

## “The Sinner’s Prayer and the Son of Man” - Luke 18:1-17

Please Stand and Open Your Bibles to Luke 18:1-8

We are coming down to the last 3-4 studies in Luke of what is known as the “Travel Discourses”. They started back in chapter 9...

Luke 9:51

Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem...

This continues until the “Triumphant Entry” in Chapter 19. These 10 chapters that deal with this short period of time at the end of Jesus’s earthly ministry are focused mainly on interaction with the Scribes and Pharisees that by now have rejected Him completely. Jesus uses this time to teach the Disciples, and us, many lessons. We have seen the attitude of these religious leaders through Lukes’s descriptions.

Luke 10:25

And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and **tested** Him, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

Luke 11:14-16

And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute. So it was, when the demon had gone out, that the mute spoke; and the multitudes marveled. But some of them said, “He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.” Others, **testing** Him, sought from Him a sign from heaven.

Luke 11:37, 53-54

And as He spoke, a certain Pharisee asked Him to dine with him... And as He said these things to them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to **assail** Him vehemently, and to **cross-examine** Him about many things, **lying in wait** for Him, and seeking to **catch Him** in something He might say, that they might **accuse** Him.

Luke 13:14

But the ruler of the synagogue **answered with indignation**, because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, “There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day.”

Luke 13:31

On that very day some Pharisees came, saying to Him, “**Get out and depart** from here, for Herod wants to kill You.”

Luke 14:1

Now it happened, as He went into the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath, that they **watched Him closely**.

Luke 15:1-2

Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him. And the Pharisees and scribes **complained**, saying, “This Man receives sinners and eats with them.”

Luke 16:14

Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they **derided** Him.

Luke 17:20-21

Now when **He was asked** by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, “The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.” (In Your Midst!)

I brought all this up so you can see a pattern here that will be reflected in our study today. We are going to talk about something that reflects the same spirit we see in the

Pharisees. I see more complaining about how the gospel is being presented and personal attacks on those that do it then I do those supporting the work of the gospel. I have seen more memes of what the gospel is not than what it is. I have heard teaching and debates by leaders, who as far as I can see, are using differing glossaries and dictionaries to define terms that we should have or not have in our gospel tracts. Everyone has their method of how the gospel needs to be presented and received and leave no room to share in what others are doing. It almost seems that each of them has a “My way or the Highway” attitude. I get it, we need to hold fast our convictions and make sure that there are zero works put into how we get saved. I am not short of criticism towards some of the methods I have seen. But I have also discovered as I grow older in the Lord to never put God in a box. As I hear your stories and how you responded to differing calls to come to Jesus, I see that God can and often uses all kinds of various ways to bring people to Himself.

Today we are going to see three small stories that all deal with having a relationship with Him. We need to remember that chapter 18 is picking up where chapter 17 left off. Jesus was teaching the disciples about when the Kingdom of God would come and what the world would look like before His return to

rescue us from the judgement to come. And so, we remember never to lose heart about it as Luke shares the first story...

Always Pray!

Luke 18:1-8

I love the picture of this story. I see what we could call, one of those activist judges. Think in your mind a DC Circuit Judge. You know, the kind of judge that would ignore the obvious evidence of high ups in the government breaking federal laws to destroy a candidate from the opposing party. I know, I know it's hard to believe but please use your imagination. Maybe this might help, a Justice system that covers up the most heinous crimes committed by the rich and famous. This is the kind of judge that is in our story. But we also see a widow that needs a judgment and this judge won't have it. I can't help but see the quintessential little old lady. Walking around with her cane and will never take no for an answer. The one that shows up to something while everyone else is just standing around she just bullies her way up front and demands an answer. The picture Jesus is painting is she never gave up. Every day she pushed her way up to the front and knocked on the judge's door with her cane and demanded to be heard. Finally, the judge gives in and sees her case. (We need a lady like this to go knock on Pam Bondi's door!)

The point of the story is don't give up praying. How much more will the righteous judge of all the earth hear when people when they cry out to Him. This is in context with our instruction in chapter 11...

Luke 11:2

So He said to them, "When you pray, say:  
Our Father in heaven,  
Hallowed be Your name.  
Your kingdom come..."

Don't give up. It will come. Don't stop praying for righteousness to reign. Jesus is coming.

1 John 5:14-15

Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

And in context with chapter 17 Jesus will tell them later in Luke...

Luke 21:36

“Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

And how is one found worthy? That is answered in our next story...

## The Pharisee and the Tax Collector

Luke 18:9-14

It is obvious who Luke is talking about when he says that Jesus taught this parable to those who trusted in themselves. The Pharisees, as we have seen, are all full of themselves. They could not believe they need a Savior. They have completely rejected Jesus as the Messiah and because of this are lost. Why? Because they trusted in their works. This is stated plainly in our story of two people that go before God in the Temple. The Pharisee talks about all the good he has done. This is actually part of a prayer that they were taught to pray. They were to thank God they were not born a gentile, a boor? (Ignorant Mind-Sinner), or a woman. They also did fast twice a week. That was on Mondays and Thursdays. The early church went so far as to make sure the Christians didn't fast on those days, so they set up fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays. This is why the Catholics only eat fish on Fridays.

We see the opposite in the Tax Collector. He knows his state before God and appeals to Him for mercy. And what does Jesus say about Him?

Luke 18:14

“I tell you, this man went down to his house **justified** rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Why is this important? Because the word that Jesus used is very, very important!

Galatians 2:16

knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

Romans 3:22-25

For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood

Romans 5:1

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ

Being Justified is literally being completely forgiven for all of your sins, past, present, and future. It is a legal term to render a favorable verdict. And how did the Tax Collector receive it?

Luke 18:13

“And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’”

How many of you have ever heard someone ask, “Where in the Bible is the Sinner’s Prayer?”. Some of them will even say “Nowhere in the Bible do we see the Sinner’s Prayer practiced” What did we just read? There are too many people in Christianity today that want to make the gospel more complicated than it is. They discourage any form of evangelism that includes a prayer or a calling on the Lord or confessing His name. They ignore the fact that all of them are seen in scripture including just believe.

I say whatever works, works. A person can’t be saved unless he knows what he is being saved from. How a person responds to

the information is up to them. Maybe you beat your breast, maybe you walk an aisle, maybe you call upon the Lord, maybe you confess His Name. Maybe you just receive Him. I am not going to put God in a box and say that he can't work through Billy Graham or John MacArthur. Any way you look at it we are to humble ourselves before God and receive His free gift of salvation. Just do it and do it today! How simple is it? As simple as a child running to Jesus!

Luke 18:15-17

Then they also brought infants to Him that He might touch them; but when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. 16 But Jesus called them to Him and said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. 17 Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."

A little child has nothing to bring. He has no strength, no wealth, no achievements, no friends in high places. All they had was a desire to come to Jesus. That is all they need and that is all you need. The Pharisees wanted the Kingdom of God and will never find it. The little ones not only found it but have inherited it! Whatever way speaks to you respond like a little Child.

Mark 1:14

Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. **Repent, and believe** in the gospel.”

Romans 10:9-10

...if you **confess with your mouth** the Lord Jesus and **believe in your heart** that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Romans 10:13

For “whoever **calls** on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

John 1:11-13

He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as **received Him**, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Acts 16:29-31

Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. And he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” So they said, “**Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved.**”