



Tale of Two People

I. Our Choice, Our Faith, Our Reward

A Parable: Pharisee & A Thief/Extortionist

Luke 18:9–14 (NIV84®)

To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: ¹⁰ “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’ ¹³ “But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’ ¹⁴ “I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

A Young Scholar & Peter/Andrew/James/John

Luke 18:18–30 (NIV84®)

¹⁸ A certain ruler asked him, “Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” ¹⁹ “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone. ²⁰ You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not give false testimony, honor your father and mother.’”

²¹ “All these I have kept since I was a boy,” he said. ²² When Jesus heard this, he said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” ²³ When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was a man of great wealth. ²⁴ Jesus looked at him and said, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.” ²⁶ Those who heard this asked, “Who then can be saved?” ²⁷ Jesus replied, “What is impossible with men is possible with God.” ²⁸ **Peter said to him, “We have left all we had to follow you!” ²⁹ “I tell you the truth,” Jesus said to them, “no one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God ³⁰ will fail to receive many times as much in this age and, in the age to come, eternal life.”**

Roman Authority & Privilege: Pilate & Cornelius

Matthew 27:24 (NIV84®)

When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but that instead an uproar was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. **“I am innocent of this man’s blood,”** he said. “It is your responsibility!”

Acts 10:1–4 (NIV84®)

At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion in what was known as the Italian Regiment. ² He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly. ³ One day at about three in the afternoon he had a vision. He distinctly saw an angel of God, who came to him and said, “Cornelius!” ⁴ Cornelius stared at him



in fear. "What is it, Lord?" he asked. The angel answered, "Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God.

Rewards & the Challenge of Pursuing God

Luke 22:28–33 (NIV84®)

²⁸ You are those who have stood by me in my trials. ²⁹ And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, ³⁰ so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. ³¹ "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. ³² But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers." ³³ But he replied, "Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death."

II. Recruiting Pattern

Abraham

David

1 Samuel 17:34–36 (NIV84®)

³⁴ But David said to Saul, "Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, ³⁵ I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. ³⁶ Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God.

Moses

Gideon

Judges 6:11–15 (NIV84®)

¹¹ The angel of the LORD came and sat down under the oak in Ophrah that belonged to Joash the Abiezerite, where his son Gideon was threshing wheat in a winepress to keep it from the Midianites. ¹² When the angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon, he said, "The LORD is with you, mighty warrior." ¹³ "But sir," Gideon replied, "if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our fathers told us about when they said, 'Did not the LORD bring us up out of Egypt?' But now the LORD has abandoned us and put us into the hand of Midian." ¹⁴ The LORD turned to him and said, "Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian's hand. Am I not sending you?" ¹⁵ "But Lord," Gideon asked, "how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family."

Peter, Andrew, James and John

Saul of Tarsus

Philippians 3:4–9 (NIV84®)

If anyone else thinks he has reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: ⁵ circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless. ⁷ But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. **I consider them**



rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.

Acts 9:15–16 (NIV84®)

¹⁵ But the Lord said to Ananias, “Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. ¹⁶ I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.”

III. The Assignment: Our Assignment

Acts 1:6–8 (NIV84®)

⁶ So when they met together, they asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷ He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Acts 4:1–4 (NIV84®)

The priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to Peter and John while they were speaking to the people. ² They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. ³ They seized Peter and John, and because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day. ⁴ **But many who heard the message believed, and the number of men grew to about five thousand.**

Springtime “Planting Season” — 10 Weeks of Intent for a Greater Harvest of Faith

- ❖ **Easter: April 17**
- ❖ **Spring Festival: April 9 – May 8**
- ❖ **“Let’s Talk” . . . TRUTH BE TOLD — A Faith Conversation**

1 Peter 3:15 (NIV84®)

But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. **Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone** who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.