

Church of God Sunday School

THE RICH YOUNG RULER

Matthew 19:16-26; Mark 10:17-27; Luke 18:18-27

As Jesus and His disciples were traveling from Galilee to Judea (*joo-DEE-uh*), a young man came running up to Jesus. This young man was a rich ruler. No doubt, he was wearing expensive clothing. Yet, he showed humility and reverence by kneeling before Jesus.

The ruler asked Jesus, "Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" Jesus answered him with another question: "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God." Then Jesus told him, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments."

The ruler asked Jesus which commandments he should keep. Do you remember the commandments given to Moses on Mount Sinai? Jesus named several of these commandments in His answer to the ruler: "Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother."

Then Jesus mentioned another commandment: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Jesus said that this commandment was the second great commandment of the Law (Matthew 22:39). Do you know what the first and greatest commandment is? (Read Matthew 22:37-38).

When Jesus spoke of these commandments to the young ruler, he said to Jesus, "All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?" He had obeyed all these commandments since he was very young, but he felt that something was lacking (or missing). Jesus knew exactly what it was.

Jesus looked lovingly at the ruler and said, "One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor . . ." That sounds like a lot to ask, doesn't it? Remember, the young man was very

rich. He had many possessions. But Jesus could see that his riches were hindering him from having eternal life. After telling the ruler to sell his possessions, Jesus told him to "come, take up the cross, and follow me." He could not do this until he gave up that which was first place in his heart—his riches.

The young man did not want to give up his great riches. When he heard what Jesus had to say, he sadly went away. Jesus had understood what the young man lacked: he did not love God with all his heart. Something else was first in his heart.

Jesus told His disciples: "A rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. . . . 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."

When the disciples heard what Jesus said, they were amazed. They asked, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus told them, "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible."

Riches can be a great hindrance to the Christian. There are other things that can also

hinder the Christian. Anything that takes first place in your heart other than God will keep you out of Heaven.

If you were to ask Jesus, "What lack I yet?" what would He say? Would you be willing to give it up to follow Jesus? When we give up all to follow Jesus, we are promised "treasure in heaven."

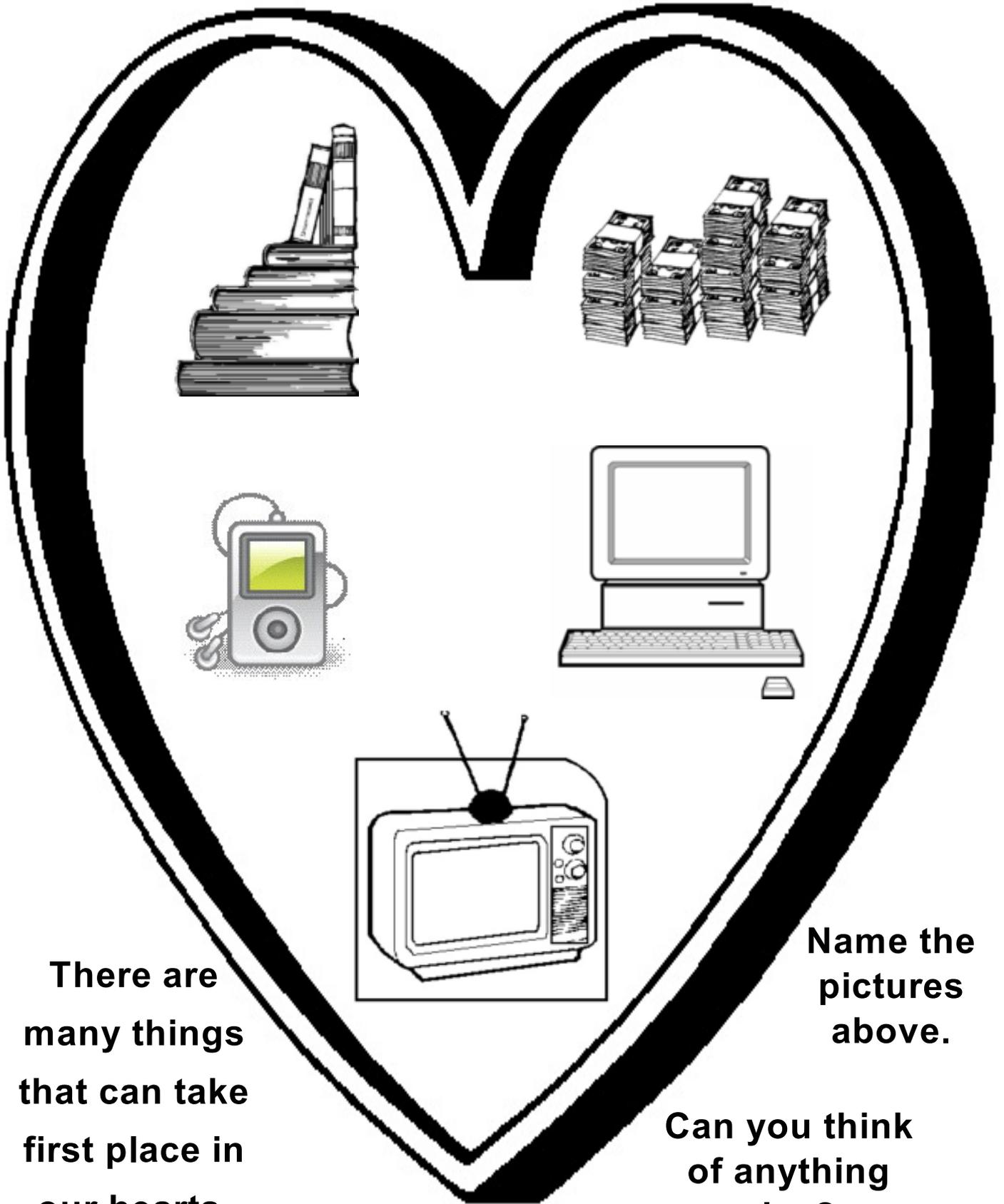
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**MEMORY VERSE:**

*"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."*

*—Ephesians 2:8*

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There are many things that can take first place in our hearts.

Name the pictures above.

Can you think of anything else?



The Rich Young Ruler Went Away Sorrowfully