



A COLLECTION OF
STORIES
FROM
WEST AFRICA

Compiled and Illustrated by
David A. Naff



THE RICH MAN
AND THE BEGGAR



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By Spark Team



THE RICH MAN AND THE BEGGAR

(Nigeria)

Note to the reader: words and phrases typical of West Africa and retained and indicated by italics.

Many people think they can get into heaven by doing good deeds. One of the good deeds they do to get into heaven is to give money to beggars. So, there are lots of professional beggars in many different countries today. This story tells about one of them.

One time there was a certain professional beggar who always sat at a certain corner. And then there was a rich man who almost every day passed that very corner. Whenever the

man passed the beggar he would give him a coin that was worth a lot.

“May God prosper you today,” the rich man would say as he dropped the coin in the beggar’s outstretched hand.

“And may God see and remember your generosity in the judgment day,” the beggar would reply as he hid the coin in his clothing.”

One day as the rich man passed that corner, he remembered that he had not asked his brother to water his goats. He was going to be gone for several days and someone would need to give the goats water.

So, as he gave the customary large coin he greeted as usual, “May God prosper you today.”

“And may God see and remember your generosity in the judgment day,” the beggar replied as he hid the coin in his clothing.

Then the rich man asked the beggar, "Would you please go to my brother and ask him to water my goats while I am gone for several days?"

The beggar, who had been daily receiving big coins from this man, drew himself up with disdain, and said, "I will most gladly receive your gifts, but I will **not** run your errands."

Wow! What a way to act when someone has helped you! We don’t want to be like the rich man and think we can get to heaven by doing good. But we must not be like the beggar either.

Do we treat God and Jesus the way the beggar treated the rich man? Do we think of God like Santa Claus? We ignore Santa all year long, but then expect to receive presents from him

at Christmas time. Are we really thankful for God's blessings every day all year long? Or do we just receive His blessings day by day and never obey Him?

What does God want us to do?? to be?? Jesus summed it all up in Mark 12:30, 31. "... You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. This is the first law. The second law is this. You must love your neighbor as yourself. No other law is greater than these."

This is the real answer. First, we love God with all our heart. And then, we obey Him by loving others and doing what pleases Him.

After we have given our hearts to Him, what other things does Jesus want us to do? How many can you think of?

John 13:34, 35 tells us to love one another.

In Mark 16:15 Jesus told us, "... go to all the world, and preach the Good News to every person."

Now you name some.

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