

Luke 18:18-30

Dependant Faith

Image Church // Inverted Kingdom Vol. 2 / Radical Week 4

Introduction

Well, good morning Image Family I hope you're doing well!

Commission Jonathan Sams:

- Introduce, celebrate...
- Commission him as the **director of equipping and community groups**...
- Let him talk about the institute
 - What is it, and what's offered through it? When is it? How do we get connected
- celebrate!

Alright, if you have your bibles, grab them and turn to Luke 18...

Back in the day when I was working landscaping, I would help my boss trap all kinds of stuff... Groundhogs were a big one we'd try to catch, caught over 30 of them one year!

- Caught some opossums, and feral cats, *I won't tell you what I did with some of them... Calm down- it was rabid...*

But he also trapped coyotes and foxes... Fascinating process... The smell is huge... The type of traps is important...

He would catch these coyotes and foxes and sell them to some folks that would take them and release them in these big blocks of woods that were perfect coyotes and foxes...

Sounds good right?!? Sounds like a neat little haven for these animals.

Except there's a fence around this big block of woods so the coyotes and foxes couldn't get out...

It's ok though, it's a big block of woods... Except this was the place where people brought their dogs to train and run them!

- Chase the coyotes and foxes all over the place...

See there was this illusion of freedom and flourishing for these coyotes and foxes, but the reality is that they are trapped...

This morning we're going to be looking at 2 guys, one of them has the appearance of freedom but is really trapped, and the other seems trapped but is really free!

Let's pick up in verse 18...

Luke 18:18-30

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

19 "Why do you call me good?" Jesus asked him. "No one is good except God alone."

Now, Jesus isn't saying here that He's not good, and that He's not God...

What Jesus is doing here is reframing this guys view of good...

- Jesus sees right through this guy and knows his heart and he knows that this ruler thinks that he is good, you'll see it surface here in just a sec...
- So Jesus jumps in with this statement to challenge his view of **good**...
- Only God is good...

BTW: This is a vital concept for us to understand...

- We like to think we're good...
- The reality is that we're not...
- This is one of the biggest misses when it comes to understanding Christianity and why Jesus came...

Jesus came for bad people if there were good people what's the point of Jesus coming...

- Only God is good...
- Jesus came so that we could **receive** the goodness of God...

This ruler had a gap in his understanding of good... He thought salvation was **dependent on his goodness**, hence his question...
What must I do to inherit eternal life...

Jesus continues in **verse 20**:

20 You know the commandments: Do not commit adultery; do not murder; do not steal; do not bear false witness; honor your father and mother."

Jesus holds up 5 of the 10 commandments... **Why?** We don't know... But what we know is that Jesus isn't done... This isn't His application to the guy, this is a setup...

- **He's getting this ruler to put forth the reality of his heart...**

Watch how he responds...

21 "I have kept all these from my youth," he said.

Ah, there it is... Essentially, he answers I am good! I've done these things...

There's a miss mainly in his sufficiency to be able to keep these at the standard that God demands...

- Obviously, he's not heard Jesus teaching at the sermon on the mount..

Again he has a superficial view of what it means to be genuinely good... And his confident dependence on His ability to execute... He said he's kept them since his youth...

Alright, now, Jesus is about to expose His heart...

22 When Jesus heard this, he told him, "You still lack one thing:

Want you to see the irony here, Jesus says: **you still lack one thing...**

This is a guy that thinks he lacks nothing... This is a guy that the community would say lacks nothing, morally or physically...

And then, Jesus says something utterly astonishing... *He says to him:*
Sell all you have and distribute it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

What?!? Why would Jesus say this? Is this an additional requirement that Jesus is adding on?!?

No, **Jesus' point isn't to go and do something, but to depend on someone!**

- *One thing you lack... But Jesus gives 3: sell all you have, give to the poor, follow me...*
- **Jesus' point is the one thing this man lacks is JESUS!**

What this man lacks is dependent faith... **BTW:** This has been a theme for Jesus all the way back to the top of **Chapter 18...**

It's not about your goodness it's about dependent faith... And so Jesus goes at his heart, what he's really dependant on... **His money...**

Jesus exposes what's at the core of this guy's heart... His dependence isn't on God... God isn't over everything in his life... His security, his hope, his trust, isn't on God...

- His trust is in himself... morally and materially when it comes to provision...

Sure, this ruler was a decent guy on the outside, probably an upstanding citizen...

- But the reality is that on the inside there was a problem... The problem was that he didn't have a true dependence on God...
- Jesus exposes that...

Jesus comes after this guy's idol, this guy's security, this guy's identity... And He says give it up...

But notice Jesus asks this guy to give it up for something... **and you will have treasure in heaven.**

- Jesus isn't just being tyrannical, or mean to this guy...
- He's offering this guy something more...
- This is a good m

And watch how this ruler responds...

23 After he heard this, he became extremely sad, because he was very rich.

His response here confirms the reality of where His heart is... **He's not ready to come to God on God's terms**... He started the conversation *bright-eyed and bushy-tailed*...

- Ends it in sadness when he sees the nature of God's call to true surrender and dependence...

Jesus responds to this in verse 24:

24 Seeing that he became sad, Jesus 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 go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God."

Jesus gives a little proverbial statement designed to make this point...

- it's impossible for rich people to gain entry into the kingdom in their own strength.
- The reaction of the ruler vividly illustrates the reality of what Jesus is saying...

One scholar says it like this: *Wealth can shrink the door of the kingdom down to an impassable peephole. The self-focused security of the wealthy is a padlock against kingdom entry.*¹

Here's what we need to see in this:

There are dangers that combat dependant faith... There's a specific application here, and there's also a general one here...

¹ Darrell L. Bock, *Luke: 9:51–24:53*, vol. 2, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, 1485–1486.

Specific... Money

Jesus shows us that money is a spiritual liability: Money is a form of power that quickly replaces our sense of need for God. Money offers you control: When you have money, you can do things; you can get done what you want done in the world even when others don't want it to happen. You can avoid things you want to avoid.²

- *Appeal*...
- *What does your financial generosity say about your dependence?*

General... Anything that Keeps you from depending on God...

- Could ask it like this, what's the one area of your life that you can't turn over control to God???

Jesus issues a strong warning here... And hearing this the disciples are like, *hand up*...

26 Those who heard this asked, "Then who can be saved?"

Wealth was seen as a blessing from God... If these highly favored people can't get in then who can?!?

Now they are more on the right track, this is different that the presumption of goodness...

27 He replied, "What is impossible with man is possible with God."

No one gets in on their own it's impossible... But there's an incredible hope, salvation is possible with God...

28 Then Peter said, "Look, we have left what we had and followed you." **29** So he said to them, "Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left a house, wife or brothers or sisters, parents or children because of the kingdom of God, **30** who will not receive many times more at this time, and eternal life in the age to come."

Jesus is not advocating for abandonment here... That would go against so many of His other teachings...

- He's pointing to a life of sacrifice for the sake of the mission...

² JD Greear, *Whatever it takes*.

Here's my question... Where are you sacrificing for the sake of the Kingdom? What are you giving up for the sake of the Kingdom?

- Where are you saying no to your job to say Yes to Kingdom things?
- Where are you saying no to certain things as a family in order to say yes to Kingdom things as a family?
- I think the concern is that our lives don't really look that different out there... We can really blend in...

Now there's also an encouragement here... Give it up now and you get it later...

- *Appeal...*

The ruler walked away from a great opportunity... Will you?

31 Then he took the Twelve aside and told them, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem. Everything that is written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished. **32** For he will be handed over to the Gentiles, and he will be mocked, insulted, spit on; **33** and after they flog him, they will kill him, and he will rise on the third day." **34** They understood none of these things. The meaning of the saying was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said.

Jesus knows where the journey leads...

This is a cool moment for us... We know what Jesus is alluding to in this moment... The disciples did not, they heard what Jesus said but did not understand...

When writing this, Luke would have understood the real implications of what Jesus had said, and so he emphasizes that the disciples at the time did not understand... Jesus reveals what his mission is and what it would cost...

Jesus knows what it will cost him to be the one we can depend on...

Verse 35 *they're continuing on their journey...*

35 As he approached Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the road begging. **36** Hearing a crowd passing by, he inquired what was happening. **37** "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by," they told him. **38** So he called out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" **39** Then those in front told him to keep quiet, but he kept crying out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" **40** Jesus stopped and commanded that he be brought to him. When he came closer, he asked him, **41** "What do you want me to do for you?" "Lord," he said, "I want to see." **42** "Receive your sight," Jesus told him. "Your faith has saved you." **43** Instantly he could see, and he began to follow him, glorifying God. All the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

The Blind man, an outcast of society, has nothing... Comes to Jesus in faith...

The overarching reality:

The rich young ruler has all that the eye could see, but was really blind... The blind man has nothing the eye can see, but is able to see!

- *Ultimately one ends up with nothing and one ends up with everything...*

What is the difference?!? Dependant faith... and need for mercy...

Throwing yourself at the feet of Jesus...

This blind man is a beautiful picture for us...

- We come to Jesus with nothing... we can't even see Him...
- Yet in faith we call in for His mercy, believe that He will give it to us...
- He opens our eyes and saves us...

And watch this... the man who was blind also models how we should respond to the mercy we have received...

- Follow Jesus
- Glorify Jesus
- Proclaim it to the people around us...

Family, we need to be like this man who was blind!!

- Having dependant, desperate faith...

This has been the theme in Luke 18:

- Persistent widow...
- Tax collector...
- Children...
- Blind man...

Inverted Kingdom... All of the people society looks down on are all of the people God uses to display how our hearts should look before Him!

The Kingdom of God is counter-cultural... When you begin to lean into the realities surrounding the Kingdom of God it's radical, life-changing, transformative...

Conclusion [VAMP]

Gospel

Where are the gospel gaps??

Where are the areas you're not depending on God?

Where is your dependence?

Does your life truly reflect total dependence and commitment to Jesus?

Pray

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Discuss areas in our lives that we often believe help "earn" our salvation
 - a. In what ways are you tempted to think you can "earn" your salvation?
 - b. What makes you feel self-sufficient when it comes to God?
2. Discuss how money can pull us away from Jesus
3. What is the one thing that regularly tempts you from fully surrendering yourself to Jesus? (Examples: Money, success, control, safety, etc.)
4. What is one thing that you have sacrificed because of your belief in Jesus?