatly astonished at that, because they thought the rich were favored by God, and therefore were first in line to get into heaven.

Jesus says that that is not the case. And then Peter asks a pretty good question.

He says, "What's in it for us? We have left everything to follow you."

I really like that question, because I think it sets up something that we don't think about too much. And that is that Jesus is dragging these disciples all over Galilee.

And by dragging them all over Galilee, Jesus has separated the disciples from their wealth - from their meager wealth, their worldly wealth - which is their wives, their children, their homes, sleeping in their own bed, eating the home-cooked meals.

He has separated them from their livelihoods. Granted, we may say, well, the disciples weren't wealthy.

Well, not wealthy in terms of a lot of material riches. But Peter, Andrew, James, and John were probably middle class when the fishing business was good.

Matthew was the tax collector, so he was probably in that class. And who knows about the rest of the disciples.

But Jesus, by dragging them all over Galilee, was separating them from what was important before, what was important in their minds - their wealth, their material wealth, and their relationships.

Why did Jesus do this? Well, to introduce them to the riches of the Kingdom of God.

The spiritual values that He was going to teach them about the Kingdom of God.

That brings us back to St. Ignatius of Loyola and the first principle and foundation of detachment, of stewardship. How we use our material wealth in this world, whether it's a lot, or whether it's little, or whether it's somewhere in the middle, it's all about stewardship.

How do we use it? Do we use our material wealth to help us to grow in holiness, and to get to heaven? St. Ignatius says if it's a problem for us, we need to let it go. All the created things in this world, all the things that we have that God has placed for our use.

We should use them for our spiritual good and thus for God's greater power and glory.

Today, as we consider this Gospel, and as we also heard that first reading, we become very aware of the dangers of excessive material wealth.

We heard how the prince of Tyre became very arrogant and self-sufficient, and those are dangers of extreme material wealth. But for most of us who don't fall into that category, it's more of a question of how we manage the material wealth that God has placed at our disposal.

Let's pray today that we can do that for our spiritual good, the good of God's Kingdom, and for greater honor and glory.