

Lesson 21 Luke 18:15-19:10 The Rich Ruler, Jesus Heals a Blind Beggar, Zacchaeus

1. Read Luke 18:9-14, from our last lesson and Luke 18:15-17 and footnotes.

Luke 18:15-17 People were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them, and when the disciples saw this, they rebuked them. ¹⁶ Jesus, however, called the children to himself and said, "Let the children come to me and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁷ Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it."

Share any information of interest from your footnotes.

Compare the Pharisee and the tax collector in Luke 18:9-14 to the children in 15-17.

How is the attitude of the children, as they meet Jesus, different from the attitude of the Pharisee and tax collector as they pray to God?

2. Read Luke 18:18–22 and footnotes. What do we know about the man in this story?

Reflection: Why was he sad? If you stop reading at vs 23, what would you think he did next?

Luke 18:18–22 ¹⁸ An official asked him this question, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" ¹⁹ Jesus answered him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. ²⁰ You know the commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery; you shall not kill; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; honor your father and your mother.'" ²¹ And he replied, "All of these I have observed from my youth." ²² When Jesus heard this he said to him, "There is still one thing left for you: sell all that you have and distribute it to the poor, and you will have a treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." ²³ But when he heard this, he became quite sad, for he was very rich.

3. Matthew's version of the above story includes a different version of Jesus' comments to the rich man.

Read Matthew 19:21-22 and compare it to Luke 18:22-23 above.

How are they different? Do you think this changes the meaning of the story?

Matthew 19:21-22 Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to [the] poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." ²² When the young man heard this statement, he went away sad, for he had many possessions.

4. Read Luke 18:24-30. How did Jesus summarize the problem of the ruler in 18:24-25?

What does Jesus mean by 'a camel going through the eye of a needle' (Luke 18:25)? What did Jesus mean by saying, "'What is impossible for human beings is possible for God.'" (18:27)?

Luke 18:24-30 Jesus looked at him [now sad] and said, "How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ For it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God." ²⁶ Those who heard this said, "Then who can be saved?" ²⁷ And he said, "What is impossible for human beings is possible for God." ²⁸ Then Peter said, "We have given up our possessions and followed you." ²⁹ He said to them, "Amen, I say to you, there is no one who has given up house or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God ³⁰ who will not receive [back] an overabundant return in this present age and eternal life in the age to come."

5. Read Luke 18:31-34. Imagine you have given up everything to follow Jesus on His journey to Jerusalem. Why would these words be difficult to understand or believe?

Luke 18:31-34 Then he took the Twelve aside and said to them, “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem and everything written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. ³² He will be handed over to the Gentiles and he will be mocked and insulted and spat upon; ³³ and after they have scourged him, they will kill him, but on the third day he will rise.” ³⁴ But they understood nothing of this; the word remained hidden from them and they failed to comprehend what he said.

6. Read Luke 18:35-45. We read that the blind man “cried out all the more.” Why do you think he did this? How do you think the blind man felt when Jesus asked, “What do you want me to do for you?” If Jesus asked you that question right now, what would be your answer?

Luke 18:35-43 Now as he approached Jericho a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging, ³⁶ and hearing a crowd going by, he inquired what was happening. ³⁷ They told him, “Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.” ³⁸ He shouted, “Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me!” ³⁹ The people walking in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent, but he kept calling out all the more, “Son of David, have pity on me!” ⁴⁰ Then Jesus stopped and ordered that he be brought to him; and when he came near, Jesus asked him, ⁴¹ “What do you want me to do for you?” He replied, “Lord, please let me see.” ⁴² Jesus told him, “Have sight; your faith has saved you.” ⁴³ He immediately received his sight and followed him, giving glory to God. When they saw this, all the people gave praise to God.

7. Read Luke 19:1-10, Deuteronomy 4:29 and footnotes.

Luke 19:1-10 ¹ He came to Jericho and intended to pass through the town. ² Now a man there named Zacchaeus, who was a chief tax collector and also a wealthy man, ³ was seeking to see who Jesus was; but he could not see him because of the crowd, for he was short in stature. ⁴ So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree in order to see Jesus, who was about to pass that way. ⁵ When he reached the place, Jesus looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down quickly, for today I must stay at your house.” ⁶ And he came down quickly and received him with joy. ⁷ When they all saw this, they began to grumble, saying, “He has gone to stay at the house of a sinner.” ⁸ But Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, “Behold, half of my possessions, Lord, I shall give to the poor, and if I have extorted anything from anyone, I shall repay it four times over.” ⁹ And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house because this man too is a descendant of Abraham. ¹⁰ For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save what was lost.”

Deuteronomy 4:29 But if from there you seek the LORD your God, you will find him if you seek him with all your heart and with all your soul.

Who was Zacchaeus? Why did he want to see Jesus?

What did he do in order to see Jesus?

Jesus called Zacchaeus by name and he never mentioned anything about repentance, money or sin. What did Zacchaeus tell Jesus he would do? What was his motivation?

Who was seeking whom in this story?