



**Mennonite
Church
Canada**

CAMELS in the kingdom?

Children's Story

Year B, Proper 23

Title: Camels in the Kingdom?
Author: Stephen Plenert
Church: Springstein Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, MB
Text: Mark 10:17-31
Theme: When we live God's fair and sharing way, we are blessed by a big faith family.
Needed: A needle, a toy camel (or a real camel if you have one), and perhaps some other objects.

Wondering questions:

- I wonder why Jesus talked about camels and a needle's eye in this story.
- I wonder if it's easier for poor people or rich people to trust God.
- I wonder if God's Kingdom is here inside our church and homes.

Gathering Activity:

Invite the children to come and join you on a little journey to the children's time spot. Depending on the size of your sanctuary, you might want to journey around a section or two of adults before you settle down for the story. Ask the children to guess why you are taking a journey as you wind your way to the front. Once they have settled into a comfortable listening position, explain that you took them on a journey because, in today's Bible story, Jesus was on a journey, or a trip, and, as Jesus' followers, it is good for us to do what Jesus does. Open your Bible to Mark 10:17 and read that verse to them to introduce the story.

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Story:

Jesus was ready to head out on another journey. This time he was going to Jerusalem. Mark 10:17 says, "As he was setting out on a journey, a man ran up to him and knelt (*he went down on his knees*) before him. "Good teacher," the man said. "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" (*to have life that never ends*).

Jesus answered him by giving him a list of commandments from the Bible. The man seemed kind of excited by this and told Jesus that he had kept all the commandments since he was a boy. "Not so fast," said Jesus, "You also need to sell everything you own and give it away. Then you'll have eternal treasure and you can come follow me." The man was confused. Sell everything? Give it all away? He was very rich. How could he just give everything away? And then Jesus said something very funny. He said that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than it is for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God.

I have a needle here. Can you see the eye? It's that small hole in the end. Have any of you seen a camel? They are big animals, aren't they? How easy would it be to fit a live camel, or even this stuffed animal, through that little hole? It would be impossible, wouldn't it? The people who were with Jesus were confused, too. They thought that having lots of money was a sign that God loved you especially much. They thought that it would be the EASIEST for rich people to get into God's Kingdom. So they asked Jesus, "If rich people can't get in, who can?" "Good question!" Jesus answered. "Nobody can get into God's Kingdom without God's help."

Nobody means not you, not me, not the pastor, nobody. Money won't get you in. If

you're too attached to money, it might even keep you out! Thinking too much about things like money can keep us from thinking about and following Jesus. It can get in the way of finding God's Kingdom which is about being fair and loving. Because God is so fair and loving, God helps us get in. If we allow God's love and fairness to fill our hearts and flow through us to others, we start discovering God's Kingdom in us and around us. That's very good news!

Even though we can't get into God's Kingdom by using money, we can all get in with God's help. Jesus wants everyone in God's kingdom, but Jesus knows that everyone, including the man who knelt before him, needs God's help to be a part of that Kingdom.

Prayer:

Dear Jesus, thank you for interesting stories that show us that we need God's help to be loving and fair and be part of your kingdom. Please help us be part of your Kingdom today and forever. And Dear God, please help us share your loving fairness with others today. Amen.