



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Session 7: Eternal Life

Suggested Week of Use: April 12, 2026

Core Passage: Matthew 19:16-30

News Story Summary

Who doesn't like a reward on their birthday? You can start your birthday with a free handcrafted beverage from Starbucks, a free stack of pancakes from IHOP, or a free donut from Krispy Kreme. During the day you can pick up a free gift from Sephora, as well as a free beauty product from ULTA while munching on a free pretzel from Auntie Anne's or a free pastry from Panera Bread. For dinner Jersey Mike's has a free sub, Buffalo Wild Wings has free wings, or Red Robin has a free burger. Then, you could wrap up the day with a free dessert from Chick-fil-A, Baskin-Robbins, or Nothing Bundt Cakes.

For more about this story, search "Birthday rewards 2026."

Engage

To supplement the Engage activities, ask: *Who likes getting a free birthday surprise simply because it's your special day?* Share the birthday rewards options mentioned in the news story summary. Allow adults to share some of their favorite birthday deals. Point out that some "free" rewards actually come with a cost, such as downloading an app, providing personal information, or making a prior purchase. Ask: *How do such birthday rewards compare with the gift of eternal life?* Explain that today's passage examines a conversation between Jesus and a rich young ruler. Note that the man was looking for salvation through his good works, but Jesus told him (and His disciples) the truth about what it takes to secure a spot in God's kingdom. Encourage adults to consider their response to God's free gift and what they might be relying on spiritually as they dig into these verses.

Challenge

To supplement the Challenge activities, remind adults about the various birthday rewards offered by restaurants and stores. Discuss other areas of life where they can earn rewards for their performance. Share that while such rewards are not bad, any reward system pales in comparison to God's gift of grace through Jesus. Say: *He turns the world's value system upside down.* Challenge adults to reflect silently on this question: *What treasures or rewards might be hindering your efforts to follow Jesus?* Close the session in prayer, asking God to help each adult in the group to realize that His rewards far exceed anything that might be keeping them from pursuing Him with all their hearts.