

Luke Lesson 18

Luke Chapter 18

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Memory verses for this week: *Jer 49:22 Behold, he shall come up and fly as the eagle, and spread his wings over Bozrah: and at that day shall the heart of the mighty men of Edom be as the heart of a woman in her pangs.*

Introduction: We continue our study of the book of Luke this week as we continue in chapter 18. Last week's lesson Jesus taught on how we should be always willing to forgive others who have offended us. He then taught about how we have a responsibility to serve the Lord when we are saved. We also studied about the ten lepers Jesus healed. Only one of the ten came back to glorify the Lord for being cleansed.

I. Parable of the Unjust Judge

Luke 18:1 And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;

Luke 18:2 Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:

Luke 18:3 And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

The disciples had earlier asked the Lord to teach them how to pray. Perhaps there is nothing that we can do that invokes more power than to pray to the Lord. Many people spend all their money and exhaust every avenue to correct a sickness, and then say "I guess we just need to pray about it." This is almost like saying that nothing else has worked, so our last resort is prayer. Prayer shouldn't be our last defense... it should be our first avenue of support. Two weeks ago we studied about how the faith of just a mustard seed could move mountains. Jesus was teaching a great truth here in verse 1 when he said "men ought always to pray, and not to faint."

We should petition the Lord, and then have enough faith to believe God will answer our prayers. In the parable of the unjust judge, we see a man in a city who feared neither God nor man. I thank the Lord that he is not this way. Jesus came to seek and save those who are lost. How someone could love us when we are His enemy is love beyond understanding, but that is exactly what Jesus did. This certain widow in the city come and asks the judge to avenge her of her adversary.

Luke 18:4 And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

Luke 18:5 Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

Luke 18:6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

The judge grows tired of hearing the woman continue to plead her case over and over, and finally agrees to avenge her. I think that we can see that like this widow who would not stop coming, we in prayer need to be continual and unrelenting with our prayers. If we keep coming back, the Lord is impressed with our faith and many times will grant our petition if it is within His will for us. God instructs us to hear what the unjust judge said. If he avenged the woman and feared not man nor God, will God not do much more for the saved?

Luke 18:7 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

Luke 18:8 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

The answer is a resounding 'yes' as to whether God will not do much more for the saved. God will avenge his own elect. Just as the unjust judge avenged the woman who was insistent with her demands, those who have cried before the Lord will be avenged. Not only will he, but it says in verse 8 he will avenge them speedily. Then Jesus asks a question. "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" I pray he will find many with faith, but we know that there will always be a remnant of the church that will stand to the end.

In the King James Study Bible, the writers said this about the first 8 verses.

18:1–8. And he spake a parable unto them. The verses that follow are often called the parable of the unjust judge. This judge was blatantly bad, unprincipled, lawless, and void of moral fortitude to do what was right. The poor widow, on the other hand, was helpless, friendless, destitute, and with no hope. Yet through her great persistence, the wicked judge was so bothered that he finally granted her request. Although Jesus taught perseverance in prayer in other places (Mt 7:7–8), He is here using a form of logic that reasons from the lesser to the greater. Jesus said, regarding God's children, that **he will avenge them speedily** (vs. 8). The idea is this. If this poor woman with no hope received help from a wicked unscrupulous judge, how much sooner and greater will be the help a loving heavenly Father gives to His own dear children. i

II. Parable of the Pharisee and the Publican

iJerry Falwell, executive editor; Edward E. Hinson and Michael Kroll Woodrow, general editors, *KJV Bible commentary [computer file], electronic ed., Logos Library System*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1994.

Luke 18:9 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

Luke 18:10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

In this parable the Lord impresses upon us the true attitude that we should take before coming before Him when we pray. No matter how good we are, we can not come to God on the grounds of our righteousness. Remember what it says in the book of Isaiah... all our righteousness are as filthy rags in God's sight.

Isa 64:6 But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

The only way any of us can approach God is to do it via coming as confessed sinners. We must recognize that it is only due to the grace of God that we can approach the Lord. We find one man who came to the temple was a Pharisee while the other was a publican. The Pharisees were one of the leading religious groups of that period, and thought very highly of themselves. And the publicans were a despised group in their sight. The Pharisee was a self-righteous man which gave the credit to himself for being of such exceptional merit.

Luke 18:11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

Luke 18:12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

Luke 18:13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

I think it is interesting that it says the many prayed 'thus with himself.' He wasn't getting anywhere near God with this prayer. Prayers like this bounce right back from the ceiling. Until we are saved, the prayer God wants to hear from us is to acknowledge we are a sinner and by faith accept Jesus to save us. This man was so full of himself that all he could do was brag on himself compared to others. He says "I'm not like other men who are extortioners, unjust, adulterers or even as this publican." The one thing he did right was to thank the Lord with thanksgiving. However, this was not a prayer praising the Lord but rather praising himself and his virtues.

He wasn't thanking God for what grace had done for him, but rather praising himself for what he had done on his own. Without Jesus, we are nothing. He said not only was he good, but he fasted twice each week and gave tithes on all he possessed. While this may have been commendable, we can't come to God bragging about it. We see the publican was not self-righteous in his thinking. It

says he stood afar off being conscious of his unworthiness. He was so ashamed that he would not lift up his eyes unto heaven but smote upon his breast and confessed to God that he was a sinner. And then he asked God to be merciful to him. Note what Jesus said in verse 14.

Luke 18:14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

The man who saw himself as an unrighteous sinner and begged for God's mercy was the one who went down justified. It says 'he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.'

III. Jesus Blesses Little Children

Luke 18:15 And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them.

Luke 18:16 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

Luke 18:17 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.

As the people gathered around Jesus, many brought infants that they might be blessed by the Lord. This attitude of bringing the little children to Christ was something that Jesus was very pleased. This upset the disciples that the people would waste the Lord's time with these little children, but Jesus rebuked them for their misguided thoughts. He tells them to 'Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.'

Think of the unquestioned faith a small child has in their parents. They believe them and don't question every thing the way we do when we are grown. He says that this is what the kingdom of God is all about. In other words God wants us to have that total trusting faith and no doubts. He says unless we come as a child, we will in no wise enter therein.

Matthew Henry said this about the children.

None are too little, too young, to bring to Christ, who knows how to show kindness to them that are not capable of doing service to him. 2. One gracious touch of Christ's will make our children happy. They *brought infants to him, that he might touch them* in token of the application of his grace and Spirit to them, for that always makes way for his *blessing*, which likewise they expected. So welcome are *children* to Christ that those grown people are most welcome to him who have in them most of the disposition of children (v. 17): *Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child*, that is, receive the benefits of it with humility and thankfulness, not pretending to merit them as the Pharisee did, but

gladly owning himself indebted to free grace for them, as the publican did; unless a man be brought to this self-denying frame he shall *in no wise enter* into that kingdom. They must receive the kingdom of God as *children*, receive their estates by descent and inheritance, not by purchase, and call it their Father's gift. **ii**

IV. The Rich Young Ruler

Luke 18:18 And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

Luke 18:19 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God.

This young ruler comes and wants to know what it would take to inherit eternal life. He certainly came to the right one to find the answer. Jesus wants to immediately get the young man's eyes on the heavenly Father, and says there is none good, save one, and that is God. The young man most likely did not know that Jesus was God manifested on earth.

Luke 18:20 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother.

Luke 18:21 And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up.

Perhaps the young man was questioning how to inherit eternal life in regards to the law of Moses. Jesus quotes some of the ten commandments as he points out things that we should not do. The young man is very confident in himself and says he has kept all of these from a youth up. While the young man may have lived a very good life, it is highly unlikely that he had done all of these things perfectly.

Rom 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

Rom 3:11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

Rom 3:12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

1 John 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

iiHenry, Matthew, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Bible*, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers) 1997.

Luke 18:22 Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.

Luke 18:23 And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich.

Luke 18:24 And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

Luke 18:25 For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

Jesus points that the young man was guilty of breaking the very first commandment which was to put God first in our lives. This man loved his money more than God. When Jesus tells him to sell all that he had and to come and follow him, it was something that brought great sorrow to him. It says in verse 23 he was very rich. Does Jesus tell us to all sell everything we have and come and follow him with nothing at all? No, he normally does not. However, I have met a few people who said that after they were saved, they were directed of the Lord to dispose of the riches.

The main thing is that "IF" the Lord asks us to do it, we should be willing to do it. If money is more important than our service to God, our priorities are mixed up. Jesus goes on to say that few rich people would enter into the kingdom of God. Does money prevent us from being saved? It can if we put our trust in riches. He says it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

Luke 18:26 And they that heard it said, Who then can be saved?

Luke 18:27 And he said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.

They question then who can be saved? It may be impossible with man, but all things are possible with God. A rich man can still be saved, but he must see his need of a Savior and come in faith and repentance just like the poor man. So many times money blinds people to their need of a savior. I was on visitation this week with Samuel Turk, our missionary from Indonesia. We came to a huge house with columns probably worth over \$200,000. I told Samuel that I used to not like coming to visit people of great wealth, but God convicted me of that and made me realize that ALL MEN and WOMEN need a savior.

Are they easy to reach? No, they are aren't. But nothing should intimidate us in presenting the Gospel. I praise God for what it says in verse 27... "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God." No we can't do much to reach the rich man, but God can.

Luke 18:28 Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee.

Luke 18:29 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake,

Luke 18:30 Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.

Peter questions what he and the other disciples will receive for leaving all and following Jesus. He promises that nothing we have ever given up for the cause of the kingdom will be blessed not only in the world to come, but will receive manifold more in this present time. I don't think we will receive exact monetary rewards, but most likely will be much greater spiritual blessings. Having lots of money means little when it comes to happiness. But having the Lord in your life, your health, and a proper love of your family and fellow man is so much greater than anything this life has to offer. However God chooses to bless us, it will be much greater than any thing we have sacrificed for God's sake.

V. Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection

Luke 18:31 Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished.

Luke 18:32 For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on:

Luke 18:33 And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again.

Luke 18:34 And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.

Jesus again tries to explain what will soon be happening to Him. He explains in detail how he would be delivered and spitefully entreated and put to death on the cross. And that after three days, he would rise again. However, it says they understood none of these things. These things were not clear at this time, but later God brought back the teachings to them after Jesus was resurrected.

VI. A Blind Man Healed Near Jericho

Luke 18:35 And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way side begging:

Luke 18:36 And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant.

Luke 18:37 And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.

Luke 18:38 And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me.

Luke 18:39 And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, Thou son of David, have mercy on me.

Luke 18:40 And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him,

Luke 18:41 Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight.

Luke 18:42 And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee.

Luke 18:43 And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.

For a blind man to be healed was very uncommon. The man comes to the right one to find the healing. He was on the side of the road begging. He cried out “Thou son of David, have mercy on me.” Just by these words I think we can see the faith of the man. He had to believe Jesus was the messiah and promised Savior. When Christ asked him what he wanted, he asked for his sight. And it says he immediately received his sight. When we pray to the Lord, we need to be specific about our requests. Pick out a missionary on the board, read his newsletter, and pray about that one specific person’s needs. Specific prayers see specific answers.

J. Vernon McGee points out how this verse does NOT conflict with other gospel accounts of the healing of the blind men. As usual, if you study it out, you find that man is always at fault. God’s word is perfect and without error.

Before we look at this incident, I should mention that critics of the Bible find in this a contradiction, because Matthew speaks of two blind men, while Mark and Luke mention only one. However, if you will read this passage carefully, you will see that Matthew and Mark obviously refer to a work of healing as Jesus departed from Jericho. Bartimaeus, the active one of the two, the one who cried, “... Jesus, thou son of David...,” is specifically mentioned in Mark 10:46. The healing described by Luke, in verses 40–43, occurred before Jesus entered Jericho. This man also used the familiar form of address, “son of David.” iii

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.

iiiJ. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible commentary [computer file], electronic ed., Logos Library System*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1981 by J. Vernon McGee.

