

**One truth shared:** Getting into heaven is totally dependent on God, not you.

*A certain ruler asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"*

*"Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone. You know the commandments: 'You shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, honor your father and mother.'"*

*"All these I have kept since I was a boy," he said.*

*When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."*

*When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was very wealthy. Jesus looked at him and said, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."*

*Those who heard this asked, "Who then can be saved?"*

*Jesus replied, "What is impossible with man is possible with God."*

**Luke 18:18-27**

### Faith Demonstrated Through Total Dependence

An archery competition is a fairly simple concept. If you hit the target, you win the prize. The ruler wanted the prize of heaven, so he asked Jesus what the target was that he needed to hit in order to win the prize of heaven. Jesus' answer, obey the commandments. The ruler was thrilled. He truly believed he had hit the target and had earned the prize, but he was wrong. He hadn't obeyed all of the commandments. He loved money. The sad reality for the ruler was that he had missed. If you don't hit the target, you don't get the prize. If the prize is heaven, then not getting the prize is hell.

Everyone thinks that they can step up to the line and hit the target to get into heaven. But hitting the target doesn't just mean to be a good person or try hard. The target is perfection. The target is sinlessness. No one is capable of hitting that target including the ruler. Everyone must face the reality that they have missed the target and deserve hell. That is why when the crowd heard this they asked Jesus, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus answered, "No one... without God's help. But with God, you are saved."

God in his grace sent Jesus to step up to the line, and Jesus hit the target. He was perfect. Instead of enjoying the prize of heaven for himself, Jesus hands you the trophy. But why? You did nothing to deserve the prize of heaven. Your arrow didn't even come close to the target. Grace. Jesus loves you. The proof? He gave you his victory.

This is true for you yesterday, today, and forever. Knowing that you are guaranteed the prize of heaven gives you incredible confidence, peace, and hope. These things are better than popularity, relationships, money, basically everything this world has to offer. So hold on to them. Don't go thinking that there is still some expectation for you to hit the target. Just turn to Jesus and say, "Thank you for giving me your prize."

**Prayer:** Thank you Lord, for making it possible for me to receive your free gift of salvation. I am not worthy to receive such a gift, but I thank You in the name of Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen.

# Foundation Teen Facilitators Guide

## Year C – Proper 25

### Lord, Increase Our Faith

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### Faith Demonstrated Through Total Dependence

***Starting the Discussion:** This first section is intended to be light and easy, to engage and get the conversation going. Have a little fun with these questions.*

Instead of a discussion, we are going to play a game. Use a tennis ball, ping pong ball, or ball of crumpled paper. The game is simple, make the ball into the bucket, move on to the next round. Start with something really easy, like make the ball into the sink from two feet away. After each round make the next target a little more difficult. You can move the throw from line further back or make the target smaller or both. The last person standing wins. If everyone misses on the final round, repeat the round until there is a winner. Feel free to play multiple times. If possible, have a prize ready for the winner like a candy bar or something.

***Connecting:** This section serves as a bridge between the opening conversation and the body of the study/discussion. It should get the group thinking about the topic/text even before they've looked at it.*

A series of questions

- A participation trophy is a trophy given to children who participate in an event but don't finish in first, second or third place. Why do some people have a problem with that?
- Why would a student get frustrated if they studied like crazy and someone else didn't study at all but still got a better grade?
- *Agree or disagree:* Humans crave fairness.

***Digging In:** Here we want to dig into some texts or the text for the day and see what Scripture says. The questions are meant to be open ended to give a beginning of a scriptural conversation. These are a guide for a spiritual and scriptural conversation.*

- According to Jesus, how does one get into heaven?
- Is that fair? How so?
- Why did Jesus call out the man's wealth and ask him to give it up?
- The conclusion the people came to after Jesus interacted with the rich man was, "No one can be saved!" Is that a fair assessment?
- Why is the only way to be saved totally relying on God?
- Jesus tells us to be fully reliant on God, he will give us the greatest of blessings both in this life and eternal life. What specifically are some of those blessings?

**Conclusion:** Here we want to wrap up the discussion, perhaps circling back to the “connecting question” above.

- What is the danger of a Christian thinking, “Jesus hit the target for me. Now I have to make sure that I deserve it or earn it in some way?”
- Total dependency on someone else is hard because it makes you vulnerable. Can you think of some examples of being vulnerable because you have to depend on others? Why is it the opposite of vulnerable to be dependent on God?
- *Conclusion:* It is the best to be totally dependent on God for our salvation.