

DEDICATION:

To my Megan

THANK YOU:

To the best mother I've ever had for editing this book.

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PURPOSE FOR WRITING:

I don't know Jesus half as well as I would like... but I want to share what I know with those who want to know Him better.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK:

This book can be used as a stand alone resource. However, it was designed to be used alongside our free video study series on the Gospel of Luke. You can find the videos on our YouTube channel (2BeLikeChrist).

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCygDFdZnOKlaRmdjHDldcaQ>

DISCLAIMER:

Everything in this book could be wrong. I am a student of the Bible. This book represents my best current understanding of the biblical text. Critically examine everything I've written.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 13	10-35
CHAPTER 14	36-59
CHAPTER 15	60-81
CHAPTER 16	82-105
CHAPTER 17	106-127
CHAPTER 18	128-149
CHAPTER 19	150-179
CHAPTER 20	180-205
CHAPTER 21	206-239
CHAPTER 22	240-275
CHAPTER 23	276-309
CHAPTER 24	310-335
SOURCES.....	341-346

LUKE 13

In 5 minutes...

WHEN:

- The events of chapter 13 were part of Jesus' ministry on earth.
- These events took place approximately 30-33 A.D..

CHARACTERS:

- Jesus - The Son of God.
- Handicapped Woman - The woman was "bent over and could not fully straighten herself."
- The Pharisees - Jewish religious leaders who were determined to undermine Jesus.
- Herod - Herod Antipas the ruler of Galilee and Perea.

WHERE:

- Luke does not share the exact location of these events.
- Verse 22 reads, "He [Jesus] went on his way through towns and villages, teaching and journeying toward Jerusalem."

LUKE 13



OVERVIEW:

- JESUS TEACHES ABOUT REPENTANCE (13:1-5):
 - + Two incidents are mentioned in this section: (1) the killing of some Galileans by Pilate the Roman governor and (2) the collapse of a tower of Siloam that killed 18 people.
 - + Jesus taught that all men needed to repent before they died physically and spiritually.
- PARABLE OF A FRUITLESS FIG TREE (13:6-9):
 - + A vineyard owner wanted a fig tree cut down because it hadn't produced fruit in three years.
 - + The vinedresser asked the owner to give the tree one more year to produce fruit before cutting it down.
- A DISABLED WOMAN HEALED (13:10-17):
 - + While teaching in the synagogue, Jesus healed a woman who was "bent over."
 - + The ruler of the synagogue told the people Jesus had broken God's law by healing on a Sabbath day.
 - + Jesus rebuked the man and revealed His hypocrisy to the people.
- THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS LIKE A MUSTARD SEED AND LEAVEN (13:18-21):
- THE NARROW DOOR (13:22-30):
 - + As Jesus went to Jerusalem, a man asked Him, "Lord will those who are saved be few?"
 - + Jesus responded, "Strive to enter through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able."
 - + Jesus taught that the door would one day be closed and those left outside would not be allowed in.
 - + "In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (13:28).
- HEROD THREATENS JESUS (13:31-33):
 - + The Pharisees warned Jesus Herod was planning to kill Him and advised Him to leave the area.
 - + Jesus wasn't concerned. He told the Pharisees He would stay and accomplish the work He intended to do.
- JESUS LAMENTS THE WICKEDNESS OF JERUSALEM AND ITS PEOPLE (13:34-35):

BIG PICTURE:

- Repentance is a key theme in this chapter and throughout the entire Bible.
- All of us must repent of the sin in our lives because it is our sin that separates us from God.
- If we do not turn away from sin, we will be cast out of God's presence like those talked about in verse 27.

TAKEAWAYS:

- Take advantage of the opportunities God gives you.
- Don't put off becoming a Christian thinking you will have time to do it later.
- None of us knows when God will shut the door of opportunity, either in our death or in the return of Jesus.

LUKE 13

Luk 13:1 There were some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

Luk 13:2 And he answered them, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way?”

Luk 13:3 No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.

Luk 13:4 Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem?”

Luk 13:5 No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”

- From verse 1, we understand chapter 13 to be a continuation of chapter 12.
- This opening discussion is unique to Luke’s gospel.
- Some of the people in Jesus’ audience brought up an incident regarding Pilate (the Roman governor) killing Galilean Jews while they were offering sacrifices to God.
 - o While they were killing animals for sacrifice, their blood was spilled by Pilate’s men, therefore their blood was mingled with the blood of the animals.
 - o Although these Jews were from Galilee, this event almost certainly occurred in Jerusalem at the Temple because that’s where the Jews went to present their sacrifices.
- The exact time and circumstances are hard to lock down definitively.
- Secular history doesn’t provide us with any event that we can say is “for sure” the one referenced here.
 - o There are several theories:
 - Pilate and the Aqueduct:
 - 175 4. After this he raised another disturbance, by expending that sacred treasure which is called Corban upon aqueducts, whereby he brought water from the distance of four hundred furlongs. At this the multitude had great indignation; and when Pilate was come to Jerusalem, they came about his tribunal, and made a clamor at it. 176 Now when he was apprised aforehand of this disturbance, he mixed his own soldiers in their armor with the multitude, and ordered them to conceal themselves under the habits of private men, and not indeed to use their swords, but with their staves to beat those that made the clamor. He then gave the signal from his

tribunal (to do as he had bidden them). 177 Now the Jews were so sadly beaten, that many of them perished by the stripes they received, and many of them perished as trodden to death by themselves; by which means the multitude was astonished at the calamity of those that were slain, and held their peace (*Wars of the Jews* 2.175-177).

- Pilate caused an uprising by attempting to use Temple money, which was dedicated to the Lord, to build an aqueduct in Jerusalem.



- An aqueduct was an ancient way of transporting fresh water over long distances.
- The Jews staged a weeklong protest in Jerusalem.
- Pilate, tired of the unrest, placed disguised soldiers in the crowds of protestors.
- On Pilate's signal the soldiers attacked the Jews, killing some and injuring others.
- Josephus doesn't mention Galileans specifically.
- Judas the Galilean:
 - Some suggest this was the event referred to in Acts 5:37.
 - Act 5:37 After him Judas the Galilean rose up in the days of the census and drew away some of the people after him. He too perished, and all who followed him were scattered.
 - There isn't any mention of Jerusalem or sacrifices.
- A dispute between Rulers:
 - Luke 23 informs us Herod Antipas and Pilate didn't get along until the time of Jesus' trial.

- Some think Pilate may have had some Galilean Jews killed when they came down to Jerusalem to worship as an insult to Herod.
 - I'm not aware of any historical evidence that would take this view out of the realm of "guess-work."
- All of these theories have pros and cons.
- One of them may be correct or all of them may be wrong.
- The second historical event mentioned in the opening of this chapter is the collapse of a tower in Siloam.



(James Tissot, Tower of Siloam).

- Siloam was a neighborhood on Jerusalem's southeast side.
- We don't know the purpose of the aforementioned tower.
- It may have been part of an aqueduct, a guard tower, or something else.
- All we know is that it collapsed and killed 18 people.
- Now let's return to the text.
- Jesus was teaching and some people brought up the incident of Pilate and the Galileans.
 - Why?
 - We aren't told.
 - Maybe it was in the news and was a popular topic of conversation.

- Maybe Jesus' enemies brought this up to see how He would respond.
 - Would He side with Pilate and Rome?
 - Would He side with the Jews?
 - Either side would have given Jesus' enemies an angle to work.
- Or maybe there was an implied question behind bringing it up to Jesus.
- Either way, Jesus took the opportunity to teach a lesson about the need for repentance.
- He asked the people if they believed the Galileans who were killed died because they were worse sinners than others.
 - Did God select them for death because they were worse than everyone else?
 - Were they being punished for something?
 - In an indirect way, Jesus was addressing a thought that has existed in the human mind for millennium.
 - When bad things happen to people, is it God's punishment for a sin they committed?
 - Remember Job's friends in the book of Job?
 - They were convinced the bad things that happened to Job were a result of some sin in his life.
- Jesus was going to speak to that question, but I don't believe it was His main point.
- After the event of Pilate and the Galileans was brought up, Jesus brought up the tower of Siloam.
- Jesus placed these two disasters in the forefront of the minds of His hearers and asked them if these tragedies happened because of the wickedness of their victims.
 - Does God deal out death to especially wicked people?
 - Jesus' answer... "No."
- At this point, I expected Jesus to talk about why tragedies happen, when they happen, how God uses them, etc...
 - From a human mind, that seems to be the conversation for which He was setting up His audience.
 - And that discussion would have been one many people would have been very interested in hearing.
- But Jesus didn't go that way.
 - Jesus didn't explain why some people die and some people live.

- The only thing He revealed was that the wicked are not always the ones affected by calamity.
 - To conclude such would be wrong.
 - But here is what Jesus told us we can know... “unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”
 - A deadly tragedy (spiritually speaking) will be the end of any life that doesn’t involve repentance.
-

- APPLICATION:

- When tragedy happens to other people, it is easy to start asking “why” out of curiosity.
 - Evidently, the Jews were curious about why the Galileans and the tower victims were killed.
 - Jesus didn’t explain, instead He told them to focus on their own sins.
 - Conjecture as to the reason bad things happen to other people doesn’t need to be our focus because we don’t know the answers and Jesus didn’t share them with us.
 - Instead of worrying about other people’s sins, Jesus wanted us to make sure our sins are corrected.
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Luk 13:6 And he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none.

Luk 13:7 And he said to the vinedresser, ‘Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?’

Luk 13:8 And he answered him, ‘Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure.

Luk 13:9 Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’”

- This short parable appears to connect with what Jesus just said about repentance.
- The Parable:
 - A man had a vineyard.

- In the vineyard there was a fig tree.
 - For three years the fig tree hadn't produced any figs.
 - The man wasn't pleased with the fruitlessness of the tree and told his vineyard keeper to cut it down.
 - The vineyard keeper asked the man to allow the tree to stay one more year.
 - He promised to "dig around it" (turn the soil over to give it air and nutrients) and fertilize the tree.
 - The vineyard keeper's hope was that the tree would produce fruit the following year.
 - If the tree remained barren the following year, he would cut it down.
- The Meaning:
- Jesus didn't provide us with the interpretation of this parable, but I think we can figure it out.
 - Remember the context.
 - Jesus was talking to Jews.
 - The Jew's track record of following God's law was anything but perfect.
 - God gave them many chances to repent and turn to Him.
 - Remember, this parable comes right on the heels of a teaching about repentance.
 - In a general sense, the parable can be understood to illustrate God's patient nature.
 - God wants every human soul to repent and "bear fruit."
 - He is patient and isn't quick to cut us down, even as we fail year after year.
 - In a specific sense, the parable can be understood to illustrate God's patience with the Jewish nation.
 - The fig tree = the spiritually unfruitful Jews who continually rejected God.
 - The vineyard owner = God.
 - The vineyard keeper = Jesus and perhaps the other prophets who continually offered the Jews an opportunity to repent and change.
 - Some think the final "cutting down" occurred when the Roman's destroyed Jerusalem in 70 A.D..
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- APPLICATION:

- Take a moment and thank God for His patience.
 - No one would ever be saved if God wasn't patient.
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- APPLICATION:

- God wants the lost saved.
 - Notice how God allows the unfruitful tree to be cultivated.
 - 1Ti 2:3-4 This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.
 - How did God cultivate the soil around you and how did it lead you to faith?
 - Or how is God cultivating the soil around you now? What influences led you to study more about God?
-

Luk 13:10 Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath.

Luk 13:11 And behold, there was a woman who had had a disabling spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not fully straighten herself.

- Jesus was in the synagogue on Saturday (Sabbath) with a woman who had a “disabling spirit.”
- The “spirit” caused her to be bent over.
- We don't know much about this “disabling spirit.” We don't know if it was a sickness or a type of demon possession.
 - But we do know it was something Satan caused.
 - Luk 13:16 And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?”
- She had been afflicted by Satan for 18 years.

Luk 13:12 When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said to her, “Woman, you are freed from your disability.”

Luk 13:13 And he laid his hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and she glorified God.

Luk 13:14 But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, said to the people, “There are six days in which work ought to be done. Come on those days and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day.”

- Jesus called the woman to Him and healed her.
- She responded by praising God for her healing.
- In contrast, the ruler of the synagogue took issue with the display of God’s power.
- It was the Sabbath day and people weren’t supposed to “work” on the Sabbath day.
- The ruler told the woman she should have come on one of the other six days of the week.
 - o This wasn’t the first time a prominent Jew protested a Sabbath healing.
 - o The scribes and Pharisees tried to accuse Jesus of breaking the Law back in Luke 6 for healing a man with a withered hand.
- This ruler’s response revealed his biases.
- No one in their right mind would have associate Jesus’ miraculous power with common “work” unless they were already determined to oppose Jesus.
- The obstinate Jews disapproved of Jesus’ miracles, but the miracles themselves were evidence God approved of Jesus.
 - o If God didn’t support Jesus healing on the Sabbath, why would He empower Him to do miracles on the Sabbath day?
 - o Common sense should have told the scribes, Pharisees, and rulers they were wrong.

Luk 13:15 Then the Lord answered him, “You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger and lead it away to water it?”

Luk 13:16 And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?”

Luk 13:17 As he said these things, all his adversaries were put to shame, and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.

- Jesus didn’t hold back His condemnation of the rulers.
- “You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger and lead it away to water it?”
- Although opposed to “working” on Sabbath, the rulers commonly untied their animals and led them to water on Sabbath.

- They wouldn't let their animal suffer by keeping it tied up all day on Saturday.
- Yet, when a woman who had been bound 18 years was loosed from her suffering on the Sabbath the ruler's complained.
- They were certainly hypocrites.
 - o They cared more about their animals than this woman.
 - o They claimed to know God's Law but loved their animals more than their neighbors.
- Jesus' critics were "put to shame" and rightfully so.
- Jesus exposed them in front of the people whose admiration they loved.
- Unlike the Jewish elite, the common people rejoiced at witnessing Jesus' miracles.

Luk 13:18 He said therefore, "What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it?"

Luk 13:19 It is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his garden, and it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air made nests in its branches."

- The Parable:
 - o The Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed.



- o
- o The exact species of tree or shrub Jesus referenced is still up for debate.

- Some suggest it was *Salvadora perisica* and others suggest *Brassica nigra*.
- Either way, it was a tree/shrub that germinated from a very small seed and grew to significant size.
- Its size gave shelter and a home to birds living in its branches.
- The Interpretation:
 - Like the parable at the beginning of the chapter, Jesus didn't provide an explanation to His listeners.
 - Matthew's gospel emphasizes the smallness of the mustard seed.
 - Mat 13:32 "It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree..."
 - Although the Kingdom of God had small and humble earthly beginnings, it would grow large and be a home to people all around the world.
 - It started off in the rather insignificant region of Galilee.
 - Its king was born to a poor family.
 - The king's disciples were mostly common people.
 - But since the time of Jesus, the Kingdom of God has grown, and its citizens can be found in every nation on earth.

Luk 13:20 And again he said, "To what shall I compare the kingdom of God.

Luk 13:21 It is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, until it was all leavened."

- Another parable without an explanation.
- The Parable:
 - The Kingdom of God is like leaven.
 - Leaven is an ingredient added to bread which causes it to rise.
 - In comparison to the other ingredients, leaven is a very small percentage of any recipe.
 - In the parable, a woman took the leaven and put it in her flour "until it was all leavened."
- The Interpretation:
 - A small quantity of leaven is enough to influence an entire loaf of bread.

- In the same way, the small and humble beginnings of the Kingdom of God may not have appeared a mighty force to many, but Jesus knew it would influence the world forever.
- The people listening to Jesus probably had no idea the events in their town that day would shape our modern world 2,000 years later.
- There are very few (perhaps zero) nations, tribes, and institutions that could argue they have been in no way impacted by the influence of God's Kingdom.

Luk 13:22 He went on his way through towns and villages, teaching and journeying toward Jerusalem.

Luk 13:23 And someone said to him, "Lord, will those who are saved be few?" And he said to them,

Luk 13:24 "Strive to enter through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

- Jesus travelled through various towns preaching the gospel and eventually turned towards Jerusalem.
- On the way, someone asked Him, "Lord, will those who are saved be few?"
 - "Are a lot of people going to be saved in the end?"
 - A good question.
- Jesus' response:
 - Strive - make great efforts to achieve or obtain something (Oxford).

G75

ἀγωνίζομαι

agōnizomai

ag-o-nid'-zom-ah-ee

From G73; to *struggle*, literally (to *compete* for a prize), figuratively (to *contend* with an adversary), or generally (to *endeavor* to accomplish something): - fight, labor fervently, strive.

Total KJV occurrences: 7

Strong's Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries

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- Jesus told this man he needed to make a serious effort to “enter at the narrow door.”
- This language is similar to Jesus’ instruction in Matthew 7 in the Sermon on the Mount.
 - Mat 7:13-14 “Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.
 - Jesus spoke of 2 gates in verses 13 and 14.
 - The first gate leads to destruction (eternal separation from God).
 - The second gate leads to life (eternal life with God).
 - A path leads up to each gate.
 - The path to destruction is wide and easy to walk down.
 - The ease of the path attracts a lot of people.
 - It’s easy and enjoyable at first but leads somewhere no one wants to go.
 - The wide path represents a life lived for self and not for God.
 - It is easy and enjoyable to live for self, sin, and pleasure.
 - But it will lead you somewhere you don’t want to go.

- The path to life is narrow and hard.
 - Few people walk on this path.
 - It is difficult at first but leads to a great reward.
 - The narrow path represents a life lived for God.
 - It is difficult to surrender your own self-interest to live for God's interest.
 - It is a road of sacrifice.
 - But it will lead you to an eternal life of joy.
 - It is important to notice Jesus told His disciples from the very beginning that they will be in the minority.
-

- APPLICATION:
 - We shouldn't let the fact that we are in the minority discourage us or cause us to believe we are doing something incorrectly.
 - We should worry more if we find ourselves in a majority.
 - We should be continually evaluating whether our lives are in line with Jesus' instructions.
-

- Returning to Luke's account, Jesus said, "Strive to enter through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able."
 - An effort must be made to bring our lives into alignment with God's will.
 - Being who God wants you to be doesn't happen without struggle.
 - Satan and sin aren't going to let you go without a fight.
 - "Many... will seek to enter and will not be able."
 - Why?
 - Because their desire to enter is no more than a "mere wish or slothful endeavor" (Jamieson-Fausset-Brown).
 - They do not desire it enough to "strive" for it.
 - They seek it, but not as if it were a matter of life or death.
 - If you ask 100 people if they want to go to heaven, 100 will probably say "yes." But how many devote serious effort to pursuing the things of God?

- Entering the narrow door must be our main concern and the chief business of our life on earth.
-

- APPLICATION:

- Are we saved by the grace of God? Certainly!
 - Eph 2:8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.
 - But there is no question this text lays a responsibility at our feet.
 - Jesus laid that responsibility at our feet.
 - We are saved by the grace offered to those who “strive” to know God and do His will.
- Many will pursue salvation to some degree.
 - They will see the need to enter the narrow door.
 - But they will not reach it in the end.
-

- APPLICATION:

- We should take this warning very seriously.
 - Salvation is not something you pursue casually.
-

- APPLICATION:

- This man’s question and Jesus’ response is very relevant for religious discussions today.
 - If you went to 100 churches and asked their leadership, “will those who are saved be few,” you would get all kinds of varying answers.
 - Only Jesus’ answer matters (especially sense He will be the Judge).
-

Luk 13:25 When once the master of the house has risen and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, open to us,’ then he will answer you, ‘I do not know where you come from.’

Luk 13:26 Then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets.’

Luk 13:27 But he will say, ‘I tell you, I do not know where you come from. Depart from me, all you workers of evil!’

- There is an opportunity to enter the narrow door, but once the opportunity is past, it will be too late.
- Jesus told the people that when that day comes, those who ignored His words will plead with Him to have mercy, but the time for mercy will have past and the time for judgement at hand.
- On that day, the Jews who ignored His preaching will beg Him to let them through the door of salvation on the basis of their close earthly association with Him.
- But He will tell them that, although they walked with Him in Galilee and Judaea, He never knew them.

- APPLICATION:

- o There is a difference between being close to Jesus and being close to Jesus.
- o You can spend time close to the things of Jesus.
 - Around Christians.
 - Around preaching.
 - Around youth groups.
 - Around churches.
- o But your association with those things doesn’t mean you have a close personal relationship with Jesus, God, or the Spirit.
- o Our hearts must be close to God if we hope to enter the narrow door.
- o James 4:8 Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.

Luk 13:28 In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but you yourselves cast out.

Luk 13:29 And people will come from east and west, and from north and south, and recline at table in the kingdom of God.

Luk 13:30 And behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last.”

- To be locked out of the narrow door is to be separated from God.
 - Jesus described the separation as “weeping and gnashing of teeth.”
 - Weeping for sadness.
 - Grinding teeth due to pain.
 - These two descriptors are commonly used in the New Testament to describe the place of eternal separation from God (Hell).
- The Jews had great respect for the men they considered the “fathers” of their nation (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob).
 - But Jesus was telling them they would be locked out of God’s presence while their forefathers sat at God’s table
 - Their fathers and God’s prophets found rest within the narrow door but many of the 1st Century Jews wouldn’t be joining them (even though they paid them lip service).
- The fathers and prophets weren’t going to be the only ones at the table in God’s kingdom.
 - People were going to come from every direction (North, South, East, and West) to be a part of the Kingdom.
 - By this, I believe Jesus was referring to the Gentile world.
 - Jesus was telling these Jews there would be Gentiles who would enjoy closer fellowship with God, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob than them.
- The audacity of Jesus to suggest Gentiles would enjoy God’s blessing and many Jews would be excluded must have sent shockwaves through the crowd.
 - The Jews saw themselves as God’s special people.
 - If anyone was going to heaven, they were going to heaven, so they thought.
 - The idea that a Gentile could be closer to God than them would have been insulting.
- “And behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last.”
 - The Jews thought the Gentiles were dogs (last).
 - They thought they were special on account of their bloodline (first).
 - But things were different in God’s eyes.
 - A person’s heart is what matters to God, not their bloodline (Matthew 3:9).
 - Some of the Gentiles would receive the high honor of being seated at God’s table (first).

- While the Jews were denied entrance for their disobedience (last).
- God turns the tables on the human evaluation of who should be first vs. last.

Luk 13:31 At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, “Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.”

- Jesus was approached by some Pharisees who “warned” Him of Herod’s (Herod Antipas) intentions to take his life.
- What were these Pharisees doing?
 - There is a small chance these Pharisees were genuinely concerned for Jesus’ safety. The gospels do talk about a few Pharisees who had respect for Jesus.
 - It seems more likely these Pharisees were pretending to be friendly to Jesus but were really trying to intimidate Him and run Him out of town.
 - Based on Jesus’ response in the next verse, it’s possible these Pharisees had been sent by Herod to threaten Jesus.
 - Herod had already killed John the Baptist.
 - He probably didn’t like the growing influence and popularity of Jesus.
 - Anyone who had as much influence among the people as Jesus could have been viewed as a political threat.

Luk 13:32 And he said to them, “Go and tell that fox, ‘Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I finish my course.

Luk 13:33 Nevertheless, I must go on my way today and tomorrow and the day following, for it cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem.’

Luk 13:34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!

Luk 13:35 Behold, your house is forsaken. And I tell you, you will not see me until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!’”

- I love Jesus’ response.
- It was bold and to the point.
- “I am going to continue casting out demons and healing the sick in this spot today and tomorrow and I will continue on my way on the third day” (paraphrase).

- Herod thought He ruled that region of the world, but it was Jesus' dominion.
- He would do as He pleased until His work was done.
- Jesus called Herod a "fox."
 - I could only find 2 references to foxes in the Bible (Luke 13:32 and Nehemiah 4:3).
 - Foxes are known for being cunning and sly.
 - This properly described the way Herod reigned.
 - He was a politician more than a military man.
 - This term would have been a fitting description for this particular circumstance if Herod had sent the Pharisees to Jesus to intimidate Him.
 - Herod was using others to do His dirty work.
 - Trying to scare Jesus without confronting Him directly.
 - It was the tactic of a fox, not a lion.
- Jesus told the Pharisees when He completed His work in Herod's jurisdiction, He would head to Jerusalem; "for it cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem."
 - Jesus foretold the location of His death.
 - He knew when it would happen.
 - He knew how it would happen.
 - Even though the Jewish authorities denied wanting to kill Him (John 7:19).
 - Even though Herod was threatening to kill Him outside of Jerusalem.
 - Ultimately, it was Jesus who determined the time and place.
 - Jerusalem was the place where prophets died.
 - I think Jesus said this was because of the track record of the Jews who lived in Jerusalem (see verse 34).
 - Jerusalem was the holy city, yet, within its walls, and by design of its citizens, many of God's prophets had been murdered.
 - It's inhabitants consistently showed resistance to God's messengers.
 - Jesus then mourned the city God had so long loved.
 - Jerusalem was supposed to be a place where God was glorified and honored among the nations, but they had turned away from Him.
 - God wanted to care for His people, but they refused Him.
 - Jesus compared God to a mother hen and the Jews to her chicks.

- When chicks sense danger, they immediately run to their mother who spreads her wings to hide and shield them.
 - A chick is easy prey for a predator, but a full-grown protective mother hen is a bit more intimidating.
 - God had extended His wings of protection to the Jews countless times.
 - Instead of running to Him, they took their chances.
 - If you've read the Old Testament, you'll know things didn't go well for the Jews.
 - They were continually made the prey of Satan and the surrounding nations.
-

▪ APPLICATION:

- We aren't going to make it out of this world alive without God's protection.
 - Satan will win the day if we try to go it alone.
 - The idea that human beings aren't self-sufficient isn't a popular one because it's a humbling one.
 - But it is a necessary concept to grasp if you want to avoid being the prey of Satan and sin.
-

- The language in verse 35 parallels that of Matthew 23:38-39.
 - The house left desolate is probably a reference to the Temple.
 - The Temple was the house in which the presence of God dwelt.
 - It was the place to which the people could return to find the protection of God's wings.
 - But no longer!
 - Rather than being referred to as the "LORD's house," Jesus here referred to it as their house.
 - The house was desolate, abandoned, and empty.
 - Jesus knew the Jews were headed down a wicked road.
 - God had drawn back His wings of protection and was preparing to pour out His judgement.
 - What does the end of verse 35 mean?

- When would Jesus' enemies and the rebels in Jerusalem say, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord"?
- This phrase was used during Jesus' triumphal entry (Matthew 21:9; Mark 11:9; John 12:13).
- But it was used by those who honored Jesus, not those who hated Him.
- There are several theories as to the meaning of this verse, but I suspect Jesus was talking about His second coming.
 - Jesus was going to be leaving Galilee and Judaea (after His resurrection) and those who opposed Him wouldn't see Him again until they were ready to confess Him as Lord.
 - When will all the Jews, even the rebellious Jews, confess Christ?
 - On the Judgment Day, when every soul will be overwhelmed by the glory of Jesus and bow to Him (Romans 14:11).

LUKE 14

In 5 minutes...

WHEN:

- The events of chapter 14 were part of Jesus' ministry on earth.
- These events took place approximately 30-33 A.D..

CHARACTERS:

- Jesus - The Son of God.
- Man with Dropsy - A man Jesus healed on the Sabbath day.
- The Pharisees - Jesus was invited to a Pharisee's house to dine where other Pharisees and lawyers were gathered.

WHERE:

- Luke does not share the exact location of these events.
- Verse 22 reads, "He [Jesus] went on his way through towns and villages, teaching and journeying toward Jerusalem."

LUKE 14



OVERVIEW:

- JESUS HEALS A MAN WITH DROPSY (14:1-6):
 - + On the Sabbath, Jesus was invited into the home of a Pharisee where He met a man with dropsy.
 - + Jesus asked the Pharisees, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not?"
 - + He went on to challenge their double standards and hypocritical practice of Sabbath law.
- DO NOT CHOOSE THE BEST SEATS (14:7-11):
 - + Jesus taught the people not to sit in the best seat available when arriving at a feast.
 - + Instead, they ought to choose a humble seat and allow the host to honor them with a better one.
 - + "For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."
- DO GOOD TO PEOPLE WHO CAN'T PAY YOU BACK (14:12-14):
 - + Jesus taught the people they ought not throw a banquet for people who could return the favor.
 - + When throwing a banquet, they were to invite the "poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind."
 - + They might not be repayed while on earth, but their kindness would be rewarded in heaven.
- THE PARABLE OF THE PREPARED BANQUET (14:15-24):
 - + A man planned a banquet and invited many guests.
 - + When the banquet was prepared, he called the guests to his home to enjoy the feast.
 - + But each guest had an excuse for why they couldn't come.
 - + The host was very angry and told his servant to invite the guests from the streets, lanes, and highways.
- COUNTING THE COST OF BEING A DISCIPLE (14:25-33):
 - + Anyone who doesn't "hate" their spouse, parents, children, and siblings cannot be a disciple.
 - + "Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple."
 - + Jesus used the illustration of a man building a tower and a king going to war to emphasize the necessity of counting the cost.
- WORTHLESS SALT (14:34-35):
 - + Salt that doesn't have any taste isn't good for anything.
 - + A disciple who has no influence on the world they live in is comparable to tasteless salt.

BIG PICTURE:

- This chapter has several themes that will be repeated and discussed throughout the Bible.
- Jesus taught compassion (14:1-6), humility (14:7-11), about the rejection of the gospel by the Jewish people (14:12-24), the challenges facing disciples (14:25), and the importance of the Christian influence (14:34-35).

TAKEAWAYS:

- If it came down to it, would you be willing to cut off ties with your family to follow Jesus?
- If you don't have to face that decision, thank God you don't.
- If you are in a position where you have to choose family vs. Christ, pray for strength to choose correctly.
- Take a moment and say a prayer for people around the world who have to choose between family and Jesus.

LUKE 14

Luk 14:1 One Sabbath, when he went to dine at the house of a ruler of the Pharisees, they were watching him carefully.

- It is interesting to me that the Pharisees repeatedly invited Jesus into their homes for nefarious reasons and Jesus repeatedly accepted.
- We saw this happen in chapter 11.
- I'm not sure who the Pharisees thought they were fooling with their phony friendship, but it wasn't Jesus.
- This particular day was a Sabbath day.

Luk 14:2 And behold, there was a man before him who had dropsy.

Luk 14:3 And Jesus responded to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not?"

Luk 14:4 But they remained silent. Then he took him and healed him and sent him away.

Luk 14:5 And he said to them, "Which of you, having a son or an ox that has fallen into a well on a Sabbath day, will not immediately pull him out?"

Luk 14:6 And they could not reply to these things.

- Dropsy – An old name for edema.
- Edema – The buildup of fluid in the body tissue.
 - o A person with edema retains a lot of water which causes swelling.
 - o It is typically most noticeable in the legs and arms.
 - o Per my nurse practitioner wife, who works in nephrology, edema is commonly a result of kidney failure or heart failure.
- Dropsy would have been the observable symptom of a deeper problem.
- Jesus healed the man and dismissed him, knowing the Pharisees would take issue with His actions.
- Jesus challenged the Pharisees with a similar question to the one He posed in Luke 6:9.
 - o If you remember, a man with a withered hand needed healing on Sabbath.
 - o Jesus asked, "is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to destroy it?" (Luke 6:9).

- “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not?”
 - Accusing Jesus of breaking the Sabbath for miraculously healing someone seems like a stretch.
 - But the Jewish authorities didn’t have much to work with.
 - Jesus knew their hearts and challenged them before they even spoke their mind.
 - None of them dared answer, so Jesus proceeded to explain why none of the them had the right to accuse Him.
- “Which of you, having a son or an ox that has fallen into a well on a Sabbath day, will not immediately pull him out?”
 - The lawyers and Pharisees wouldn’t hesitate to help their child or even their animal if it was distressed on a Sabbath day.
 - They considered those circumstances to be an exception to the Sabbath law.
 - By their own practice of the Law, they were in no position to accuse Jesus for helping a distressed man on Sabbath.
- The lawyers and Pharisees couldn’t argue with Jesus’ point.
- They should have been thankful Jesus shut them down before they had an opportunity to open their mouths and look even stupider.

- APPLICATION:

- Before accusing someone or judging someone, we need to take an introspective look at our own lives.
 - It is really easy to find faults in other people but harder to recognize them in ourselves.
 - Do the introspection before your hypocrisy is publicly revealed and you are left like the Pharisees, without an answer.
-

Luk 14:7 Now he told a parable to those who were invited, when he noticed how they chose the places of honor, saying to them,

Luk 14:8 “When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in a place of honor, lest someone more distinguished than you be invited by him,

Luk 14:9 and he who invited you both will come and say to you, ‘Give your place to this person,’ and then you will begin with shame to take the lowest place.

Luk 14:10 But when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher.' Then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at table with you.

Luk 14:11 For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

- Observing the guests as they filed in for the meal at the Pharisees' house, Jesus notice how they took the best seat possible upon arrival.
 - o At modern meals, at least in the USA, seating position isn't usually anything of significance.
 - o But in Jesus' culture, where a person sat often indicated their status.
 - o The most honored members at the party were given the best seats.
- The guests at this meal honored themselves by determining themselves worthy of the best seats available.
- Jesus taught them not to do this, not only to save face in this world, but to save their souls in the next.
 - o The physical lesson:
 - Imagine going to a wedding and taking the best seat you could find only to be asked to vacate the seat when a more honored guest arrived.
 - That would be pretty embarrassing.
 - Instead, you ought to select the seat of least honor.
 - When the host of the party sees your humility, he will honor you by asking you to move to a better seat.
 - o The spiritual lesson:
 - The physical lesson is useful in everyday life, but Jesus' main intention wasn't to teach wedding etiquette.
 - He recognized a pride problem with the people around the table.
 - God doesn't think highly of men who think too much of themselves (Proverbs 6:16-17).
 - A man who exalts himself is a man who is attempting to steal honor that belongs to God.
 - Those who exalt themselves on earth will be humbled by God.

- But those who humble themselves on earth, who realize they are lost without God, who realize they are saved only by God’s grace, God will honor in heaven.

Luk 14:12 He said also to the man who had invited him, “When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid.

Luk 14:13 But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind,

Luk 14:14 and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just.”

- Jesus wasn’t done teaching.
- He turned to the host of this get-together and told Him the next time he hosted a meal he should do it differently.
 - Instead of inviting his friends, rich people, and relatives, he should invite the “poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind...”
 - Instead of inviting people who could pay him back for his hospitality, he should have invited people who couldn’t.
- People often host events to curry favor with others.
 - Cocktail parties and invite only dinners are used to bring important people together for the purpose of networking.
 - The meal may cost the host a great sum of money but in return they win the favor of influential people.
 - The host knows the friendship of those influential people will give them a return on their investment.
- This Pharisee was supposed to be the model of a godly man.
- Jesus told him a truly godly man would invite those who promised no future return.
 - A godly man would use his blessings to feed people in need.
 - Jesus was the ultimate example of the godly man.
 - He sacrificed Himself for people who couldn’t offer Him anything He didn’t already have.

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- APPLICATION:
 - How do we apply this principle?

- It's easy for us to get caught up in ourselves.
 - We have goals, ambitions, and dreams.
 - We have a tendency to only make decisions that are advantageous to us, things that further our goals.
 - Here, Jesus teaches us that godliness is found outside of ourselves.
 - We are like Jesus when we sacrifice for the good of others.
-

- Jesus assured His host, although there was no physical reward for meeting the needs of the sick and poor, those actions would not go unrewarded by God.
 - Caring for the world's downcast is not a lucrative business, physically speaking.
 - But God didn't put us here to store up treasures on the earth.
 - Mat 6:19 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven..."
-

- APPLICATION:

- Notice what Jesus did upon arriving for this meal.
 - He corrected the actions of the guests.
 - He corrected the actions of the host.
 - That was about the least tactful thing He could have done.
 - Imagine how you would be perceived if you were invited to a meal and as soon as dinner was served, you started telling your tablemates all the things wrong with them.
 - While there is a place for tact when dealing with unbelievers, some Christians seem to worship at the idle of tact.
 - They might say, "Jesus would never want us to be untactful."
 - Or, "We should avoid being untactful because it will turn people off to the gospel."
 - Again, while there is a place for tact, there is also a place for the bold proclamation of truths pertaining to life and death.
-

Luk 14:15 When one of those who reclined at table with him heard these things, he said to him, “Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!”

Luk 14:16 But he said to him, “A man once gave a great banquet and invited many.

Luk 14:17 And at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, ‘Come, for everything is now ready.’

Luk 14:18 But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it. Please have me excused.’

Luk 14:19 And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them. Please have me excused.’

Luk 14:20 And another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’

- The man in verse 15 probably held the common misconception that the Kingdom of God would be some kind of earthly kingdom.
- He looked forward to the happiness and prosperity of the kingdom he imagined.
 - o He may have said this thinking there would be no need to feed the poor when God’s Kingdom arrived.
 - o No one would need to invite the poor to dinner when the prosperity of the Kingdom poured into Israel.
- In response, Jesus told another parable.
 - o A man planned a great banquet and sent out a bunch of invitations.
 - o When the time for the banquet arrived, the man sent his servant to summon all the invitees.
 - o “Come, for everything is now ready.”
 - o This practice was probably pretty normal for that time period.
 - Invitations were sent out early.
 - A servant was later sent to call those who had accepted the invitation.
 - Keep in mind, there were no cell phones, email, or even fax machines.
 - o But all the invitees made excuses for why they couldn’t come:
 - “I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it. Please have me excused.”
 - “I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them. Please have me excused.”
 - “I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.”

- These three men had accepted the initial invitation, but when the time came, they asked to be excused.

Luk 14:21 So the servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house became angry and said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and crippled and blind and lame.’

Luk 14:22 And the servant said, ‘Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.’

Luk 14:23 And the master said to the servant, ‘Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled.’

Luk 14:24 For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.’”

- When the host heard everyone was skipping out on his feast, he was angry.
 - Rightfully so!
 - He had spent time preparing a meal only to have his hospitality snubbed.
- The man instructed his servant to go into the streets and bring the poor, crippled, blind, and lame to his table.
- Certainly, they would appreciate the hospitality.
- He then sent the servant to go to the “highways and hedges” and invite anyone he could find to fill the banquet table.
- Jesus concluded the parable with a warning, “For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.”
- What did Jesus intend to communicate with this parable?
 - This parable was taught in response to the man in verse 15 who said, “Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God.”
 - We don’t know specifics as to the man’s identity.
 - But it seems likely he was another Pharisee or a religious leader of some kind (based on Jesus’ comments in verse 12).
 - This man expressed joy for all of those who were to be part of the Kingdom of God, no doubt including himself in that number.
 - Jesus’ response was essentially, “Don’t be so sure you will eat bread in the Kingdom of God.”
 - “Don’t be so sure you’ll be in the number of the blessed, because although many have been invited, few will come.”

- “Many will reject the invitation when the time comes.”
- Who do the invitees and the poor, crippled, blind, and lame represent?
- 2 possible interpretations, one specific and one more general.
 - Specific:
 - The Invitees:
 - The invitees represented those who were invited to the Kingdom of God.
 - How were they invited?
 - Through the Old Testament Law and prophets.
 - The Old Testament Law, which was given to the people by Moses and the prophets who followed Moses, spoke of a coming Kingdom of God.
 - This information was specifically revealed to the Jews.
 - Those who were thought to know the Old Testament scriptures the best were the Jewish religious leaders (Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes, lawyers, etc).
 - They were the invitees.
 - They knew the Kingdom was coming.
 - God told them ahead of time through His prophets (invitation).
 - All they needed to do was wait for God’s servant to arrive and tell them the feast was ready.
 - But that servant had come (remember John the Baptist) and the religious leaders had rejected his invitation (Matthew 3 and Luke 3).
 - Jesus offered them the same invitation, but they continued to refused.
 - The opportunity to “eat bread in the Kingdom of Heaven” was available and they were snubbing it.
 - The poor, crippled, blind, and lame in the streets and lanes (verse 21).
 - These less-fortunate ones represented the common Jewish people, perhaps the lowest class of Jewish society (publicans, sinners, handicapped, etc.).

- These were the ones oppressed by the religious leaders, oppressed not only monetarily but also spiritually (Matthew 23:4).
- Throughout the gospels, we see that Jesus was more readily accepted by common Jews, especially the poor and those who were physically sick.
- It was these less-fortunate ones who would accept the invitation to be a part of the Kingdom of God.
- They would come to the banquet.
- This truth was already playing out and would continue to play out as Jesus' ministry continued.
- The people from the highways and hedges (verse 22).
 - This second group is meant to represent the Gentiles (non-Jews).
 - Jesus introduced the Kingdom of God to the Jews, but it was God's intention to eventually invite all nations to be a part of His Kingdom (see Acts 10 and beyond).
 - The New Testament writings go on to tell us how the majority of the Jews rejected Jesus and His preaching, but many of the Gentiles accepted it.
 - The Gentiles were not among the original invitees, but when the opportunity was offered to them, they would come and "eat bread in the Kingdom of God."
- General Interpretation:
 - The general interpretation is not significantly different than the first.
 - Rather than viewing the invitees as the Jewish religious leaders specifically, this view interprets the entire Jewish nation as the invitees.
 - The Jews were invited by the Law and the prophets but the vast majority of them rejected their Messiah and their chance to be a part of the Kingdom.
 - Paul makes mention of this in Romans 9-11, where speaking generally, he said the whole of the Jewish nation had rejected God.
 - They received an invitation but refused it.

- In the general interpretation, the poor, crippled, blind, lame, the people from the streets, lanes, highways, and hedges all represent the Gentiles (verses 21-22).
 - They were not initially invited, but when they were afforded the opportunity, they came.
- This parable reveals that Jesus' rejection by the Jews, including His murder, was not a surprise to God.
- This fact is revealed throughout the gospels and we know God designed His plan having foreknowledge of how the Jews would respond to Jesus.
- If you are reading the Bible for the first time, you may find it odd that Jesus was killed.
 - Did God fail?
 - Did evil people mess up God's plan?
 - No!
 - The more familiar you become with the Bible, both the Old and New Testament, you'll realize the events of Jesus' life went exactly as God planned.
 - Jesus' death was foreshadowed in the Old Testament.
 - Jesus' death was necessary to show that God was just and to justify all human beings who had sinned (Romans 3:26).
 - Jesus' death and resurrection was a picture of the transformation Christians experience (Romans 6:5).
 - It was not a mistake.
 - It was the climactic point of a tapestry of events woven by God through all of human history.

Luk 14:25 Now great crowds accompanied him, and he turned and said to them,

Luk 14:26 "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.

Luk 14:27 Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.

- Here we see another rather "tactless" (by the world's standards) statement from Jesus.
 - Crowds of people were following Him.

- He turned around and said, “If you don’t hate your parents, wife, and children, you aren’t worthy of being my follower!
- Ouch!
- Was Jesus trying to run people off?
- You would think He would lead into that discussion a bit more gently.
- But sometimes Jesus just said what needed to be said.
- In what sense, were people to “hate” their family?
 - 1Jn 4:20 If anyone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen.
 - How do we reconcile God’s instructions not to hate others while applying Jesus’ words that we must hate?
 - How do we interpret the “hate”?
 - It should be understood in the way Matthew records Jesus’ words.
 - Mat 10:37 Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.
 - The devotion of a disciple to Jesus must be so deep, that if required to make the choice between Jesus and family, the disciple would choose Jesus so quickly it would look to the world as if they hated their family.
 - Jesus must be loved supremely.

- APPLICATION:

- Jesus didn’t teach that it was ok to be a half-hearted Christian.
- He was looking for devotees.
- We shouldn’t present the Christian life as a small commitment.
- Or as an addition to the life a person is already living.
- Christianity is a radical realignment of a person’s affections.

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- Jesus was making His followers aware of the potential hardships associated with being His disciples.
 - The gospel message has divided thousands of families since it was first preached in Galilee.
 - Many people have had to make the decision to save their souls at the

- expense of their family.
 - If those following Jesus were not prepared to make this sacrifice, they were not worthy of Jesus.
- It is important to point out that loving your family is not wrong, however, placing your family as a higher priority than Jesus is definitely wrong.
 - Not all of our choices in life are black and white.
 - Choices are not always a decision between what is right and what is wrong.
 - Some of them are a decision between what is good and what is better.
 - It is good to love your family.
 - But if the love of family and the love of Christ conflict, the love of Christ is better.
- Surrendering your family to follow Christ may be one of the hardest sacrifices anyone can make.
 - Being around family is a very high priority for most people.
 - Some people live in the same location their whole lives, not because they love it, but because moving would require living away from family.
 - People turn down career promotions to stay around family.
 - People choose universities to attend based on their proximity to family members.
 - Family affects people's lives in big ways.
 - When I moved away from home to pursue mission work with my wife, it wasn't the fear of a new location that made me hesitant, it wasn't the danger of not having the best health care in the world, and it wasn't the fear of change.
 - The thing that tempted me most to stay was family. I didn't want to leave my family (both immediate family and church family).
 - It would mean missing the birth of my first nephew.
 - Missing out on family traditions and holidays.
 - Not being able to see people I loved.
 - Luckily for me, I have video chat and Facebook Messenger and my family is supportive of me.
 - But for many, following Christ means being cut off from family

completely.

- Rejection.
- No updates.
- No pictures.
- No holidays.
- You can see why someone would want to go back.
- To leave off following Christ to restore their family harmony.
- You can see how someone could be tempted to dial back their devotion.
 - Be a bit less committed.
 - Be a bit less convicted.
- But Jesus' words are unmistakably clear.
- A person who does that is not a disciple.
- This was a very bold statement.
- Imagine if someone you hardly knew told you you needed to love them more than your own family in order to go to heaven.
- A statement like that would turn a lot of people off immediately.
- Jesus was, and still is, looking for people who are ready to give serious commitment.

○ APPLICATION:

- It is very common for people to water down the commitment required in the Christian life when trying to “get someone saved.”
- It doesn't do a person any good to begin walking with Jesus as a disciple only to quickly quit when they learn what it is really going to cost them.
- We need to be up front with people (as Jesus was).
- If we were, our churches would probably be stronger.
- They would be filled with people who are ready to give 100% of themselves to Jesus, instead of Sunday-morning-only-Christians who are only interested in giving 10%.

▪ APPLICATION:

- Do you love Jesus more than anything?

- This is a serious question we all need to consider.
 - Based on Jesus' words in Luke 14 and Matthew 10, how many professing "Christians" do you think Jesus will look at on the Judgement Day and say, "You are not worthy of me because you loved your family more than me"?
 - Am I one of those people?
-

Luk 14:27 Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.

- Jesus was going to sacrifice Himself on the cross for all men, but each individual disciple would be required to make sacrifices for the sake of the Kingdom of God.
 - Jesus was going to give up His life to complete God's plan.
 - Each disciple was asked to give up their life to become a servant of God.
 - Rom 12:1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies as a living sacrifice**, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.
 - 1Co 6:19-20 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were **bought with a price**. So glorify God in your body.
 - Christians belong to God and must use their lives to serve Him.
 - That service is not always easy.
 - The struggles Christians encounter in God's service are here figuratively referred to as a "cross."
 - A Christian must be willing to endure the hardships of being a servant.
 - 2Ti 3:12 Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

- It's easy for us to look at this statement and to understand exactly what Jesus is saying because we are on the far side of the cross, but imagine how shocking these words would have been to the Apostles, who had yet to fully understand the sacrifices Jesus was going to make.
 - They thought they were establishing a Kingdom.
 - They had no idea how a cross factored into that plan.

Luk 14:28 For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?

Luk 14:29 Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him,

Luk 14:30 saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.'

Luk 14:31 Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand?

Luk 14:32 And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace.

- Jesus wanted the people following Him to consider the cost of what they were doing.
- The road to the Kingdom of God was not going to be as easy as many of them assumed.
- Jesus reiterated the importance of them counting the cost by giving two illustrations.
 - o Building a Tower:
 - Jesus asked them which one of them would set to work building a tower without calculating the build cost.
 - We don't know what kind of tower this refers to, perhaps a watchtower in a vineyard (Mat 21:33), but the specifics of the structure aren't essential to understand the principle.
 - A person with a brain doesn't start a building project without making sure they have enough cash/resources to finish the project.
 - What good is a half-built house? Or half of a boat?
 - A person who fails to count the cost of building a tower may get the foundation laid, only to realize they don't have enough money to complete construction.
 - People will walk by and mock the half-finished project.
 - They will think the builder foolish for not counting the cost.
 - Most men have enough common sense to count the cost when it comes to construction, but what about spiritual commitments?
 - Many men, who would never fail to count the cost of building a new house, will begin a spiritual journey without considering the sacrifices they will have to make.

- APPLICATION:

- How can someone accurately count the cost if they are unaware of the complete picture of what it means to be a disciple?
 - As teachers, we need to be up-front with people about the cost of being a Christian.
 - It does no good to sugar-coat the gospel message.
-

- A King Going to War:

- The second illustration is one of a king preparing for battle.
- Before charging headlong into battle, a reasonable king will assess the strength of his army, the strength of the enemy's army, and calculate his chances of winning.
- If the king realizes he has no chance of winning against the enemy force, instead of fighting a battle he cannot win, he will send a representative to the enemy king and ask to negotiate peace.
- If the king had skipped the initial evaluation of military strength, he would have started a fight he couldn't win, and the outcome would have been devastating.
- Again, Jesus was reinforcing the principle that His followers needed to evaluate what they were getting themselves into before they committed to the journey.

Luk 14:33 So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.

- Jesus' two illustrations led up to this conclusion.
- A person must be willing to renounce their loyalty to anything or anyone other than Christ.
- A person's service to God might cost them a relationship, a possession, their health, or even their life.
- Loss of any of those things is a possibility.
- This is the cost that must be counted.
- Before anyone becomes a disciple, they need to ask themselves if they are ready to give

up anything and everything to see their commitment through to the end.

Luk 14:34 “Salt is good, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored?”

Luk 14:35 It is of no use either for the soil or for the manure pile. It is thrown away. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

- As the chapter concludes, another illustration is recorded.
- Jesus compared His disciples to salt.
- “Salt is good...”
 - o Yes, salt is good for a lot of things.
 - o Taste.
 - o Preserving food.
 - o The body needs it for health.
- We put salt on our food because it has a very distinct taste many of us like (especially me).
- Salt is meant to influence our taste buds.
- I believe, Jesus was telling His followers they needed to have an influencing effect on the world.
 - o They were to shine the light of the gospel into dark places and impact people trapped in sin.
 - o In Matthew 5, Jesus coupled His illustration about salt with one about light and how light is designed to shine through the darkness.
 - o Mat 5:14-15 “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house.
- But what if all the salt in my saltshaker loses its taste?
 - o The salt crystals would be nothing more than little grains of tasteless nothingness.
 - o It wouldn't be valuable for anything.
 - o In the same way, a person who claims to be a follower of Christ, but isn't affecting the world in any meaningful way, who isn't shining the light, isn't fulfilling their responsibility.
 - o They aren't good for anything, just like tasteless salt.

- Jesus concluded with a statement He used elsewhere in the gospels, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”
 - This was a call for people to consider His words.
 - Jesus didn’t explain His illustration about the salt because, evidently, He wanted people to devote themselves to finding the spiritual meaning.
 - Those who were truly curious would apply themselves and those who weren’t wouldn’t.

LUKE 15

In 5 minutes...

WHEN:

- The events of chapter 15 were part of Jesus' ministry on earth.
- These events took place approximately 30-33 A.D..

CHARACTERS:

- Jesus - The Messiah and Son of God.
- A Shepherd with a Lost Sheep
- A Woman with a Lost Coin
- The Prodigal Son - A young man who left home and nearly ruined his life.

WHERE:

- Luke does not share the exact location of these events.
- Luke 13:22 reads, "He [Jesus] went on his way through towns and villages, teaching and journeying toward Jerusalem."

LUKE 15



OVERVIEW:

- THE PARABLE OF THE LOST SHEEP (15:1-7):
 - + Jesus told this parable in response to the Pharisees grumbling about Him spending time with sinners.
 - + A shepherd had 100 sheep, but one got lost.
 - + The shepherd left the 99 to search for the 1.
 - + When he found it, him and his friends rejoiced.
 - + Jesus compared their rejoicing to the rejoicing that goes on in heaven when a sinner repents.
- THE PARABLE OF THE LOST COIN (15:8-10):
 - + Jesus asked, if a woman has 10 coins but loses one, "does she not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently until she finds it?"
 - + Upon finding the lost coin, her and her friends will rejoice.
 - + "Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents."
- THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON (15:11-32):
 - + A man had two sons. One day, his youngest son approached him and asked to be given his inheritance.
 - + The father gave his son his portion of the inheritance. A few days later, his son left home.
 - + The younger son wasted all of his money on sinful living and quickly found himself broke and in despair.
 - + He resolved to return to his father's house and ask his father to take him back as a hired servant.
 - + When he arrived home, his father ran to him, hugged him, honored him, and forgave him.
 - + But the father's oldest son was angry that his father was so quick to forgive the brother who had shamed the family.
 - + His father told him it was fitting to celebrate the return of his younger brother because he "was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found."

BIG PICTURE:

- The Bible tells us all men have sinned and wandered away from God (Romans 3:23).
- At some point, we are all lost sheep, lost coins, and prodigal children.
- Jesus wants you to return home to the safety and blessing of God's care.

TAKEAWAYS:

- How do you view people who are caught up in sin?
- Do you look down on them?
- Do you feel morally superior to them?
- Do you want nothing to do with them?
- Jesus intentionally spent time with sinners (Luke 15:2). He wanted to show them a better way to live, because He loved them.
- Are we like Jesus or are we like the Pharisees and scribes who weren't interested in extending help to sinners?

LUKE 15

This chapter contains several parables taught by Jesus.

QUICK BREAKDOWN:

1. Verses 1-7 – Parable of the Lost Sheep
2. Verses 8-10 – Parable of the Lost Coin
3. Verses 11-32 – Parable of the Prodigal Son

Luk 15:1 Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him.

Luk 15:2 And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, “This man receives sinners and eats with them.”

Luk 15:3 So he told them this parable:

- The parables of chapter 15 were taught in response to the Pharisee’s and scribe’s attitudes.
- They didn’t like the idea of the Messiah associating with people they viewed as really bad sinners.
- These religious leaders had a lot of misconceptions about who God was, who Jesus was, and who the Messiah figure was supposed to be.
- These parables exposed their incorrect thinking and they teach us about the nature of God and Jesus’ work.

Luk 15:4 “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it?

Luk 15:5 And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

Luk 15:6 And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’

Luk 15:7 Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

- No creature strays more easily than a sheep; none is more heedless; and none so incapable of finding its way back to the flock, when once gone astray: it will bleat for the flock, and still run on in an opposite direction to the place where the flock is: this I have often noticed (Adam Clarke).

- Jesus asked the Pharisees and scribes, “If a shepherd had 100 sheep, but one got lost, wouldn’t that shepherd leave the 99 safe sheep to search for the lost one?”
 - I don’t know a lot about shepherding, but Jesus made this decision sound like it would have been common-sense for any shepherd. As if He was implying, “Of course, the shepherd would go off in search of the lost one.”
 - When the shepherd found the sheep, he would put it over his shoulders and take it back to the flock.
 - This was a common image in the ancient world.



(Greek god Hermes carrying a lamb).

- He would tell all of his friends the good news and they would be happy for him.
- Interpretation:
 - These verses describe God’s love for the lost using a very simple illustration.
 - Jesus was the shepherd.
 - The lost sheep represented those who were spiritually lost in sin, those who wandered away from God.
 - In this context specifically, it represented the “tax collectors and sinners.”
 - The reason Jesus came to earth was to save lost people.
 - Luk 19:10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.

- Jesus didn't have to die to save people who were already righteous.
 - That wouldn't make any sense.
 - So of course, Jesus was going to spend time with sinners.
 - They were the ones He was after.
- The Lesson:
 - The Pharisees and scribes would have never criticized a shepherd for going to look for a lost sheep.
 - Yet, they were constantly criticizing the "Good Shepherd" (Jesus) for spending time with the lost.
 - I think the misconception the Pharisees and scribes had was that the Messiah was going to show up and spend His time patting them on the back and honoring them for what they thought was their self-achieved righteousness.
 - That wasn't His mission at all.
 - Quite the opposite really!

Luk 15:7 Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

- I struggled with this verse when I read it for the first time, and I want to take a moment to help anyone else who may find it difficult.
- Jesus said there is more joy in heaven when a sinner repents than over 99 righteous people who don't need to repent.
- Question: Why does God rejoice more over a sinner who repents than over faithful believers who never leave His fold? Does God love them more?
- Answer: No, God doesn't love the faithful less.
- So, what is the text saying?
 - I believe we can understand the meaning through personal experience.
 - Let's say you are going to buy a gift which costs \$1000 dollars for your friend's birthday today (you're a good friend).
 - Yesterday, you had all the money in your wallet but today \$100 is missing.
 - You're worried because the time of the party is approaching.
 - Upon realizing 1/10th of your money is missing, you tear your house apart searching for it!

- After 20 minutes, you find it under the package of cookies you were eating.
- How do you feel?
 - You're relieved!
 - Your heart is full of momentary joy because you found what was lost.
- What would you have done if you had never found it?
- You don't know, but that stress has now been taken off your shoulders.
- Your worry is lifted, and you rejoice because of it.
- Are the other \$900 in your wallet loved less because you found the missing \$100?
- No! Your joy in them has been steady and consistent.
- Your joy in the missing \$100 is momentarily more potent because of the concern for its safety.
- This text also teaches us about the value God places on the individual.
 - God isn't content just having large numbers of people worshipping Him.
 - He isn't satisfied when the number of His followers reaches a particular level and only concerns Himself when that number falls too low.
 - The Bible tells us God desires all men to be saved.
 - He cares for each human being on an individual level.
 - God isn't just interested in the world collectively; He is interested in you specifically.
 - He knows you.
 - In one sense, Jesus died for the world.
 - In another sense, Jesus died for you.

- APPLICATION:

- The Church needs to be concerned about individuals, not numbers.
- I know it can be easy for large churches to lose track of individuals who leave and fall off the path because they have plenty of people in their pews and they don't feel the impact.
- If we're part of a congregation of 100 people and 1 lady stops showing up, how should we respond?
 - Do we say, "Well we've got 99 others and I'm sure we can pick up one or two more from somewhere else!"

- Or do we say, “We’ve got to go help that lost sheep.”
 - Some congregations grow so large that keeping track of one individual can be difficult.
 - Is that excusable?
 - Would the good shepherd be pleased with a congregation like that?
 - If a congregation is too large to care about its members, it’s too large.
-

Luk 15:8 “Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently until she finds it?”

Luk 15:9 And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.’

Luk 15:10 Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

- This second parable continues on the theme of the first.
 - A woman had 10 silver coins but lost 1.
 - Most countries today use paper money to represent large dollar values (\$10, \$20, \$100, etc) and coins for the really small values (.01 cents, .05 cents, etc).
 - Most of us wouldn’t care too much if we lost a nickel or a dime.
 - But they didn’t have paper money in those days. Coins could represent large dollar values. So, don’t imagine the value of this coin as 5 or 10 cents.
 - It may have been a denarius coin which would have represented the value of a day’s work, 8-10 hours.
 - In modern American money it could have been something like \$50-\$150 dollars.
 - All that to say, it was a significant amount of money.
 - The woman searched diligently for the money until it was found.
 - She then went and told all of her friends she had found what was lost and they rejoiced with her.
 - In verse 10, Jesus compared the joy and relief of finding something lost to the rejoicing that goes on in heaven when the angels learn a lost person has been saved.
-

- APPLICATION:

- There are days when our work for the Lord can seem insignificant.
 - Like nobody cares or pays attention to what we are doing.
 - But evidently the spiritual beings appreciate those who preach the gospel and those whose lives are changed by it.
-

- Interpretation:

- The meaning of this parable is largely the same as the last.
- God wants sinners to turn from their sin and return to Him.
- 1 Timothy 2:4-5 This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.
- Jesus was spending time with sinners because He cared about their souls.
- The Pharisees and scribes didn't care about the lost, they had written them off.
- But Jesus was diligent about recovering what had been lost, like the woman and with the lost coin.

Luk 15:11 And he said, "There was a man who had two sons.

Luk 15:12 And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.' And he divided his property between them.

Luk 15:13 Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living.

- The remainder of the chapter records Jesus' parable about the "prodigal son."
 - This parable is well known and has been the topic of countless sermons and Bible classes over the years.
 - Prodigal means "spending money or resources freely and recklessly; wastefully extravagant" (Oxford).
- In the parable, a father had two sons.
- The younger one, who was rather selfish, asked his father to give him his inheritance.
 - Instead of living with his father and allowing him to manage the money that would one day belong to him, he wanted immediate control.
 - Interestingly, the father granted the request.
- A few days later, the younger son packed up all his stuff, moved to a new town, and began spending all of his inheritance money irresponsibly.

Luk 15:14 And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need.

Luk 15:15 So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs.

Luk 15:16 And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything.

- It wasn't long before the younger son had spent all of his money.
 - o You've probably heard of this happening in real life.
 - o A person comes into some money, only to spend it so thoughtlessly that they are broke in a short period of time.
- Things only got worse from there.
 - o The land was oppressed by a famine (food shortage).
 - o During a famine, food prices would have gone up significantly.
 - o This exacerbated the young man's problems.
- He then did something that would have been very shameful for a Jewish person, he got a job caring for pigs.
 - o The Jewish dietary restrictions classified pigs as "unclean" animals.
 - o A Jew wouldn't have taken a pig feeding job unless they were in dire straits.
- Eventually, he had no money left to buy food and found himself craving what the pigs were eating.
 - o The pigs were eating "pods" which were probably something like plant husks.
 - o The text says, "no man gave him anything."
 - o Friends probably weren't too hard to find when he had money, but now that he had none, no one cared about him.
- This was the life he had created for himself.

Luk 15:17 "But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger!

Luk 15:18 I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you.

Luk 15:19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired

servants.”

- Sometimes we have to hit the bottom to realize the mistakes we've made.
 - o Jesus described the prodigal son's awakening with the words, "he came to himself."
 - o As if he had been out of his mind, or not using his senses properly, or delusional.
 - o When he finally woke up to the world his sin had dumped him in, he remembered his father's house and how even the servants had plenty to eat.
 - o He decided he would humble himself, return to his father's house, and ask to work there as a servant.
 - He wasn't going to ask his father to take him back as a son.
 - He knew he wasn't worthy of that because he had disrespected and shamed his family.

Luk 15:20 And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him.

Luk 15:21 And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

Luk 15:22 But the father said to his servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet.

Luk 15:23 And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate.

Luk 15:24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to celebrate.

- The prodigal son, carrying the weight of all his shame, set off towards home.
- When he was still a good distance from his father's house, his father spotted him.
 - o What was the father's first response upon seeing his son walking towards him on the road?
 - Was it, "I told you so!"
 - Was it, "That no good rotten son of mine has no right to come back here!"
 - Was it, bitterness towards the boy who had shamed the family?
 - o No, it was compassion!
 - Compassion for a man who had had his life torn apart by bad decisions.

- Compassion for a broken man.
- The father, so moved by his compassion, ran out to meet his son, and greeted him with a kiss and an embrace.
- The prodigal began his rehearsed speech about his unworthiness, but the father wouldn't hear it.
 - He told his servants to bring a robe, a ring, and shoes to replace the ragged garments of his son's past life.
 - He didn't just give his son something to eat, he instructed the servants to kill the "fatted calf."
 - The fatted calf was a special animal set aside for special occasions.
 - It may have been raised in a stall, rather than being allowed to graze freely in the field, in order to fatten it up and make the meat taste better.
- The father didn't give his son the bare necessities of survival, he poured out an abundance of grace.

Luk 15:24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to celebrate.

- In what sense was his son dead?
- His son had taken all of his possession, moved away, and cut off all ties with his father's house.
- Physical death can remove a son from a father's life, but this son was figuratively dead in the sense that he chose to remove himself from his father's life.
- His return to his father was as if he was back from the dead.

Luk 15:25 "Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing.

Luk 15:26 And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant.

Luk 15:27 And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.'

Luk 15:28 But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him,

Luk 15:29 but he answered his father, 'Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends.

Luk 15:30 But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!’

- The father’s joy in his son’s return was greater than any sense of resentment left over from his departure.
- But that feeling was not shared by everyone in the house.
- The prodigal son’s older brother wasn’t as pleased to hear about his brothers return.
 - o When he found out the reason for the celebration, he refused to join the festivities.
 - o The father went out and asked him to join, but he wouldn’t.
 - o Instead he complained that his brother was being given attention and not him.
 - o He reminded his father that he had always been faithful to him and hadn’t squandered his inheritance while shaming the family.
- He felt like his father’s affections were misplaced.
- He thought the father ought to be honoring him and shaming his brother.
- Keep this in mind when we interpret the parable.

Luk 15:31 And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours.

Luk 15:32 It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.’”

- The father made it clear to his older son that the celebration was not a statement about loyalty or favoritism.
- It was simply a fitting response to a joyous occasion.
- When the lost are found, it is a moment worth celebrating (just as we saw with the lost sheep and the lost coin).

INTERPRETATION:

- Now that we’ve familiarized ourselves with this parable, let’s try to understand the lesson behind it.
- The context given in the opening 2 verses of the chapter is very important.
 - o “Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. And the Pharisees and scribes grumbled, saying, ‘This man receives sinners and eats with

them.”

- The lesson of the prodigal son and his older brother is similar to the parable of the lost sheep and the lost coin.
- All three of these parables are a response to the Pharisee’s and scribe’s grumbling.
- Verse 11:
 - “There was a man who had two sons.”
 - The father is meant to represent God.
- Verses 12-15:
 - The younger son represents those who have ruined their lives with sin.
 - Specifically, those whose sins are known by all.
 - In this context, the tax collectors and sinners.
 - They pursued a life of sin because they thought they could find a better life somewhere other than the house of God.
 - They rejected His Law and His offers of care and pursued sin.
 - In the end it destroyed their lives.
 - They hit rock-bottom.
 - Like the prodigal feeding the pigs, their sins may have led them to places they never imagined they’d be.
 - Like the prodigal, their pleasure lasted for a while but then they “began to be in need.”
 - Perhaps in financial need.
 - Or maybe they found their soul in need of something the world couldn’t offer them.
 - They had a thirst that couldn’t be satiated no matter how they tried.
 - They realized something was missing.
- Verses 17-19:
 - The prodigal son literally came to his sense in the pig pen.
 - The tax collectors and sinners were coming to their senses in their figurative pig pen of sin.
 - They were humble enough to admit they were sinners, that their lives weren’t what they should have been, and they found hope of restoration in the words of Jesus.
 - Many of them would have known about God (the good Father).

- They would have been taught God’s Law from their childhood.
 - They would have known of God’s care for His people during their times of faithfulness.
 - Upon hearing Jesus preach, they determined to return to God’s house to seek forgiveness.
 - They knew they were unworthy, but Jesus spoke of God’s grace.
- Verses 20-24:
 - The father responded with compassion and celebration upon the return of his prodigal son.
 - The father gave, not just the necessities, but an abundance of grace.
 - What was Jesus teaching the Pharisees and scribes about God’s attitude towards the repentant?
 - God is compassionate.
 - God is generous.
 - God is filled with joy when sinners return to Him.
 - The Pharisees and scribes grumbled when Jesus spent time with sinners, but they wouldn’t have grumbled if they had shared the heart of God.
 - Their complaint at the beginning of the chapter was, “This man receives sinners and eats with them.”
 - Jesus gave them a parable where God threw a feast for a repentant sinner.
 - Their grumbling revealed they didn’t share God’s heart.
 - In verse 24, the father remarked, “For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.”
 - This language is used throughout the New Testament and is very common in modern church vernacular.
 - Those saved by Jesus are said to be “made alive” after having been “dead” in sin.
 - Eph 2:1,4-5 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins... But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved.
 - Those who aren’t saved by Christ are described as “lost.”
 - Luk 19:10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.
 - “Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like

me. I once was lost, but now am found, was blind but now I see.”

- Verses 25-32:

- Who does the older brother represent?
- Now that we've put the other puzzle pieces together, you can probably guess.
- The older brother is meant to represent those who share the attitude of the scribes and Pharisees.
- He wasn't pleased that his brother was seeking reconciliation or that the father was giving him grace.
- Why?
 - Because he thought, if anyone should be honored, it was him.
 - He pointed back to his track record of faithfulness.
 - He thought the father should be paying attention to him and honoring him because his past was a lot better than his brothers.
- As we discussed previously, the Jewish religious leaders seemed to believe the Messiah figure was going to show up and honor them for their righteousness.
 - They really thought they were something special.
 - They were self-righteous.
 - And they thought they deserved a reward.
 - So, when they saw Jesus associating Himself with the people they considered the rabble of the town, rather than aligning their hearts with God's, they complained and refused to celebrate the repentance of sinners.
- In the parable, the father spoke to his older son and told him that the celebration surrounding his younger son's return didn't mean he didn't appreciate his older son's faithfulness.
 - God's rejoicing over sinners who repent in no way demeans the faithful.
 - And the faithful shouldn't take it that way, in fact, they should rejoice with Him!
 - They ought to share God's heart and compassion for the lost.
 - Question:
 - So, was Jesus telling the Pharisees and scribes they had been faithful?
 - That the father (God) was pleased with them?
 - Answer:

- I believe the answer is “no”!
- In the gospels, Jesus made it very clear that God wasn’t pleased with the Pharisees and scribes.
- But... the Pharisees and scribes believed they were faithful.
- In using this illustration, Jesus showed them that even if they had been faithful to God, they would still be wrong in grumbling about the salvation of sinners.
- Even if what the Pharisees and scribes believed about their own righteousness was true, they were still wrong for not celebrating the restoration of the lost.
- They should have been happy that the dead were coming to life and the lost were being found.

WHAT DO WE LEARN:

- Although, in context, this is a parable about the Pharisees, scribes, tax collectors, and sinners of the 1st Century, there are still important takeaways for us in the 21st Century.
- There are some really important lessons here about the nature of man and the nature of God.
 - 1. God permits us to live by our own wisdom.
 - When the younger son went to his father and asked for his inheritance, the father gave it to him.
 - He then permitted him to leave a few days later to seek a life of his own.
 - Like the father, God permits us to live the life we choose, even when He knows it is not best.
 - He does not refuse us exit if we choose to leave.
 - There are many who do leave God’s care.
 - Let this be a lesson to anyone who thinks they are going to find a better life outside of the governance of God.
 - 2. The world guarantees nothing, God guarantees us what we need.
 - As soon as the prodigal son’s money ran out, “he began to be in need” and “no one gave him anything.”
 - The world is harsh, but God is good.
 - God promises to care for us. The devil will destroy you.

- 3. When you no longer have what the world wants, you are no longer valued by the world. God doesn't want for anything yet ascribes great value to you.
 - When the prodigal ran out of money, the world left him to starve.
 - When the prodigal ran out of money, his father clothed him in riches.
- 4. Sin will lead you places you never imagined you'd go.
 - Some sins may start out as "harmless" pleasures.
 - But Satan is subtle and can lead you down into the pig pen of life before you realize what is happening.
- 5. Sometimes you have to hit the bottom before you realize you need God.
 - Although the saying is cliché, it is true, "When you are at the bottom, the only place to look is up."
 - Sometimes God allows us to hit the bottom as an act of grace.
 - If hitting the bottom is the only thing that will shake us out of our sin induced delusion, we will thank God for the grace in the pain of hitting it.
- 6. Going to God for forgiveness and salvation requires humility.
 - The prodigal son had to admit he had failed.
 - Going back to his father's house was an admission that he had tried to govern his own life and he had done a poor job.
 - A lost person has to be able to admit they can't make it to heaven on their own.
 - They have to be humble enough to acknowledge they need Jesus to put them in a right relationship with God.
 - A lost person needs Jesus to show them the way, because they will be forever lost without Him.
 - "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6).
- 7. God loves forgiving sinners.
 - Isn't that a beautiful thought?
 - He runs to them with compassion in His heart.
 - He welcomes their return.
 - This is a really important lesson for those who feel they are too dirty or unforgivable because of their past sins.
 - Here was a man who shamed his family and blew his inheritance on prostitutes.

- God couldn't wait to welcome him home.
- 8. God restores us, not to the level of our worth, but to the high level of His grace.
 - The father forgave his son and gave him gifts, even after the son admitted his unworthiness to his father.
 - Like the prodigal, none of us are worthy of our Father's forgiveness.
 - He not only forgives; He elevates us to privileges we are so far from deserving.
 - He calls us His sons and daughters.
- 9. If we have bitterness in our hearts towards sinners who seek forgiveness, we need to do some serious evaluation.
 - If we share the heart of the older brother, we need to recalibrate and find out how our heart got out of step with God's.
 - It should concern us when we rejoice in our own salvation, but grumble at someone else's.
- 10. God cares about the lost and we should too.
 - This statement summarizes the chapter.
 - Jesus came to the earth because God loves sinners and wants them to be reconciled to Him.
 - Those who have been reconciled to Him through Jesus (Christians) should want that for others.

LUKE 16

In 5 minutes...

WHEN:

- The events of chapter 16 were part of Jesus' ministry on earth.
- These events took place approximately 30-33 A.D..

CHARACTERS:

- Jesus - The Messiah and Son of God.
- Dishonest Manager - A property manager who managed his master's money poorly.
- Rich Man - A wealthy man who died and went to "Hades" (a place reserved for the wicked).
- Lazarus - A poor man who died and was taken by the angels to "Abraham's side" (a place reserved for the righteous).

WHERE:

- Luke does not share the exact location of these events.
- Luke 13:22 reads, "He [Jesus] went on his way through towns and villages, teaching and journeying toward Jerusalem."

LUKE 16



OVERVIEW:

- THE PARABLE OF THE DISHONEST MANAGER (16:1-13):
 - + A rich man was planning to fire his manager because of his incompetence.
 - + Before being fired, the manager called all of the rich man's debtors and cut them deals to gain their favor.
 - + He hoped they would be generous to him when they learned of his firing.
 - + Rather than condemning the manager, the rich man commended him on his cleverness.
 - + Jesus used this parable to teach His disciples about resourcefulness, using God's blessings wisely, and the danger of falling in love with earthly wealth.
- THE PROBLEM WITH THE PHARISEES (16:14-17):
 - + The Pharisees loved earthly wealth and were only concerned with looking good in the eyes of men.
 - + They tried to use the Old Testament Law to make themselves look "godly" but they rejected what the Old Testament pointed towards, the Kingdom of God.
 - + Jesus made it clear the Kingdom of God was coming and could not be stopped.
- TEACHING ON DIVORCE (16:18):
 - + In the 1st Century, there was a debate among the Jews about when divorce was permissible.
 - + Jesus told them, "Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery."
- THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS (16:19-31):
 - + Jesus told the people a story about two men, one rich (rich man) and one poor (Lazarus).
 - + On earth, the rich man lived in luxury while Lazarus layed in poverty outside the gate of his house.
 - + Eventually, both of them died. Lazarus' soul was taken to Paradise while the rich man's went to Hades.
 - + The rich man wanted Lazarus to ease his pain in torment, but Abraham told him he would not.
 - + The rich man then asked for Lazarus to be sent back to earth to warn his 5 brothers about Hades.
 - + Abraham told him they had "Moses and the Prophets" and that was enough.

BIG PICTURE:

- You may have heard about Paradise and Hades before. Surprisingly, the Bible doesn't have much to say about them.
- This is one of the only passages, if not the only passage, that talks about them in any detail.
- They are pictured here as the waiting place of the soul pre-Judgement Day.

TAKEAWAYS:

- Are we as individuals and local congregations resourceful with the money, talents, and resources God gives us?
- How much time do we spend thinking about effective ways to use our gifts?
- Do we spend more time trying to become resourceful in earthly pursuits or spiritual pursuits?

LUKE 16

Luk 16:1 He also said to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was wasting his possessions.

Luk 16:2 And he called him and said to him, ‘What is this that I hear about you? Turn in the account of your management, for you can no longer be manager.’

Luk 16:3 And the manager said to himself, ‘What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg.

Luk 16:4 I have decided what to do, so that when I am removed from management, people may receive me into their houses.’

Luk 16:5 So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he said to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’

Luk 16:6 He said, ‘A hundred measures of oil.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.’

Luk 16:7 Then he said to another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ He said, ‘A hundred measures of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty.’

- Perhaps no other parable of Jesus’ has caused as much head-scratching as the one found in Luke 16:1-8.
- It can be difficult to understand the lesson Jesus was teaching.
- It can even appear as if Jesus was supporting dishonest behavior.
- But before we discuss all of that, let’s go over the parable and familiarize ourselves with the details.
- The parable:
 - o Notice first to whom the parable was spoken.
 - Jesus was talking to His disciples.
 - The parables in chapter 15 were directed towards the Pharisees and scribes (15:2-3).
 - o The parable introduced a rich man who had a “manager.”
 - The manager was a person who was trusted to manage the money, property, and investments of the rich man.
 - In the Old Testament, Joseph held a role similar to this in Potiphar’s house (Genesis 39:4).
 - o Unlike Joseph, this manager wasn’t very good at his job.

- He was accused of wasting his master's money.
- Upon hearing about the mismanagement and seeing that his manager could give no reasonable explanation for the waste, the rich man told his manager to make the necessary preparations to relinquish control of the accounts.
- He was going to be fired just as soon as he could return all of the things he had been managing.
- Understandably, the loss of his job concerned the man.
 - What would he do?
 - He wasn't cut out for physical labor.
 - He was too ashamed to beg for money on the street.
- After considering his options, he came to a conclusion.
 - He decided to go to his master's debtors and cut them some deals.
 - He went to the people who owed the rich man money and settled their debts for less than what they owed.
 - One man owed 100 measures of oil... the manager settled it for 50 measures.
 - Another man owed 100 measures of wheat... the manager settled it for 80 measures.
 - Why?
 - Because he would make friends by cutting people deals.
 - Writing off a portion of people's debt would put him in the good graces of those people.
 - Then, when they heard he had lost his job, they would be inclined to help him in some way.
 - He was essentially buying friends with his master's money.
 - Was that an honest thing to do?
 - Of course not.
 - But he had already been told he was going to be fired.
 - By the time the rich man heard his debtors had settled their debts at bargain rates, it would be too late.

- And if he was an honorable man, he probably wouldn't go back to the debtors and demand full payment because the manager was still "technically" working under his name when the deals were struck.

Luk 16:8 The master commended the dishonest manager for his shrewdness. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light.

- Shrewd – “having or based on a clear understanding and good judgment of a situation, resulting in an advantage” (Cambridge).
- You might think the master would be furious at his manager for cutting unauthorized deals for personal gain, but Jesus illustrated the master appreciating his sly resourcefulness.
 - The manager knew he didn't have much time to secure his future.
 - He showed great ingenuity in using the small amount of time he had left to ensure he would be okay after being fired.
- The manager certainly wasn't virtuous, but he was resourceful.
 - Keep this thought in mind as we work through our interpretation of the next few verses.
 - The man's resourcefulness was being highlighted, not his virtue.
- “For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light.”
 - We need to figure out who Jesus was referring to when He referred to the “sons of this world” and the “sons of light.”
 - Jesus contrasted the two groups.
 - “Sons of light” is used in one other place in the gospels, John 12:36.
 - Joh 12:36 While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.” When Jesus had said these things, he departed and hid himself from them.
 - In John, the sons of light are those who believed the gospel.
 - Those who lived for spiritual riches.
 - Those who laid up their treasures in heaven.
 - I believe Jesus was referring to the same group of people in Luke 16.
 - The “sons of this world” appear to be those who lived for the riches of the world rather than the spiritual riches.

- Their minds were fixed on material things.
- Their time and their energy were spent accomplishing earthly pursuits.
- So, what did Jesus mean when He said “...the sons of this world are shrewder with their dealings than the sons of light”?
- It appears to be a bit of a rebuke against those who claimed to love spiritual things.
- People who are in love with what this world offers (money, fame, influence, etc) are tenacious about seizing the opportunities.
 - Their eyes are peeled for any advantageous moment that might get them closer to their goals.
 - They are shrewd and resourceful in everything they do.
 - These people have an image of what they want their future to look like and they go after it.
- But Jesus seemed to suggest the followers of God weren’t as shrewd and resourceful when it came to securing their futures and accomplishing their goals.
- They could take a lesson from the tenacity of the people chasing physical things.
- “... those who “are” worldly show much prudence in providing for themselves; seize occasions for making good bargains; are active and industrious; try to turn everything to the best account, and thus exert themselves to the utmost to advance their interests; while Christians often suffer opportunities of doing good to pass unimproved... Alas! this is too true; and we cannot but reflect here how different the world would be if all Christians were as anxious, and diligent, and prudent in religious matters as others are in worldly things. (Albert Barnes).

-
- APPLICATION:
 - Jesus’ point was truer than most congregations and Christians want to admit.
 - It isn’t particularly hard to find a group of highly motivated business professionals.
 - It is somewhat hard to find a group of highly motivated Christians.
 - I can find you a lot of people who devote long days to business strategy meetings.

- I would have a hard time finding you an equal number of equally devoted disciples.
 - The corporate world is innovative and inventive.
 - Many churches are stale and give little thought to new methods.
 - That doesn't make sense if the stakes are as high as we preach they are.
 - Ask yourself, "How can I apply myself more tenaciously to the Lord's work?"
 - Keep in mind, the answer will look different for every person.
-

Luk 16:9 And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal dwellings.

Luk 16:10 "One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much.

Luk 16:11 If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches?

Luk 16:12 And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?

- This isn't the easiest verse to interpret, but it isn't impossible.
- It almost sounds as if Jesus was telling His listeners to mimic the wasteful manager and use dirty money to make friends.
- A lot of the confusion is due to the term "unrighteous wealth."
 - "Unrighteous wealth" sounds like wealth acquired through sinful means.
 - Or wealth used to buy sinful things.
- But based on what we know about Jesus, that doesn't sound like something He would recommend.
- Jesus was trying to steer people away from unrighteousness, not get them involved in it.
- So how are we to understand "unrighteous wealth"?
 - I believe we are meant to understand it in contrast to the "true riches" mentioned in verse 11.
 - "Unrighteous wealth" describes earthly money. The kind of wealth that is misused by many and offers no lasting satisfaction.

- Perhaps it is called “unrighteous” because loving it is a root of all kinds of evil (1 Timothy 6:10).
- Jesus was instructing His disciples to use their money, not for unrighteousness, not to secure their earthly future, but to invest in their eternal future.
- To make friends who will receive them into “eternal dwellings.”
 - Shrewd investors put their money into stocks, options, bonds, mutual funds, and start-up companies because they believe those investments will give them a positive return some day.
 - A disciple should be using his/her money to invest in people, supporting other disciples and reaching the lost.
 - Why?
 - Because souls are a better investment than earthly possessions.
 - And when your earthly money fails you (i.e. when you die and can’t take it with you and it becomes worthless to you) those who died before you, whose souls were benefited by your eternally minded money management, will be there to welcome you into heaven.

Luk 16:10 “One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much.

- Jesus’ teaching wasn’t just directed at the rich.
- It was just as true for those who had very little.
- Our character is shown in how we manage what we have, whether little or much.
- A heart that faithfully manages a little money is a heart that would faithfully manage a large sum of money.
- A heart that dishonestly manages a little money is a heart that would dishonestly manage a large sum of money.

- APPLICATION:

- There is a lot of application here.
- Can we honestly say we are making investments for eternity?
- Can we say we are investing in people’s souls?

- APPLICATION:

- Biblical money principles aren't just for affluent Christians.
 - No matter what our income, God wants us to manage our money well.
 - That doesn't just mean investing for retirement or paying down debt.
 - That means we need to be investing for eternity.
-

Luk 16:11 If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches?

Luk 16:12 And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?

- The true riches are the everlasting riches of heaven.
 - If a person is not faithful with the money and material things God gives them on earth, why would God reward them with greater things?
 - “And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own.”
 - The disciples were themselves managers.
 - Whose stuff were they managing?
 - God's!
 - They had what they had because God allowed them to have it.
 - If they were unfaithful managers of God's money, why would God reward them?
-

- APPLICATION:
 - The same is true for us.
 - Our physical possessions are ours only so long as God permits us to have them.
 - While we have them, we are responsible for managing them in a way that honors our master.
 - The manager in the parable was supposed to be managing his master's possessions for his master's gain.
 - We ought to be managing God's possessions for His glory.
-

Luk 16:13 No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.”

- This is very similar to Jesus’ statement in Matthew 6:24.
- Mat 6:24 No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.
- Jesus told the disciples that, although they ought to be shrewd with their money, they were not to serve it.
 - o The acquisition of additional money was not to be their guiding force.
 - o They served God and so did their money.
- It is a good thing to have money and to manage it shrewdly for God’s glory.
- It is a bad thing to have money and to manage it shrewdly to acquire more money while forgetting about God.
- In the end, your money will fail you, God won’t.
- In summary, the first 13 verses of the chapter are a lesson about the proper use of money and a warning against falling in love with it.

Luk 16:14 The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things, and they ridiculed him.

Luk 16:15 And he said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God.

- It is often the things we are most guilty of that solicit the most defensive reactions from us.
- This was true for the Pharisees.
 - o They appeared to be pious servants of God, but Luke reveals they were actually servants of money.
 - o Money was their master more than God was their master.
- They sneered at Jesus.
 - o Sometimes rich people mock poor people when they condemn them for having money.

- They think the only reason the poor speak out against money is because they don't have any and don't have the means to get any.
- But the Pharisees failed to recognize Jesus had willingly given up unimaginable riches in heaven to come to earth.
- In one of Jesus' most straightforward rebukes, He flat out told the Pharisees their actions were an abomination in the sight of God (yikes).
 - They spent their time justifying themselves (trying to appear righteous) in the eyes of men.
 - They wanted other people to look at them and admire them.
 - It was a pride problem.
 - As we've observed throughout the gospels, God wasn't/isn't a fan of proud men.
 - They should have been spending their time considering how they could be just in God's eyes.
 - Instead they were worried about how they looked to men's eyes.
 - That was a big problem because what sinful human beings admire isn't the same as what God admires.
 - In fact, Jesus told them the things men admire are an abomination to God.
 - Their affections were all tangled up:
 - They loved money.
 - They loved men's admiration.
 - They couldn't serve those things and God at the same time.

Luk 16:16 "The Law and the Prophets were until John; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone forces his way into it.

Luk 16:17 But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one dot of the Law to become void.

- These two verses are tough.
- This text has a parallel in Matthew 11:11-13.
 - Mat 11:11-13 Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John,

- These might not seem obviously parallel at first but if you look at the Greek term translated “suffered violence” in Matthew 11, you’ll find it is the same Greek term translated “forces his way into” in Luke 16.
- *See the notes on Matthew 11 for more info.
- The Pharisees attempted to justify themselves using the Old Testament Law and writings of the prophets.
 - They prided themselves on their perfect law keeping.
 - But Jesus revealed to them they had perverted the law and weren’t keeping it at all.
- Since the time of John the Baptist, the message of the Kingdom of God had been preached.
 - It was something new, but it didn’t void the Old Testament Law.
 - It fulfilled the Old Testament Law.
- The Pharisees were trying to hold people back from entering the Kingdom of God.
 - They didn’t like the message and saw it as a threat to their way of life.
 - But as much as they tried to suppress it, people continued “forcing” their way into it (verse 16).
 - Like Black Friday shoppers forcing their way through the front door of a store, multitudes of people were jostling their way to hear John and Jesus preach about the Kingdom.
- The Law’s direction was towards the Messiah.
 - It pointed people to the Savior.
 - It foretold His arrival and of His Kingdom.
 - The Pharisees were not going to be able to hinder God’s plan.
 - Attempting to stop the Messiah was attempting to void the promises of the Old Testament.
 - Jesus told the people heaven and earth would sooner vanish than God’s purpose for the Old Testament not be accomplished.
- Nothing in the Old Law would go unfulfilled, including the arrival of the Kingdom.
- People were pressing into it and the power of heaven was behind it.

Luk 16:18 “Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery.

- How does verse 18 fit into the surrounding context?
 - Was Jesus changing the subject?
 - Or was this point meant to further show the Pharisees' corruption?
 - To be honest, I can see it both ways.
 - If this is just a stand-alone verse on the topic of marriage and divorce, it is easy enough to understand.
 - But if this verse was meant to follow in context, how does it fit?
 - How would this verse show another side of the Pharisees' disregard for the Old Testament Law?
 - To understand, it is helpful to go back to Matthew 19.
 - Mat 19:3-9 And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?" He answered, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." They said to him, "Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce and to send her away?" He said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery."
 - In Matthew 19, some Pharisees asked Jesus if it was ok to divorce your wife for any reason.
 - Based on Jesus' statement in Matthew 19:8, it appears some of the Pharisees affirmed it was ok to divorce your wife for any reason.
 - But Jesus told them that was not God's design from the beginning.
 - That wasn't what God desired. He desired the married to remain married.
 - In Matthew 19:4, Jesus told them they would have known the answer to their question if they had actually read the scriptures.
 - The Pharisees claimed to love and follow the scriptures, but Jesus told them they didn't even know the scriptures.
 - Understanding Matthew 19, helps us understand how Luke 16:18 might fit into the previous verses.
 - The Pharisees showed a clear disregard for the things God cared about:

- They loved money more than God (verse 14).
 - They loved men’s admiration more than God (verse 15).
 - They were trying to thwart God’s purposes by undermining the Messiah and the Kingdom of Heaven (verses 16-17).
 - And many of them ignored God’s real design for marriage (verse 18).
- So, the reason marriage and divorce were mentioned here was because Jesus was compounding His accusations against those who “ridiculed Him” (verse 14).
- They suggested Jesus was an opponent of God and the Old Testament, but Jesus showed them they were the real enemies of God. They were the ones attempting to undermine God.
- Principles about marriage and divorce are mentioned in at least three of the gospels and are later discussed in the epistles.
- There is no question that marriage is sacred to God and the act of getting married is just as much a spiritual union as it is a physical union.
- The modern suggestion that we should keep religion out of marriage and sex is an impossible one.
- The principle taught in this text is not difficult to understand, but its real-world application can be hard.
- God designed marriages to stay together.
 - Mat 19:6 “...What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.”
 - We aren’t to jump in and out of marriages as if the marriage bond is insignificant.
- Jesus taught that those who divorce a spouse and marry someone else commit adultery?
 - Why? Why are they guilty of adultery if they divorced the old spouse?
 - I believe, it’s because the text implies the original husband and wife are still bound to one another.
 - They may have been legally divorced by a human court, but they are still bound by the union God formed.
 - They are not free to exit the marriage relationship.
 - When a man divorces his wife and marries someone else, he is violating his unbroken bond with his first wife.
 - As mentioned previously, marriage is a physical and legal union, but of greater gravity is the spiritual union formed by God.
- Important Point:

- This verse is an excellent example of why the Bible must be studied comprehensively.
- Sometimes reading one verse will give you part of the information, but not the entire picture.
- In Matthew 19:9, Jesus gives one exception to this divorce rule.
- Mat 19:9 And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery.”
- There are other verses in chapters like 1 Corinthians 7 that also need to be brought into this discussion.
- I would refer you to the notes on those specific passages.
- We need to walk away from this text with an understanding of Jesus’ seriousness when it comes to marriage.
 - It isn’t something to be entered into lightly.
 - It isn’t something to be exited lightly.
 - Marriage is meant to last a lifetime.

Luk 16:19 “There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day.

Luk 16:20 And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores,

Luk 16:21 who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores.

- Chapter 16 concludes with a relatively well-known text, the story of the rich man and Lazarus.
- This parable featured 2 main characters:
 - A rich man who lived in luxury.
 - Clothed in purple.
 - He feasted every day.
 - A poor man, Lazarus, who lived on the streets.
 - Laid at the rich man’s gate.
 - Covered in sores.
 - He was so pitiful the dogs came and licked his sores (quite an image).
- We are not told whether this was a fictional story or a historical account.

- We were not told whether the parable of the unfaithful servant at the beginning of the chapter was fictional or historical.
- I suspect both stories were fictional parables meant to illustrate a point.
- However, there are some who believe these stories were based on real people.
- Let's read the whole story before working through its meaning.

Luk 16:22 The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried,

Luk 16:23 and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side.

- Both Lazarus and the rich man died, but their destinations were very different.
 - Lazarus must have been a God-fearing man because his soul was carried by the angels to "Abraham's side."
 - Abraham was the father of the Jewish nation.
 - We read about him for the first time in Genesis 11.
 - He was a faithful man who God loved.
 - The Jews held Abraham in highest honor and the idea of being with him after death would be a welcome thought to any Jew.
 - The rich man died, was buried, and found himself in Hades.
 - The KJV translates this "torments."
 - It was a place of suffering.
 - The place for lost souls.

- APPLICATION:

- Lazarus probably didn't receive any kind of special funeral, but he was honored by the angels as soon as he passed through death.
- The rich man probably received a splendid funeral but had no honor past the grave.
- It is better to seek the honor given by God than the honor of men.

- Paradise and Hades:

- It is from this story that people get the concept of Paradise and Hades (perhaps you've heard this discussed in a Bible class).
- Many believe Jesus' words in this text should be taken at face-value as an accurate description of the state of human souls after death but before the Judgement Day (the end of time as we know it).
 - The souls of the redeemed (saved) wait for Judgment Day in a place of comfort (sometimes called Paradise, or Abraham's bosom, or Abraham's side).
 - The souls of lost sinners await Judgment Day in a place of torment and suffering (sometimes called Hades or torments).
- Others argue Jesus wasn't trying to accurately describe the condition of pre-Judgment souls, but only using this story to illustrate a point.
- To properly evaluate both positions a lot of texts need to be discussed, so I will save a thorough evaluation of that debate for another study, but I wanted to introduce the debate for those who may be interested in digging deeper.
- The end of verse 23 tells us the rich man was able to see Abraham and Lazarus from his place of suffering.

Luk 16:24 And he called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.'

Luk 16:25 But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish.'

Luk 16:26 And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.'

- The rich man called out to Abraham and asked him to have Lazarus fetch him the tiniest amount of water to cool his tongue in order to relieve him from the "flame."
 - This is one of several texts that describes the place of eternal punishment as a place of fire.
 - Mat 25:41 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'
- It's sad that the rich man wanted Lazarus to ease his suffering after he had never gone out of his way to ease Lazarus' suffering.
 - Who knows how long Lazarus sat suffering at the rich man's gate?

- The rich man had passed him by day-after-day.
- Even in torment the rich man was still selfish.
- Abraham turned down the rich man's request.
 - The roles had been reversed.
 - Reminds me of Jesus' words in Matthew 19:30.
 - Mat 19:30 But many who are first will be last, and the last first.
- Abraham told the rich man his request was not possible.
 - Those in Hades could not interact with those at Abraham's side.
 - There was a great chasm between them.
 - Chasm - a deep fissure in the earth, rock, or another surface (Oxford).

Luk 16:27 And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house—

Luk 16:28 for I have five brothers—so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.'

Luk 16:29 But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.'

Luk 16:30 And he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.'

Luk 16:31 He said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.'"

- After realizing his personal relief could not be accomplished, the rich man asked Abraham to send Lazarus back to his father's house where his 5 brothers lived.
- He wanted Lazarus to warn his brothers not to live lives that would lead them to Hades.
- But again, Abraham turned down the request.
 - God had given all of the Jews sufficient warning of the dangers of disobeying Him.
 - Moses and the prophets were God's messengers and their testimony was sufficient.
- The rich man insisted his brothers would believe if they encountered someone who had risen from the dead.
- Abraham told him he was mistaken.
 - "If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead."

- This was proved during Jesus' ministry.
- Several people were brought back to life by Jesus:
 - The widow of Nain's son.
 - Lazarus.
 - Jairus' daughter.
- All three of those miracles were done publicly.
- Yet, there were still plenty of people who didn't believe Jesus' message.
- Now that we've covered the entire narrative about the rich man and Lazarus, let's discuss the meaning of the story.
 - Why did Jesus choose to tell this story?
 - Remember what was happening at the beginning of the chapter.
 - The Pharisees were mocking Jesus after hearing Him teach on the topic of money.
 - Jesus told His audience the day would come when "unrighteous wealth" would fail them.
 - The Pharisees scoffed at that idea.
 - That day hadn't come for any of them (they hadn't died yet).
 - But that day had come for the rich man.
 - And more than anything, that rich man wanted to warn people who were headed down the same path he had gone down.
 - He wished he had paid more attention to the Law and the prophets (verses 16-17).
 - The Law and prophets that foretold of the Messiah.
 - The Law and prophets whose words were guiding people to the Kingdom of God.
 - It was too late for him, but he wanted his brothers to heed those words more closely than he had done.
 - During his lifetime, he didn't care about those things.
 - He just wanted to live his life enjoying his money, because he loved money.
 - When we look back at the first part of the chapter we begin to see a lot of parallels between the rich man and the Pharisees.

- This story was another rebuke to the Pharisees, it was a warning about where they were headed if they continued to disregard the poor and disregard the guidance of God given through Moses and the prophets.
- It was a warning from the grave.
- It was a warning from a man who lived the life of a 1st Century Pharisee and was eternally regretting it.

LUKE 17

In 5 minutes...

WHEN:

- The events of chapter 17 were part of Jesus' ministry on earth.
- These events took place approximately 30-33 A.D..

CHARACTERS:

- Jesus - The Son of God.
- 10 Men with Leprosy
- Lot - A righteous man who lived in the wicked city of Sodom (Genesis 19).
- Noah - Built an ark at God's instruction to survive a global flood (Genesis 6).

WHERE:

- Jesus met the 10 lepers in a village between Samaria and Galilee.
- Luk 17:11-12 On the way to Jerusalem he was passing along between Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers.

LUKE 17



OVERVIEW:

- TEMPTATION, FORGIVENESS, AND FAITH (17:1-6):
 - + Jesus taught it would be better for a person to be drowned with a millstone than to lead someone else into temptation.
 - + He told the disciples they must be willing to forgive anyone who asks, even if they ask 7 times in one day.
 - + When the Apostles asked Jesus to “increase” their faith, He told them faith like a grain of mustard seed was enough to perform miracles.
- THE DUTY OF A SERVANT (17:7-10):
 - + A servant doesn’t consider himself worthy of a great honor for accomplishing his daily tasks.
 - + It is the servant’s duty to serve.
 - + Disciples need to see themselves as servants who have a duty to serve the Lord.
 - + God doesn’t owe us a reward for our service, it is our expected duty.
- 10 MEN WITH LEPROSY HEALED (17:11-19):
 - + On the way to Jerusalem, Jesus met 10 men with leprosy.
 - + Jesus healed them and told them to show themselves to the priests.
 - + Out of the 10, only 1 man returned to thank Jesus for healing him.
- JESUS DISCUSSES THE KINGDOM OF GOD (17:20-37):
 - + The Pharisees asked Jesus when the Kingdom of God would arrive.
 - + Jesus told them the Kingdom of God would not come in ways they could observe, but it would be “in the midst” of them.
 - + Jesus turned to the disciples and told them days were coming when they would no longer see Him.
 - + But before those days came, Jesus would “suffer many things and be rejected” by His generation.
 - + As the flood in Noah’s day and the destruction of Sodom, the coming of the Son of Man would be sudden.
 - + “Whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will keep it” (17:33).

BIG PICTURE:

- Jesus’ words to the Pharisees reveal Jesus’ intention was not to set up a physical kingdom on earth.
- It wouldn’t have all the observable features of a typical kingdom: palace, throne, armies, government building, etc.
- The Kingdom of God was always intended to be a spiritual kingdom.

TAKEAWAYS:

- Has God answered any of your prayers recently?
- Have you remembered to thank Him?
- As was the case with the 10 leperous men, it is easy to remember to pray when we have a need, but easy to forget to thank God when He answers our prayers.

LUKE 17

Luk 17:1 And he said to his disciples, “Temptations to sin are sure to come, but woe to the one through whom they come!

Luk 17:2 It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were cast into the sea than that he should cause one of these little ones to sin.

- Satan was and is at work in the world, and temptation is inevitable so long as God allows Satan to exist.
 - Satan wants to pull people away from God.
 - His tactic? Tempting people to find satisfaction in something other than God.
 - Sometimes Satan works through people to tempt other people.
 - Examples:
 - A friend peer pressures you to lie to get out of trouble.
 - Someone dresses in a way meant to induce lust in onlookers.
 - A co-worker encourages a peer to skip family time to get a promotion.
- Jesus strongly condemned those who led others into sin.
 - He probably had the Pharisees, scribes, lawyers, and Sadducees in mind when He said this.
 - The common Jews looked to those men for spiritual advise.
 - Like little ones (little children) needing guiding from a parent.
 - But they were steering them in the wrong direction, dragging them down into their own base sins.
- Jesus’ language was extreme!
 - He told them it would be better for them to be dead than to continue coaxing others to participate in their sins.
 - “It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were cast into the sea...”
 - The language is shocking, but it makes complete sense.
 - It is better for one person to die and go to hell, than for that person to stay alive long enough to help other people go to hell.
 - A millstone is a heavy cut stone used to grind wheat at the mill.



- APPLICATION:

- Is my influence a temptation to others?
 - Do I help the devil tempt people?
 - Let's make our influence an oasis for people.
 - A place where it's easy to do the right thing.
-

Luk 17:3 Pay attention to yourselves! If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him,

Luk 17:4 and if he sins against you seven times in the day, and turns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' you must forgive him."

- We all need to pay attention to ourselves, so we don't lead others into sin.
 - It isn't hard to offend people when we aren't careful about our words and actions.
 - A loose tongue is the enemy of good influence.
 - If we want to represent Christ well, we need to be giving constant thought to the way we interact with people.
 - The Christian life isn't a reckless life, it's a considerate and contemplative life.
 - It's not surprising the Bible condemns drunkenness.

- When you are drunk, you do things you otherwise wouldn't, and say things a clearheaded mind wouldn't.
 - In a way, it's the extreme opposite of what Jesus was calling for in verse 3.
- I noticed something in verse 3 I had never noticed before, both forgiving and rebuking are commanded.
 - Forgiveness is an often-discussed Christian virtue and we will discuss it in just a moment, but we can't skip over the first part of Jesus' statement.
 - Just as clearly as Jesus told His disciples to forgive, He also told them to rebuke.
 - Jesus' disciples were to rebuke sin when they saw it in the lives of their brothers.
 - We don't emphasize the necessity of this nearly as much as we emphasize forgiveness.
 - I'll be the first to admit, I fail at this sometimes.
 - Sometimes I laugh off sin in the lives of others because it's uncomfortable to confront it.
 - Or I pretend not to notice things.
 - But rebuking sin in someone's life is just as loving as extending forgiveness.
 - A person shows no love for the soul of another when they pretend everything is alright and it's not.
- We must rebuke, but when the rebuke is done and forgiveness is sought, we must forgive.
 - Forgiveness can be just as hard, if not harder than rebuking.
 - A mature disciple will be able to do both.
 - They will rebuke in the hope that their rebuke will prick the heart of the sinner.
 - They will freely forgive when the sin is put away and rejoice at the restoration of their brother.
 - They will rebuke because they know they must.
 - They will forgive because they love nothing better.
 - A less mature disciple will often fail on one end of the spectrum.
 - They might fail to rebuke because they view it as unloving or maybe they don't really care that much about the condition of the sinful brother.
 - Or, they might avoid rebuking all together by justifying the sin in their brother's life, eliminating the need to rebuke anyone.

- Or, they might love rebuking others in their self-righteousness and get no joy at all from forgiveness.
- The mature Christian is balanced in rebuking and forgiving.
- Jesus didn't want His disciples pursuing vengeance against other disciples who wronged them, even those who wronged them repeatedly.
- He taught them to leave their hearts open to repeated forgiveness.
 - How many times are we supposed to forgive?
 - Jesus' answer: 7 times a day.
 - I don't think He meant this literally.
 - I think He was saying, "Forgive your brother as many times as he comes to you. Even if it's more times than you think is acceptable."
- To someone who doesn't know Christ, this command might seem outrageous.
 - Certainly, no one should have to forgive that many times!
 - Right?
- But for those of us who know Jesus, know of His sacrifice on the cross, know the good news of the gospel, and know our own sinfulness, this command makes perfect sense.
 - How many times have we had to ask God for forgiveness?
 - Sometimes multiple times a day, right?
 - We wouldn't ever want God to say, "Nope, not forgiving you anymore. You've used up all your grace."
 - Why would we do that to a brother who comes to us for forgiveness?
- If the idea of being told you MUST (verse 4) forgive someone is offensive to you, you need to spend more time meditating on Jesus' sacrifice.
- When you realize how much you've been forgiven, you'll love forgiving other people.

Luk 17:5 The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"

Luk 17:6 And the Lord said, "If you had faith like a grain of mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.

- Forgiveness is no easy task and the Apostles recognized they were going to need help if they were going to live out Jesus' instructions.

- They asked Jesus for an increase in faith.
- Jesus' response was interesting.
- Jesus seemed to think quality was a better metric for faith than quantity.
 - The Apostles thought they needed more faith.
 - But Jesus told them genuine faith was so powerful all they needed was a mustard seed worth to perform wonders.
 - Mustard seeds are tiny.



- Faith is trust in the power of God.
- So, it isn't an issue of the quantity we accumulate, it's an issue of the depth of our trust.
- A person who has the genuine faith Jesus talked about can be used by God in powerful ways.
 - At the time this was written, God was empowering people with miraculous ability.
 - Although we don't see that today, there is no question God still uses people of faith in great ways in His Kingdom.

Luk 17:7 “Will any one of you who has a servant plowing or keeping sheep say to him when he has come in from the field, ‘Come at once and recline at table’?”

Luk 17:8 Will he not rather say to him, ‘Prepare supper for me, and dress properly, and serve me while I eat and drink, and afterward you will eat and drink’?”

Luk 17:9 Does he thank the servant because he did what was commanded?

Luk 17:10 So you also, when you have done all that you were commanded, say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.’”

- How should God’s servants think of themselves when they’ve done good work?
 - o Perhaps they accomplished something great on account of their genuine faith and the power of God (verse 6).
 - o How should they feel about themselves?
- Accomplishment introduces a temptation to pride.
 - o We like to look back at our work and admire what we’ve accomplished.
 - o We want others to admire what we’ve accomplished.
 - o We might want others to praise us.
- This love of praise had taken hold of many in the Jewish religious community.
 - o They did good deeds because men praised them for doing them.
 - o They worshipped publicly because people honored them for their devotion.
 - o I think they wanted and expected the Messiah to honor them for their religiosity.
- But Jesus told His disciples not to think of themselves as worthy of honor.
 - o He wanted them to think of themselves as servants in a great man’s house.
 - o The master of a house doesn’t serve dinner to his servants just because they put in a hard day’s work in the field.
 - o No, the servants are expected to continue serving until the day is over.
 - o They serve the master dinner.
 - o That is their job and they don’t merit some kind of special honor or praise for doing their job.
 - o It’s the expectation of a servant.
- In the same way, disciples aren’t to walk around seeking praise and honor for their service to God.
 - o Serving God is the only reasonable response when a person learns how much God has done for them.
 - o God is the King and we are called to be His servants.
 - o It is the expectation.
 - o We shouldn’t have the attitude that God owes us or that men owe us recognition for our work.

- As Jesus said, our attitude needs to be, “We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.”
 - “We are only doing our job.”
 - What’s incredible is that God wants to honor us for serving Him.
 - He adopts us as His children.
 - He promises eternal reward to His faithful servants.
 - But those rewards are not earned.
 - They are the unmerited favor (grace) of God.
-

- APPLICATION:

- While we are here on earth, we need to remember we aren’t anything special.
 - And we shouldn’t be thinking about our service to God as a means of promoting ourselves.
 - Stay humble and let God deal with the promotions.
-

Luk 17:11 On the way to Jerusalem he was passing along between Samaria and Galilee.

Luk 17:12 And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance

Luk 17:13 and lifted up their voices, saying, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.”

- On His way to Jerusalem, Jesus was met by 10 men with leprosy.
- Leprosy (Hansen’s Disease).
 - Caused by a bacterial attack on the nerves.
 - The bacteria are slow acting, and some people can be infected for years without the telltale symptoms.
 - The bacteria cause skin deformity and nerve damage.
 - If untreated, leprosy will cause hand and/or foot paralysis.
 - Other injuries often occur due to lack of feeling in the extremities.
 - Fingers and toes are commonly lost.
 - Loss of vision and nasal deformity are also common with advanced Hansen’s.
 - Treatment for leprosy was developed in the 1940s (antibiotics).
- According to the Law of Moses, a person diagnosed with leprosy was considered unclean

and was not allowed to associate with their “clean” countrymen.

- Lev 13:3 - and the priest shall examine the diseased area on the skin of his body. And if the hair in the diseased area has turned white and the disease appears to be deeper than the skin of his body, it is a case of leprous disease. When the priest has examined him, he shall pronounce him unclean.
- This explains why the lepers stood at a distance and called to Jesus for help.

Luk 17:14 When he saw them he said to them, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went they were cleansed.

- Jesus had compassion on the men and told them to make their way to the priests, implying they would be healed.
- The Old Testament Law had rules regarding what was to take place when a leper was cleansed. It is to those rules Jesus was referring when He told them to show themselves to the priests.
- Anyone healed of leprosy had to be verified by a priest.
- You can read about the process in Leviticus 14.

Luk 17:15 Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice;

Luk 17:16 and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan.

Luk 17:17 Then Jesus answered, “Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine?”

Luk 17:18 Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?”

Luk 17:19 And he said to him, “Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well.”

- After being healed, only 1 of the 10 men returned to Jesus to thank Him.
- The singular man, a Samaritan, fell at Jesus' feet and praised God.
 - *See 2BeLikeChrist's video, *Why did the Jews Hate the Samaritans*, for a discussion of the relations of the Jews and Samaritans.
 - The Jews didn't like the Samaritans.
 - They didn't think highly of them at all.
 - For the most part, they spoke negatively about them.
 - But in this instance, Jesus was commending a Samaritan because he was the only

one who expressed thankfulness for his healing.

- Jesus seems to imply some of the other 9 were Jews.
 - Yet, only the Samaritan had returned.
 - He was the only one who had the right mindset.
 - This miracle was a great display of Jesus' power over sickness, but it was also an important lesson for His Jewish disciples.
 - A lot of the Jews had the idea that they were right with God based on their bloodline.
 - Here Jesus revealed that it was the heart that mattered, not the genetics.
 - Sometimes the greatest examples of faith were to be found outside the Jewish community.
 - That would have been a shocking revelation to some Jews.
-

- APPLICATION:

- Pictures of godliness don't always show up where we might expect them.
 - Sometimes the best teachers are the unexpected ones.
-

- APPLICATION:

- Godliness is not inherited or granted to a person because they were born with a particular pedigree.
 - A proper attitude towards God is cultivated in the heart of an individual.
-

- APPLICATION:

- When God blesses us, we should take time to thank Him.
 - This principle is very simple to understand but often neglected in practice.
-

Luk 17:20 Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, "The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed,

Luk 17:21 nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There!' for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you."

- Jesus talked a lot about the coming Kingdom of God.
- But what was it?
- As we've discussed, many of the Jews believed it was going to be a powerful worldly kingdom like those that came before it (Sumer, Assyria, Babylon, Greece, Rome, etc).
- The Jews looked forward to the time when the Messiah would arrive and lead their nation to prominence.
- At this point, Jesus had been preaching for almost 3 years but there were still no signs indicating He was raising up the next great world empire.
- So, the Pharisees asked Him when the Kingdom of God would start.
- Jesus told them their expectations about the Kingdom were misguided.
 - o God's Kingdom wasn't coming with the usual observable features of a sprouting empire (a growing military, palaces, political buildings, capital cities, etc).
 - o It wasn't going to be built around or defended by physical power.
 - o It wasn't going to conquer using physical force.
- What did Jesus mean by this?
 - o God's Kingdom, His reign, is a spiritual one.
 - o God's Kingdom doesn't wage physical wars against earthly kings, it wages war on the spiritual powers of evil.
 - o 2Co 10:3-4 For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds.
 - o The citizens of God's Kingdom, His disciples, aren't citizens because they are born within a national border, but because they are God's children.
 - It is a spiritual connection.
 - You might be able to look at a person and make a fairly accurate guess what country they are from.
 - That isn't the case with Christians.
 - Glancing at someone can't tell you if that person is a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven or not.
 - o God doesn't reign from an earthly capital city. He reigns in heaven (which is unobservable to us).
- "...the Kingdom of God is in the midst of you."
 - o God reigns in men and women's hearts.
 - o The heart of a disciple acknowledges that God is king.

- Of course, when a person acknowledges God is king, they give their loyalty and service to the king.
 - This is why the Bible talks about Christians as servants, we serve the King.
 - Like a loyal subject in a medieval movie, we give allegiance to God.
- The connection between all of the citizens of the Kingdom of God across the world is their heart's allegiance.
- No matter what ethnicity you are, no matter what country you were born in, you can be a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven if your heart belongs to God.

Luk 17:22 And he said to the disciples, "The days are coming when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it.

Luk 17:23 And they will say to you, 'Look, there!' or 'Look, here!' Do not go out or follow them.

Luk 17:24 For as the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one side to the other, so will the Son of Man be in his day.

- Turning away from the Pharisees and to His disciples, Jesus told them a day would come when they would long to see Him again.
 - He was going to be leaving them.
 - And in the future, when the challenges of being a disciple would become more difficult, some of them would long for His return.
 - They would want to see Him again and talk to Him face-to-face as they had before.
- But Jesus warned them not to believe every story about His return.
 - In their anxiousness to see Jesus again they could become susceptible to believing fake news.
 - After Jesus' departure, there would be false messiahs and people who spread false reports.
 - The disciples were not to believe every rumor.
- Jesus' return (the coming of the Son of Man) would not be subtle.
 - The disciples weren't going to have to hear secondhand news of His arrival.
 - People weren't going to have to point it out to them.
 - Jesus' arrival, at the end of time, will be as noticeable as a streak of lightning that shoots from one end of the sky to the other.

- Imagine how bright that would be.
 - Especially in a time when electric lights didn't exist.
 - Enormous bolts of lightning are anything but subtle. They are visible to everyone.
 - Not to mention the huge crack of thunder that follows them.
- Paul's description of Jesus' second coming at the end of time aligns with this portrayal.
 - He told the Thessalonian Church Jesus would return with a trumpet sound and a "cry of command."
 - 1Th 4:16 For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

Luk 17:25 But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.

- Before the Son of Man could return like a bolt of lightning, He had to suffer and be rejected by the people in His community.
- Jesus was talking about His upcoming death on the cross.

Luk 17:26 Just as it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of Man.

Luk 17:27 They were eating and drinking and marrying and being given in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.

Luk 17:28 Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot—they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building,

Luk 17:29 but on the day when Lot went out from Sodom, fire and sulfur rained from heaven and destroyed them all—

Luk 17:30 so will it be on the day when the Son of Man is revealed.

- To understand Jesus' point in this section we need to have some familiarity with the Old Testament.
- The story of Noah, the Ark, and the Flood can be read in Genesis 6-9.
 - The world was so wicked that God decided to destroy its inhabitants with a worldwide flood.
 - Noah was commanded by God to build an ark to save his family and a select number of animals.

- While building the ark, everyone else on earth continued about their usual sinful business.
- On a day like any other, Noah entered the Ark and rain started pouring down from heaven, taking everyone by surprise.
- Next, to emphasize the same principle, Jesus alluded to the story of Lot and the destruction of the city of Sodom.
 - Gen 13:13 Now the men of Sodom were wicked, great sinners against the LORD.
 - The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah must have been especially sinful places because God told Abraham he was going to destroy them.
 - God planned to rain fire and sulfur (some translations say brimstone) down on them and burn them to the ground.
 - God told a righteous man named Lot to escape the city before the destruction.
 - On the day Lot fled, God's wrath poured down on Sodom and Gomorrah.
 - Gen 19:24-25 Then the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from the LORD out of heaven. And he overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.
 - The people of the city were not given a warning.
 - Their judgement came swiftly and on a day like any other.
- Jesus' return is going to be unexpected.
 - People are going to be going about their everyday business when He arrives.
 - That day will be a welcome surprise for Jesus' disciples.
 - But it will be a terrible day for people living in sin. They will be as surprised and horrified as the people living in Sodom and those who drown in the flood.

- APPLICATION:

- Given the unexpected nature of Jesus' return, we need to make sure we are always ready.
- We can't let our guards down.
- 1Pe 5:8 Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

- APPLICATION:

- Given the unexpected nature of Jesus' return, we need to be continually busy finding ways to warn people who aren't part of God's Kingdom.

- There should be a sense of urgency.
-

Luk 17:31 On that day, let the one who is on the housetop, with his goods in the house, not come down to take them away, and likewise let the one who is in the field not turn back.

- The language in this verse initially gave me a significant amount of trouble when I first encountered its parallel passage in Matthew.
 - In Matthew 24:17-18, this same language appears in a discussion about the destruction of Jerusalem.
 - In that context, the verse is a bit easier to understand.
 - The Romans were coming to destroy Jerusalem.
 - The Christians needed to get out of the city as quickly as possible.
- But how do we understand this language in Luke 17?
 - Why would someone try to return to their house to grab physical possessions when Jesus comes back?
 - I believe, Jesus intended His audience to understand the wider principle behind the words rather than to take them literally.
 - He was communicating a principle of preparedness.
 - He was compounding the principle of Sodom and the Flood.
 - Judgement will be unexpected, and you aren't going to have a chance to do the things you neglected when it arrives.
 - There will be no time for turning back
 - At that point, it will be too late.
 - The disciples of the 1st Century, as well as the 21st Century, need to be in a constant state of readiness.
 - They need to be alert, ready, and sober-minded.
 - Ready at any moment for the Lord's return.
 - Being caught off guard can cost you your soul.

Luk 17:32 Remember Lot's wife.

- When Lot and his family fled Sodom, they were told not to look back at the city as the fire and sulfur destroyed it.
 - Gen 19:17 And as they brought them out, one [angel] said, “Escape for your life. Do not look back or stop anywhere in the valley. Escape to the hills, lest you be swept away.”
 - Gen 19:26 But Lot's wife, behind him, looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.
 - Why did she look back?
 - o The Bible doesn't tell us exactly, but Jesus' use of her as an example may help us understand.
 - o She must have had some lingering affection for her former life in that wicked place.
 - o Or a curiosity so strong she was willing to risk breaking God's law to indulge it.
 - That is a dangerous game.
 - That mistake probably cost her soul.
-

- APPLICATION:
 - o Christians sometimes play that game.
 - o Take a risk hoping Jesus won't show up.
 - o Why?
 - o Because they have some lingering affection for the world.
 - o Or they have some strong curiosity they are willing to risk breaking God's Law to indulge.
 - o It's a dangerous game.
-

- Jesus was stressing constant preparedness because it's really easy to let our guard down and start falling in love with the things of the world.

Luk 17:33 Whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will keep it.

- Jesus already made this statement almost word-for-word in Luke 9:24.
- Refer back to those notes for additional discussion.
- Any man who tries to “preserve his life” will end up losing it.
 - o Men desperately try to preserve their own lives.

- Because when a person lives for this life and the things this life offers, death is the worst possible thing.
- The problem with that way of living is that no one has ever succeeded.
- Everyone dies!
- At death a person loses everything.
- What's worse, is that a person who lives for the things of the earth will lose their soul in eternity.
- It's a lose-lose strategy.
- On the flipside, anyone who loses (gives up/surrenders) their life on earth to serve God in His Kingdom, their life will be saved after death.
 - They will be rewarded by God with an even better life.
 - They will have eternal life.
 - The only way to preserve life past death is to devote your life on earth to God, instead of to yourself.
 - You don't have any power to save yourself after death.
 - God does!

Luk 17:34 I tell you, in that night there will be two in one bed. One will be taken and the other left.

Luk 17:35 There will be two women grinding together. One will be taken and the other left.”

- People will be going about their everyday business on “that day” (Jesus' return).
- Faithful disciples will meet Jesus in the air according to 1 Thessalonians 4:17.
- 1Th 4:17 - Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.
- The faithful will be taken up out of the world, one from a bed, one from a field, one from an office, one from the high school, one from the mill, and will be brought up to meet the Lord.

Luk 17:37 And they said to him, “Where, Lord?” He said to them, “Where the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.”

- This phrase is also used in Matthew 24:28.

- As you may have already observed, Jesus used several phrases in Luke 17 that are also in Matthew 24.
 - There is no doubt some of these verses can be tough to understand.
 - When trying to interpret them, it's important to compare and contrast Luke 17, Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21.
 - Understanding the context of each of those passages is essential for coming up with a viable interpretation.
- Back to verse 37.
- The disciples asked Jesus where the things He was describing were going to take place.
 - Jesus responded with a statement about vultures.
 - "Where the corpse is, there the vultures will gather."
 - What did that have to do with the disciple's question?
 - Many suggest the statement about vultures was a cultural proverb of Jesus' day.
 - The proverb was meant to communicate the idea that "when the conditions were right, the thing would come to pass."
 - Vultures will circle a wounded animal waiting for their meal.
 - When the conditions are right (aka the animal finally dies) they come to eat at the corpse.
 - Spiritually speaking, when the conditions are right, the Lord will fulfill His plans.
 - The disciples didn't really know what they were asking when they asked, "Where, Lord?"
 - When Jesus returns, everyone on earth will be aware.
 - It will be a universal appearance.
 - So, the question of "where" isn't really relevant.
 - It was not so much a question of "where" but "when."
 - Jesus will return to judge the world when the conditions are right and when God has accomplished all He wants to accomplish on earth.

LUKE 18



In 5 minutes...

WHEN:

- The events of chapter 18 were part of Jesus' ministry on earth.
- These events took place approximately 30-33 A.D..

CHARACTERS:

- Jesus - The Son of God.
- Unjust Judge - A character in one of Jesus' parables designed to teach the people about prayer.
- Pharisee and Tax Collector - Characters used by Jesus to teach about self-righteousness.
- Rich Young Ruler - A rich man who approached Jesus to ask, "...what must I do to inherit eternal life?"
- Blind Beggar - A man healed of blindness by Jesus outside the city of Jericho.

WHERE:

- Jesus was travelling to Jerusalem. In chapter 17, He passed between Samaria and Galilee (17:11-12).
- Jesus met a blind beggar outside the city of Jericho (18:35).

LUKE 18



OVERVIEW:

- THE PARABLE OF THE WIDOW AND THE JUDGE (18:1-8):
 - + Jesus told His disciples a parable to teach them to pray and not lose heart.
 - + A persistent widow continually asked an ungodly judge to give her justice.
 - + Eventually, he granted the woman's request because he was annoyed with her persistence.
 - + If an unjust judge can be compelled to grant a request, how much more willing must a loving God be to answer the prayers of those He loves?
- THE PHARISEE AND THE TAX COLLECTOR (18:9-14):
 - + This parable was directed at those who were self-righteous.
 - + A Pharisee was in the Temple praying about how he wasn't as sinful as other men.
 - + A tax collector was in the Temple asking God to forgive him for his sins.
 - + Of the two men, Jesus said the tax collector was the one who was "justified."
- JESUS WELCOMES LITTLE CHILDREN AND BLESSES THEM (18:15-17):
- THE RICH YOUNG RULER (18:18-30):
 - + A rich man came to Jesus and asked Him what he needed to do to inherit eternal life.
 - + Jesus told him to sell his possessions and give them to the poor.
 - + The rich man wasn't willing to obey Jesus' instruction because he loved his riches.
 - + Jesus warned the people about the dangerous impact riches could have on the soul.
- JESUS FORETELLS HIS DEATH (18:31-34):
 - + Jesus informed His 12 Apostles about His upcoming arrest and murder.
 - + The Apostles couldn't comprehend the idea that the Messiah would be killed.
- THE HEALING OF A BLIND BEGGAR (18:35-43):
 - + As Jesus was near Jericho, a blind beggar started yelling for Him to come and heal him.
 - + The crowd tried to stop the man from yelling but he was determined to get Jesus' attention.
 - + Jesus noticed the man and "commanded him to be brought to Him."
 - + Jesus healed the man, saying, "Recover your sight; you faith has made you well."

BIG PICTURE:

- In chapter 18, Jesus was nearing the end of His life on earth.
- He already knew the fate (crucifixion) that awaited Him in Jerusalem.
- Rather than run away from the cross, Jesus was determined to complete God's plan and sacrifice Himself for sin.

TAKEAWAYS:

- There are things that are more important than preserving our lives.
- Accomplishing God's redeeming plan was more important to Jesus than protecting Himself from harm.
- He lived that way because He knew there was a resurrection on the other side of His pain.
- Being a part of God's eternal work should be more important to us than protecting ourselves from harm.
- We can live that way because we are confident there is a resurrection on the other side of our pain.

LUKE 18

Luk 18:1 And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart.

Luk 18:2 He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man.

Luk 18:3 And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, 'Give me justice against my adversary.'

Luk 18:4 For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself, 'Though I neither fear God nor respect man,

Luk 18:5 yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.'"

- Chapter 18 begins with two teaching stories.
 - o 1. The story of the unjust judge and the persistent widow.
 - o 2. The story of the Pharisee's prayer vs. the tax collector's prayer.
- In the first story, Jesus told His disciples about a judge who didn't have any respect for God or men.
 - o He didn't care about doing the right thing.
 - o He only cared about himself.
- In the judge's jurisdiction, there was a widow woman.
 - o She had been wronged by someone.
 - o She visited the judge often to ask him to uphold the law and give her justice.
- The judge didn't care about the widow's plight.
 - o For some reason, giving the woman justice wasn't on his agenda.
 - o He didn't want to be bothered with her case.
 - o Maybe it was too much paperwork.
 - o He kept putting her off and delaying the justice she deserved.
- But the widow was persistent and kept coming back to plead with the judge.
- Eventually the judge agreed to grant her request.
- Why?
 - o Did compassion stir within him?

- No.
 - He didn't care about the lady.
- Did he feel a sense of duty to uphold the law?
 - No.
 - He admitted to himself that he felt no sense of duty either to God or to his fellow man.
- The reason he granted the widows request was entirely selfish.
 - He said, "Though I neither fear God nor respect man, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice..."
 - He was annoyed with her persistence.
 - In order to save himself the trouble of turning the woman away in the future, he gave her justice so she wouldn't come back.
- Verse 1 informs us Jesus told this parable to teach His disciples to "pray and not lose heart."
 - This parable can seem like a really strange way to teach that point.
 - Was Jesus telling the disciples to annoy God until He gave them what they wanted?

Luk 18:6 And the Lord said, "Hear what the unrighteous judge says.

Luk 18:7 And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them?

Luk 18:8 I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

- No, Jesus was not comparing the character of the unjust judge to the character of God.
- He wasn't suggesting that God only answers prayers when He gets annoyed with hearing them.
- So, what was He teaching the disciples?
 - In the story, the widow, through her persistence, received justice.
 - Her justice was delayed because of the judge's indifference.
 - But even though she was dealing with a selfish person, she was eventually able to get what she needed.
 - Notice the contrast made in verse 7-8.

- God will give justice “speedily.”
 - Why?
 - Because unlike the unjust judge, He loves His disciples and cares about their concerns.
- The General Principle: “If you can compel a selfish person to grant your request, even if its for selfish motives, how much more can you trust God to handle your requests knowing He loves and supports you?”
 - Jesus wanted the disciples to know their prayers were heard and were being addressed by someone who cared about them, by a just Judge.
 - There was no reason to lose heart, because whether they could see it or not, God was working to give justice to His elect (disciples).
- “Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?” (verse 8).
 - There should be no doubt in our mind that God will judge everything and everyone justly. He is the just Judge.
 - There should be no doubt in our mind that God hears and answers our prayers.
 - Jesus assured His disciples of these two truths, and offered them as reasons why they shouldn’t lose heart.
 - The question isn’t whether God will be faithful to those promises, but whether Jesus will find any faithful disciples when He returns.
 - The disciples didn’t need to be concerned about God’s faithfulness, but they did need to give thought to their own faithfulness.
 - They needed to make sure they were the watchful and prepared disciples talked about in chapter 17.

Luk 18:9 He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt:

Luk 18:10 “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

Luk 18:11 The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.

Luk 18:12 I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’

Luk 18:13 But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’

Luk 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, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

- This parable was directed specifically towards self-righteous people who looked down on others for not being as “virtuous” as themselves (i.e. the Pharisees and scribes, Luke 15:2).
- Two men were in the Temple praying, but the substance of their prayers was very different.
- 1. The Pharisee:
 - The Pharisee thanked God he wasn’t “like other men.”
 - Other men had problems:
 - They were extortioners.
 - They were unjust.
 - They were adulterers.
 - Looking around him, the Pharisee even thanked God that he wasn’t like “this tax collector.”
 - The Pharisee continued, reminding God of his virtue.
 - “I fast twice a week.”
 - “I give tithes of all that I get.”
 - He really thought a lot of himself.
 - Although he “thanked God” for his “righteousness, it’s clear the Pharisee really believed he deserved the credit.
 - The prayer of thanks was just for show.
- 2. The Tax Collector:
 - The tax collector’s prayer revealed he wasn’t concerned with the sins of other men; he was concerned with his own sins.
 - He knew he wasn’t righteous, and he knew he needed God’s mercy.
 - He didn’t think very much of himself.
 - His repentance was genuine.
- Jesus told His self-righteous listeners that, of the two, God was pleased with the tax collector.
- Both men were sinners.

- The difference was, the tax collector recognized his sins and went to God for grace, while the Pharisee ignored his sins and boasted about his strengths.
- Question: Why did Jesus come to earth?
 - Why was Jesus there in their cities?
 - Was it because men can get to heaven on their own if they're righteous enough?
 - No!
 - Jesus went to earth to die on the cross because it was the only way for anyone to be saved.
 - If God hadn't extended the grace of Jesus' sacrifice to men, everyone would be headed for Hell.
 - Nobody is righteous on their own.
 - Rom 3:10 as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one;
 - Rom 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
 - One of the key lessons of the New Testament, especially the first few chapters of the book of Romans, is that everyone needs a Savior.
 - There aren't any righteous people because everybody has broken God's law at some point.
 - The difference between a disciple of Jesus and a non-disciple is the recognition of the need for a Savior.
 - Christians aren't special, they aren't sinless people, what unites a Christian community is everyone's confession that they need God's grace to be saved from their sins.
 - Genuine Christians shouldn't ever have a superiority complex (that would be an oxymoron).
 - A genuine Christian is a person who has humbled himself/herself to acknowledge their failings and has come to Christ to make things right.
- When you understand why Jesus had to come to earth, you'll understand the problem with the self-righteous attitude of the Pharisee in the parable.
 - He wasn't grasping the point of Jesus' arrival.
 - He thought he was just fine on his own.
 - He didn't think he needed a Savior.
 - But that was because he was blind to his own sins.

- APPLICATION:

- The attitude of the Pharisee is very common among religious people and non-religious people.
- Many religious people, in their pride, think they will make it to heaven because they are good at keeping God's commands.
- Some who have this attitude look down on other disciples who struggle to keep God's instructions.
- Many non-religious people also share the attitude of the Pharisee.
 - When a person sees no need for Jesus in their life, what are they saying?
 - They are saying, "I can make it on my own. I'll be just fine by myself. I'm a good enough person."
 - That is a form of self-righteousness.
 - It's the equivalent of saying, "I didn't really need Jesus to come here and die for me."

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- The Pharisee in Jesus' story would have been wise to learn from the humility of the tax collector.
 - People who are too proud to acknowledge their need for Jesus will eventually be humbled by God.
 - People who are humble enough to acknowledge their need for Jesus will eventually be exalted by God.

Luk 18:15 Now they were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them. And when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them.

Luk 18:16 But Jesus called them to him, saying, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God.

Luk 18:17 Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it."

- In the Old Testament we have examples of blessings being given while the blesser laid his hands on the blessed.
 - Gen 48:14
 - Deut 34:9

- The people respected Jesus and recognized He possessed the power of God, so they brought their children to Him so He would touch them and give them a spiritual benefit/blessing.
- Contrary to the thought of His disciples, Jesus welcomed the presence of the children.
 - It's not uncommon for people to believe children are a nuisance to important individuals.
 - Many believe important people shouldn't be bothered with children's nonsense because their time is too valuable to be wasted.
 - But here, Jesus taught His disciples they had a lot to learn from children, and what children offer to adults is far from nonsense.
 - In fact, contained in their innocence and "childish ways" are many characteristics of those who belong to the Kingdom of Heaven.
 - Children are teachable.
 - They humbly accept the care of their father.
 - They are without pride.
 - They aren't prejudice.
 - If we think our time is too valuable to be given to children, we have an overestimation of the value of our time and think more of ourselves than we are actually worth.
- I like the detail Mark's gospel adds.
 - Mar 10:16 And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.
 - Mark shows us a gentle Savior.
- In a way, Jesus was the father of all of those children.
 - He created them.
 - He knew each of them and wanted the best for each of them.

Luk 18:18 And a ruler asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

Luk 18:19 And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.

- A young man approached Jesus with a question, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"
 - A modern paraphrase might be, "What do I need to do to go to heaven?"

- Or, “What must I do to be saved?”
- Jesus didn’t immediately respond to the man’s question but highlighted the man’s word choice.
 - “Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.”
 - Matthew’s gospel records, “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good.”
 - There is only one being with the authority to speak definitively about what is good and evil, God.
 - But notice, Jesus didn’t tell the man he had come to the wrong place.
 - In fact, He went on to answer the man’s question!
 - Why did Jesus start the conversation this way?
 - He was making it clear that only God had authority to speak on the things He was about to speak on.
 - So, by going on to answer the man’s question (as we will see in the upcoming verses), Jesus was claiming to be God and to speak with the authority of God.
 - Example:
 - Let me try to illustrate (hopefully this is helpful).
 - Let’s say you approach me with a question...
 - You: “How do you send a rocket to the moon?”
 - Me: “It would take an expert physicist to answer that question!”
 - Me: *Proceeds to explain how a rocket is sent to the moon.*
 - I would be implying I am an expert physicist.

Luk 18:20 You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.’”

Luk 18:21 And he said, “All these I have kept from my youth.”

Luk 18:22 When Jesus heard this, he said to him, “One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.”

Luk 18:23 But when he heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich.

- Returning to the man's question, Jesus provided him with a list of commands from the Old Testament.
 - o Do not commit adultery.
 - o Do not murder.
 - o Do not steal.
 - o Do not bear false witness.
 - o Honor your father and mother.
- The man told Jesus he had been obedient to all of those commands since his youth.
- Jesus replied by telling him there was one additional thing he needed to do in order to have eternal life. He was to sell all of his possessions, give them to the poor, and follow Jesus.
- Sadly, the young man was not willing to do this, and he went away sorrowfully.
- Verse 23 tells us he was "extremely rich."
- Why did Jesus require the rich man to sell all of his possessions and follow him?
 - o It isn't a blanket rule that all Christians have to sell all their stuff and give it to the poor.
 - o So why did Jesus ask him to do it?
 - o Because Jesus knew this man's heart was tied up with his possessions.
 - o He needed to value the Kingdom of Heaven supremely, if he wanted to be a disciple.
 - Yes, this man kept the commandments...
 - Yes, he had given himself to God in many ways...
 - But Jesus, with pinpoint accuracy identified the condition of his heart.
 - As we've mentioned in other texts, Jesus wasn't only concerned with external compliance, He wanted the hearts of His disciples.
 - This man's treasure was laid up on earth (Matt 6:19-21).
 - Jesus told him, if he would have treasure in heaven, he needed to purge his life of the object of his greatest affection (riches), and make God his heart's desire.
 - He needed to get rid of the thing that was competing with God for his devotion.

- For this man, this may have been the equivalent of plucking out an eye or cutting off a hand (Matthew 5:29-30).
 - He was not willing to make the sacrifice.
 - Mar 10:22 Disheartened by the saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.
-

○ APPLICATION:

- This story is also recorded in Mark chapter 10.
 - Take a look at verse 21.
 - Mark 10:21 “And Jesus, **looking at him, loved him**, and said to him, “You lack one thing”
 - Helping someone better themselves by pointing out one of their weaknesses, if done correctly, can be an act of love.
 - It isn’t popular today to tell someone there is something wrong with the way they are living. In fact, it may be the greatest (and only) cultural “sin!”
 - But the scriptures show us that the most unloving thing you can do is to withhold the truth that might save someone’s soul.
 - If Jesus had been a modern day liberal, He would have patted the man on the back and told Him He approved of His lifestyle and watched the man go to hell!
 - Don’t be unloving, be like Jesus!
 - Be brave enough, and kind enough, and loving enough to show someone where they are coming up short, AND be thankful and humble enough to examine your own life, when a loving friend comes to you about one of your shortcomings.
-

○ APPLICATION:

- It’s likely, everyone around this man thought he was a godly man.
- He may have also believed he was a godly man (he seemed honest).
- But even though he and others thought he was on the right track, he still came to Jesus and asked what else he needed to do.
- When he did, Christ revealed an area for improvement he had never recognized before.

- We need to ask God the same question.
 - We may appear to others to be on the right track.
 - We may believe we are on the right track.
 - But we need to go to God and ask Him to reveal to us what we aren't seeing.
 - I suspect we all have blind spots.
 - Things that we miss because of our upbringing, or because of the way we were taught to study the Bible, or because of the examples present in our lives.
 - We need to go to God in full submission, and ask him to reveal our blind spots to us, so we can correct them.
 - And, unlike this man, we need to have a heart willing to be shaped in any direction, to be what God desires.
-

○ APPLICATION:

- Conviction isn't all that is required!
 - This man seemed convicted by Jesus' words (hence his sorrow).
 - I think there are many people who attend worship, or study their Bible, and they walk away convicted.
 - But often, that conviction wears off after a while, without us making any actual changes in our lives.
 - It's easy to feel "spiritual" when we've been convicted, however, we are not practicing godliness, unless there is a transformation following the conviction.
-

Luk 18:24 Jesus, seeing that he had become sad, said, "How difficult it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!"

Luk 18:25 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."

- This statement is very important to spend some time thinking about.

- Jesus didn't try to sugar coat the fact that riches and the pursuit of riches are a powerful lure that lead many people away from the Kingdom of Heaven.
- Billions of people throughout time have devoted themselves to accumulating stuff.
 - o Physical possessions promise satisfaction and joy, but the promise is always empty.
 - o Yet, how many people have failed to learn the lesson taught by past generations, that chasing money will not make them happy?
 - o Not only will it not make them happy, it has no ability to save their souls.
 - o Mar 8:36 For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?
- Jesus said it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter God's Kingdom.
- That's hard! And we should take that warning very seriously!
- I'm not sure many of us do.
- 1Ti 6:9-10 But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

- APPLICATION:

- o It isn't uncommon to hear people in America say, "We are so blessed to live in a prosperous nation."
- o Certainly, that is true!
 - We have an opportunity to use our prosperity to build the Kingdom.
 - To fund works around the world for the glory of God.
- o But, for some in wealthy nations, their riches are a curse.
 - Their riches give them a false sense of self-sufficiency.
 - They fall in love with the fun their riches afford them and forget their real purpose on the earth.
- o Jesus' words make us rethink the term "blessed."
 - With eternity in mind, is it better to be born in a rich nation or in a poor nation?
 - Those entrusted with riches by the providence of God have been given a dangerous responsibility.

- They have the opportunity and financial ability to do great work for the Lord.
 - But they must navigate through the eye of the needle while surrounded by enticements to misuse what has been trusted to them.
-

Luk 18:26 Those who heard it said, “Then who can be saved?”

Luk 18:27 But he said, “What is impossible with man is possible with God.”

- The door to the Kingdom of God was indeed narrow, as Jesus said in Luke 13:24.
- His audience expressed their surprise at just how narrow it was.
 - Most people think about riches as a sign of God’s blessing.
 - A person who is rich must be pleasing God, right?
 - Not necessarily according to Jesus.
- Jesus assured them that, though it seemed impossible to them, God could transform a man’s affections.
 - In order to escape the empty promises of the world, a man must be presented with something greater on which to fix his eyes and heart.
 - God is the only One capable of presenting greater promises.
 - Only He can work in men’s hearts to free them from a suicidal obsession with wealth.

Luk 18:28 And Peter said, “See, we have left our homes and followed you.”

Luk 18:29 And he said to them, “Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God,

Luk 18:30 who will not receive many times more in this time, and in the age to come eternal life.”

- Peter’s statement sounds to me like he was patting himself on the back.
- But Jesus didn’t express any disapproval.
- Instead, He commended Peter and the other Apostle’s decision to follow Him.
- The Apostles didn’t always get everything right (especially Peter lol) but they had given their hearts to God.

- They had made big sacrifices to follow Christ.
- Jesus told them anyone who sacrificed worldly attachments to be His disciple would receive a reward “many times” greater than the sacrifice.
 - o Rewards “in this time” (on earth).
 - o Rewards in “the age to come” (eternity).
 - o Keep in mind, a “reward” can come in many forms. It is not always monetary.
- 2Cor 4:17 – For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.

Luk 18:31 And taking the twelve, he said to them, “See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished.

Luk 18:32 For he will be delivered over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon.

Luk 18:33 And after flogging him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will rise.”

Luk 18:34 But they understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said.

- Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem where He would be crucified.
- He knew exactly what He was walking into and shared some of that information with the 12 Apostles.
- He told them His trip to Jerusalem was to fulfill the writings of God’s prophets through the ages.
- In the city, He would be turned over to Gentile courts, mocked, treated shamefully, spit on, flogged, and then killed.
- But He would rise from the dead on the “third day.”
- This prophecy was very straight-forward.
- There was nothing cryptic about it.
- However, verse 34 tells us the Apostles didn’t understand what Jesus was trying to tell them.
 - o “This saying was hidden from them.”
 - o Did Jesus or God hide it from them?
 - o I think it is possible, but I suspect the meaning was hidden because of their mindset.

- Like most Jews, the Apostles probably had a lot of preconceived ideas about the Messiah and the Kingdom of God.
 - In Matthew 16:22, Peter made it pretty clear he wasn't ok with the idea of Jesus being killed.
 - Mat 16:22 And Peter took him [Jesus] aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you."
- When a person has preconceived ideas cemented in their mind, it can be difficult for the truth to penetrate, even when communicated clearly.
- The Apostle's preconceived ideas were keeping them from understanding what was about to happen.
- Take a moment here to admire Jesus.
 - If I knew that Jesus' fate awaited me upon my entrance into a city, I would be running in the opposite direction.
 - But we see Jesus leading His followers into danger.
 - Jesus predicted His own death.
 - He knew where and when it was going to happen.
 - He willingly permitted Himself to be killed to accomplish His role as the world's sacrifice for sin.
 - In the Old Testament, people dragged unwilling sheep to the altar as a sacrifice for their sins.
 - But no one could have dragged Jesus to the cross, thank God the Lamb of God walked to the altar willingly.

Luk 18:35 As he drew near to Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging.

Luk 18:36 And hearing a crowd going by, he inquired what this meant.

Luk 18:37 They told him, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by."

Luk 18:38 And he cried out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

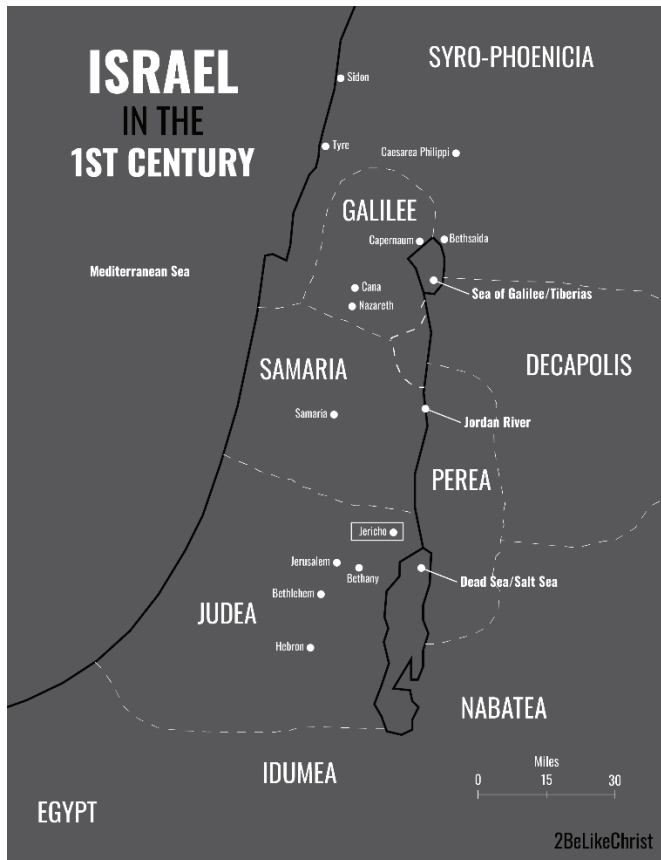
Luk 18:39 And those who were in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Luk 18:40 And Jesus stopped and commanded him to be brought to him. And when he came near, he asked him,

Luk 18:41 "What do you want me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, let me recover my sight."

Luk 18:42 And Jesus said to him, "Recover your sight; your faith has made you well."

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



-
- When Jesus was departing Jericho and turning west to Jerusalem, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar heard He was walking by.
- Not being able to locate Jesus with his eyes, he started yelling for Him, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”
 - o Many standing around Bartimaeus rebuked him and told him to be quiet.
 - o But Bartimaeus kept yelling until he got Jesus’ attention.
- Jesus asked him what He wanted Him to do for him, and Bartimaeus responded, “Lord, let me recover my sight.”
- Jesus commended his faith and healed him.

- APPLICATION:

- o Take a second to observe the parallels between this man and ourselves.
 - This man was trapped in darkness.

- We are trapped in the darkness of sin.
 - This man was willing to do anything to get to Jesus (even when others disapproved).
 - We should be willing to do anything to get to Jesus (even when others disapprove).
 - Jesus was this man's only hope to see.
 - Jesus is our only hope to escape eternal darkness.
-

- APPLICATION:

- We should be careful not to suppress the zeal of those excited about Christ, like the crowd around Bartimaeus.
-

LUKE 19



In 5 minutes...

WHEN:

- The events of chapter 19 were part of Jesus' ministry on earth.
- These events took place approximately 30-33 A.D..

CHARACTERS:

- Jesus - The Messiah and Son of God.
- Zacchaeus - A Jewish tax collector who lived in Jericho. The Bible mentions he was short in stature.
- Nobleman and his Servants - Characters in Jesus' parable about the 10 minas.

WHERE:

- The chapter opens with Jesus passing through Jericho on His way to Jerusalem.
- After passing through Bethany and Bethphage, Jesus travelled to Jerusalem where He cleansed the Temple.

LUKE 19



OVERVIEW:

- JESUS MEETS ZACCHAEUS (19:1-10):
 - + When Jesus was passing through Jericho, He met a chief tax collector named Zacchaeus.
 - + Jesus told Zacchaeus He was planning on staying at his house that day.
 - + The surrounding crowd grumbled at Jesus' decision because they considered Zacchaeus a "sinner."
 - + Zacchaeus repented of his past dishonesty and Jesus rebuked the crowd for looking down on him.
- THE PARABLE OF THE 10 MINAS (19:11-27):
 - + Jesus told a parable because the people supposed the "kingdom of God was to appear immediately."
 - + A nobleman was going to a far country to receive a kingdom.
 - + He called his servants, distributed one mina to each of them, and told them to use it to make a profit.
 - + When he returned, two of his servants had obeyed him but one had neglected his work.
 - + The lazy servant tried to make excuses but the nobleman wouldn't accept them.
 - + He punished the lazy servant by taking his mina and giving it to one of his faithful servants.
- JESUS ENTERS JERUSALEM (19:28-40):
 - + Jesus sent 2 of His disciples into the village to find a colt for Him to ride into Jerusalem.
 - + As Jesus rode into the city, the people laid clothing and palm branches in the road.
 - + They praised God saying, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"
 - + The Pharisees wanted Jesus to stop the people, but He told them if the people stopped, the rocks would start yelling praises!
- JESUS' DISTRESS AND ANGER AT THE SPIRITUAL STATE OF JERUSALEM (19:41-48):
 - + In verses 41-44, Jesus wept over the wicked and stubborn hearts of the Jewish nation.
 - + In verses 45-48, Jesus entered the Temple in anger and drove out the corrupt salesmen.
 - + He said they had turned a house of prayer into a den of robbers.

BIG PICTURE:

- The Jewish nation had a long history of rebellion against God.
- Numerous times throughout their history, God sent prophets to express His disapproval of their wickedness.
- This time, God came in the flesh to correct the Jews, but they were just as stubborn as they had ever been.

TAKEAWAYS:

- Sometimes rich people are open to the gospel message. As Jesus said, riches make it hard for a person to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but there are still honest hearts among the rich.
- Jesus doesn't look kindly on those who use religion to take advantage of others for personal profit.
- Consider your heart and motives before doing business with people of faith.
- You don't want to be a hinderance or a stumblingblock to those trying to follow Christ.

LUKE 19

Luk 19:1 He entered Jericho and was passing through.

Luk 19:2 And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich.

- Jewish Tax Collectors in the 1st Century:
 - o The Jews hated the tax collectors.
 - o This was true for the obvious reason (nobody likes giving their money to the government or seeing the IRS show up at their door).
 - o But it was also true because these tax collectors were considered sell-outs. They were Jews who worked for the ruling Romans (Jews hated the Romans).
 - o In addition, tax collectors were notorious for being thieves.
 - o It was common for them to demand more taxes than the people actually owed so they could skim the excess off the top.
 - The Romans might issue a tax of 5 dollars.
 - The tax collector would tell his fellow Jews the Romans wanted 7 dollars.
 - He would collect the money, give 5 dollars to Rome, and keep the extra 2 dollars for himself.
- You may recall, Matthew (Levi), one of the 12 Apostles, had a career in tax collecting (see Matthew 9:9).
- In Jericho, Jesus met a man named Zacchaeus who was a “chief tax collector” and very rich.

Luk 19:3 And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small in stature.

Luk 19:4 So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way.

- Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus as He passed through town, but the large crowds were preventing Him.
- It didn't help that he was a rather short man.
- To overcome his height deficiency, he decided to climb into a sycamore tree to get a

view.



(*Sycamore trees in Tel Aviv*)

Luk 19:5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.”

Luk 19:6 So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully.

Luk 19:7 And when they saw it, they all grumbled, “He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner.”

- When Jesus walked by Zacchaeus’ perch, He looked up and told Zacchaeus He was headed to his house.
- This couldn’t have been anything less than shocking to Zacchaeus.
 - o There is no indication he had ever met Jesus.
 - o How did Jesus know his name?
 - o Why did Jesus choose Zacchaeus’ house of all places? Especially considering his profession?
- Even though he must have been shocked, he came down from his tree and joyfully agreed to host Jesus.

- Zacchaeus was joyful but the onlooking crowd grumbled.
 - o Zacchaeus may have been one of the most disliked people in town.
 - o “Why would Jesus want to stay with him?”
 - o There were probably hundreds of “godlier” people in Jericho who would have loved to have Jesus as their guest.

Luk 19:8 And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold.”

- It seems Zacchaeus must have heard Jesus preach or heard of Jesus’ preaching because upon meeting him, he immediately told Jesus the changes he was going to make in his life.
 - o I don’t believe there was any self-righteousness in his comments.
 - o This was a man who recognized his own sinfulness and was committed to repentance.
- Zacchaeus told Jesus he would sell half his stuff and give it to the poor and would repay anyone he had defrauded 4 times over.
 - o He must have felt guilty about his wealth and how he had acquired it.
 - o Before meeting Jesus, he stored up his treasures on earth.
 - o After meeting Jesus, he stored up his treasures in heaven.
 - o The transition should look the same in every Christian’s life.

- APPLICATION:

- o Repentance should be accompanied by action to make past wrongs right, if possible.
 - o Zacchaeus had the means to pay back anyone he had defrauded, and he resolved to do it.
-

Luk 19:9 And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham.

Luk 19:10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

- Jesus told Zacchaeus that salvation had come to his house that day.
- It is implied He was also speaking to the surrounding crowd.
- Jesus reminded the crowd who Zacchaeus was.
 - o Remember, they grumbled when Jesus said He was going to Zacchaeus' house.
 - o But Jesus told the crowd Zacchaeus was a son of Abraham.
 - o He was a Jew. He was one of them.
 - o Jesus came to save lost people (verse 10), of who Zacchaeus was one, along with all of his fellow Jews.
- Jesus was doing exactly what He had come to earth to do in reaching out to Zacchaeus.
- The rest of the Jews needed to recognize they needed Jesus just as much as Zacchaeus.
- The scene here is very similar to the scene in Matthew 9 when Jesus called Matthew to follow Him.
 - o Matthew was a tax collector.
 - o After Jesus called him to follow Him, he invited Jesus to his house where other tax collectors had gathered.
 - o The Pharisees grumbled because Jesus was spending time with sinners.
 - o Jesus responded to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick... For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners" (Matthew 9:12-13).

- APPLICATION:

- o A person shouldn't be afraid to come to Christ because they are a sinner. Jesus came to earth for sinners and He welcomes them.
 - o Christians should never look down on sinners who are searching for Jesus. We can't forget we need Jesus' grace to save us just as much as someone who is not yet a Christian.
-

Luk 19:11 As they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately.

- Verses 12-27 record another of Jesus' parables, the parable about the 10 minas.
- Verse 11 gives us some insight as to why He told the parable.

- 1. Because he was near Jerusalem (the place He would soon be crucified).
- 2. Because some of the people supposed the “Kingdom of God was to appear immediately.”
 - What is meant by this?
 - The Bible talks about the Kingdom of Heaven in at least two senses.
 - In one sense, the Kingdom of God arrived after the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus and people are invited to become a part of it today.
 - Col 1:13 He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,
 - It was in this sense that Jesus promised His Apostles, “Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power” (Mark 9:1).
 - In another sense, the Kingdom of God will not appear in its “full power” until Jesus returns at the end of time.
 - On that day, God will defeat Satan once and for all.
 - Sin and death will be removed.
 - The wicked will be judged.
 - God will reign supreme and all His enemies will be thrown down.
 - The righteous will be honored and will reign with Him.
 - 2 Timothy 2:11-12a The saying is trustworthy, for: If we have died with Him, we will also live with Him; if we endure, we will also reign with Him;
 - The New Testament talks about the Kingdom of God in these two senses, but it seems the Jews of Jericho had something else in mind.
 - Its possible some of the Jews had the second sense in mind.
 - They thought the end of time was upon them.
 - That the world was going to end, and people were going to be judged in the very near future. Just as soon as Jesus accomplished His work.
 - Some of the Jews were probably thinking the Kingdom of God was about to appear in some kind of earthly sense.

- That Jesus was just about to be crowned king of the world.
 - That He was going to do something in Jerusalem that would reveal Him as the true Messiah and the people would lift Him up as their King.
 - He would reign, conquering their enemies, and ushering in a new era of Jewish prosperity.
 - If this was the way the people were thinking, you can see why great crowds of people were following Him.
 - They wanted to be honored when Jesus ascended the throne.
- Keep in mind, the parable we are about to read was spoken to address these ideas.
 - As we read, ask yourself:
 - What was Jesus trying to communicate to the people?
 - Was Jesus affirming the people’s belief that the end of time was right around the corner? Or that an earthly Kingdom was on the immediate horizon?
 - Or did Jesus tell this parable to let the people know they were mistaken?
- We will work our way through the parable piece-by-piece to make sure we comprehend and then we will discuss the meaning at the end.

Luk 19:12 He said therefore, “A nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then return.

Luk 19:13 Calling ten of his servants, he gave them ten minas, and said to them, ‘Engage in business until I come.’

- A nobleman was preparing to make a trip to another country.
- He was to become the King of the country he was visiting.
- In preparation, he called 10 of his servants and gave them each a mina.
 - A mina was a measurement of weight to establish monetary value.
 - Most historical sources estimate the weight to be approximately 1-1.25 pounds.



(Mina of Antiochus IV Epiphanes).



(Mina of Antioch).

- The value depended on the substance.
- A mina of silver would have been worth less than a mina of gold.
- The parable doesn't specify the kind of mina the servants received.
- The nobleman told the servants to “engage in business” until his return.
- He wanted them to manage the money, investing it in whatever way they deemed best, in order to make him a profit.

Luk 19:14 But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, ‘We do not want this man to reign over us.’

- The nobleman departed from his servants and went into the far country to claim his kingdom.
- But the people of the kingdom hated him.
- They didn't want him to become their king.

- They even sent a delegation of men to express their disapproval.

Luk 19:15 When he returned, having received the kingdom, he ordered these servants to whom he had given the money to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by doing business.

Luk 19:16 The first came before him, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made ten minas more.'

Luk 19:17 And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.'

Luk 19:18 And the second came, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made five minas.'

Luk 19:19 And he said to him, 'And you are to be over five cities.'

Luk 19:20 Then another came, saying, 'Lord, here is your mina, which I kept laid away in a handkerchief;

Luk 19:21 for I was afraid of you, because you are a severe man. You take what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.'

- Notice, even though the people of the country hated the nobleman, he was still successful at acquiring the kingdom.
- When he had received the kingdom, he decided to return home to check on the progress of his servants.
- Three servants were asked to give account of their money management.
 - 1. The first servant had managed to multiply the nobleman's money 10 times.
 - The nobleman commended him.
 - For his faithfulness, the nobleman gave him authority over 10 cities.
 - 2. The second servant had managed to multiply the nobleman's money 5 times.
 - He was also commended.
 - For his faithfulness, the nobleman gave him authority over 5 cities.
 - 3. The third servant hadn't done anything with his master's money.
 - He was afraid of the nobleman's temperament.
 - The servant saw him as an ambitious, hard-driving, and "severe" man.
 - He feared how his master would respond if he lost the money.
 - He seemed to think his master expected too much. ("you... reap what you did not sow").
 - In a way, the servant was blaming his master for his inactivity.

- The servant knew he didn't do what the master told him to do but hoped he would be safe in the fact that, although he didn't make any increase, he also didn't lose any of the money.

Luk 19:22 He said to him, 'I will condemn you with your own words, you wicked servant! You knew that I was a severe man, taking what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow?

Luk 19:23 Why then did you not put my money in the bank, and at my coming I might have collected it with interest?'

Luk 19:24 And he said to those who stood by, 'Take the mina from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas.'

Luk 19:25 And they said to him, 'Lord, he has ten minas!'

- The servants plan didn't work. The nobleman wasn't pleased with his servant just because he hadn't lost any money.
- In fact, the nobleman was very angry at him!
 - He used the servant's own words to show how foolish his actions were.
 - The servant thought his master was severe, hard-driving, and expected too much.
 - If that was true, the logical next step wouldn't have been to keep his mina wrapped in a handkerchief.
 - If all of those attributes of his master were accurate, he should have known his master would never accept his lack of effort.
- The servant should have at least put the money in the bank and allowed it to earn a bit of interest.
- The nobleman was so unhappy with his servant he took his singular mina and gave it to the servant who had 10 minas.

Luk 19:26 'I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.

- Jesus used a very similar phrase in Luke 8:18.
- Who is the "one who has?"
 - I understand this to be a person who "has" a mind prepared to accept the responsibilities of the Kingdom.
 - Their lives then show fruit through the practice of their duty.

- One who “has” such a mind and life will be used and honored by God (“more will be given”).
- Who is the “one who has not?”
 - In contrast, this would be a person whose mind and heart are closed off to the acceptance and practice of the responsibilities of a servant of the Lord.
 - This person’s heart is not good ground for growth.
 - The work the Lord could have accomplished through them and the subsequent reward will be given to a more faithful servant.

Luk 19:27 But as for these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slaughter them before me.”

- After dealing with his unfaithful servant, the nobleman turned his attention to those who opposed his kingship.
 - What was to be done with them?
 - He commanded them to be brought to him and slaughtered in front of him.
- MEANING OF THE PARABLE:
 - The parable, as I best understand it, was meant to teach the people Jesus would be departing for a time.
 - Remember, they thought the Kingdom was going to appear immediately.
 - Jesus was telling them their assumptions were mistaken. It wasn’t going to happen the way they imagined it.
 - The nobleman represented Jesus.
 - He was going into a “far country” to become a king.
 - The use of a “far country” indicated the nobleman would be gone a while.
 - In the same way, Jesus was going to be gone a while.
 - He was going to be returning to heaven after His death where He would be glorified on the throne.
 - Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world” (John 18:36).
 - God raised Jesus from the dead and “seated him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power

and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come” (Ephesians 1:20-21).

- Jesus was headed to heaven to sit on the throne, to become a king.
- The image of a nobleman going to a far country to receive a kingdom might be a bit strange to modern readers, but this image would have been familiar to the people of the 1st Century.
 - When Herod the Great died, his son Archelaus wanted to succeed him on the throne. (Herod the Great ruled Judea at the time of Jesus’ birth).
 - In order to receive that position, He had to be confirmed by Augustus, the Roman Emperor.
 - Augustus lived in a far country, Rome, which was over 1,000 miles away.
 - Archelaus made the trip in order to “receive a kingdom.”
 - Keep this story about Archelaus in mind because we are going to come back to it in a second.
- The nobleman (Jesus) was going to a far country (heaven) to become a king.
- Before leaving, the nobleman called his servants and entrusted them with a mission.
 - In a similar way, Jesus was entrusting His disciples with a mission while He was gone.
 - This mission is probably best summarized using the “Great Commission” text.
 - Mat 28:18-20 And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
 - Jesus’ disciples weren’t sent out to make money, instead they were sent to make more disciples.
 - To bear fruit and invite other souls to join the Kingdom of God.
 - Jesus distributes talents and abilities to each of His disciples, and trusts them to use them to the best of their ability.
- After speaking with his servants, the nobleman departed to the far country.

- After accomplishing his work and giving His disciples their instructions, Jesus was going to go back to heaven.
- During this period, His disciples were supposed to be working.
 - We are still in this period presently.
 - Jesus hasn't returned yet, and we are supposed to be doing the work He gave us.
- Verse 14 tells us the citizens of the nobleman's kingdom hated him and didn't want him to be their ruler.
 - Let's return to our story about Archelaus.
 - When Archelaus went to Rome to receive his kingdom, the Jews, who hated him, sent a delegation to oppose him.
 - They tried to convince Augustus that Archelaus wasn't the man he wanted to be ruling Judaea.
 - Through this parable, Jesus was teaching the Jews that the people who were supposed to be the citizens of the Messiah's kingdom (the Jews, the sons of Abraham) were actually going to oppose the reign of their King.
 - There are two ideas about who these hateful citizens were meant to represent.
 - 1. Some think this is a specific picture of the Jews who violently opposed the early church and their preaching about the Kingdom of God.
 - They tried to convince their fellow Jews that Jesus wasn't a king, wasn't the Messiah, and wasn't someone they needed to follow.
 - The Pharisees, scribes, Sadducees, and lawyers were already trying to oppose Jesus, and they would continue even after He ascended to heaven.
 - The Apostle Paul fit into the category of the "hateful citizens" before his conversion.
 - History suggests delegations of Jews were sent all over the world to try to stop the preaching of the Kingdom.
 - 2. Others think the "hateful citizens" were meant to represent anyone who was going to oppose the message of Christ.
 - No doubt, the Kingdom and its King have been resisted by both Jewish and non-Jewish force.

- This would include enemies of every generation, not just the early opposition of the 1st Century.
- In verse 15, the nobleman returned to his servants.
 - I think this a picture of the end of time.
 - At Jesus' second coming Jesus will evaluate the work of those who claimed to be his servants and judge those who opposed Him.
- Notice, even though the citizens of the kingdom opposed the nobleman's rule, he still became king.
 - "When he returned, having received the kingdom..." (verse 15).
 - Jesus has plenty of enemies and people who hate Him, but none of those enemies will keep Him from reigning.
- The nobleman called His servants to him and assessed how they had used what had been entrusted to them (the mina).
 - Jesus will assess the work of those who claim to be his servants.
 - He will reward those who used what He gave them to the best of their ability for His glory.
 - His displeasure will fall on those who were slothful in His business.
 - He won't be please with those whose actions didn't make sense in light of who they knew their master to be.

▪ **APPLICATION:**

- There are many people who go into a church building on Sunday morning and sing about God as their King, read about the judgement of God, hear sermons about their responsibility as servants of God, but whose lives seem to be unaffected by any of that knowledge.
 - They know who their Master is, but their lives are a contradiction to what they know.
 - We don't want to stand before Jesus at the end of time and have Him use the words we spoke in worship against us in our condemnation.
 - "I will condemn you with your own words, you wicked servant" (verse 22).
-

▪ APPLICATION:

- The servant knew he didn't do what the master told him to do but hoped he would be safe in the fact that, although he didn't make any increase, he also didn't lose any of the money.
 - Many people (professing Christians) will meet God on the final day and use the same defense. "I know I didn't use what was given to me to advance the Kingdom as well as I should have but..."
 - I never did it any harm!
 - I didn't do anything immoral.
 - I wasn't involved in any gross sins.
 - I attended Church.
 - I didn't do violence to anyone.
 - In light of this parable, do you think the Lord is going to be pleased with that answer?
-

▪ APPLICATION:

- God gives every disciple talents/abilities/blessings and tells us to invest them in whatever way we deem best to grow His Kingdom.
 - Notice, the nobleman didn't give his servants detailed instructions on how they were supposed to invest every cent of their mina.
 - He trusted them to do something useful with what he gave them.
 - In many ways, that is true of modern Christians.
 - Each of us has been given something by God, but God didn't write down detailed instructions for every person about how they are supposed to use their specific gifts at every point in their lives.
 - In some ways, He turns that over to us.
 - We have been entrusted with blessings and we are supposed to go out and use them the best we know how to glorify our God.
-

▪ APPLICATION:

- Jesus isn't pleased with inactivity because of fear.
- Doing what God asks us to do can definitely be scary.
- But we can't allow fear to paralyze us.

- The nobleman was angry at his servant because he didn't even try.
- This is where faith becomes very important.
 - We have to trust that if we are doing our best with what God has delegated to us, He will be there to help us in our efforts.
 - That knowledge will help us overcome paralysis and will help us resolve to do the things that seem scary.

-
- Finally, lets discuss verse 27.
 - The nobleman commanded all of the citizens who opposed his reign to be brought before him and slaughtered.
 - This was anything but a gentle rebuke to those who resisted Jesus as King.
 - On the final day, those who rejected Jesus and the growth of His Kingdom will be destroyed.
 - Rom 6:23a For the wages of sin is death...
 - 2Th 1:9 They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might,

Luk 19:28 And when he had said these things, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

Luk 19:29 When he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olivet, he sent two of the disciples,

Luk 19:30 saying, "Go into the village in front of you, where on entering you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever yet sat. Untie it and bring it here.

Luk 19:31 If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you shall say this: 'The Lord has need of it.'"

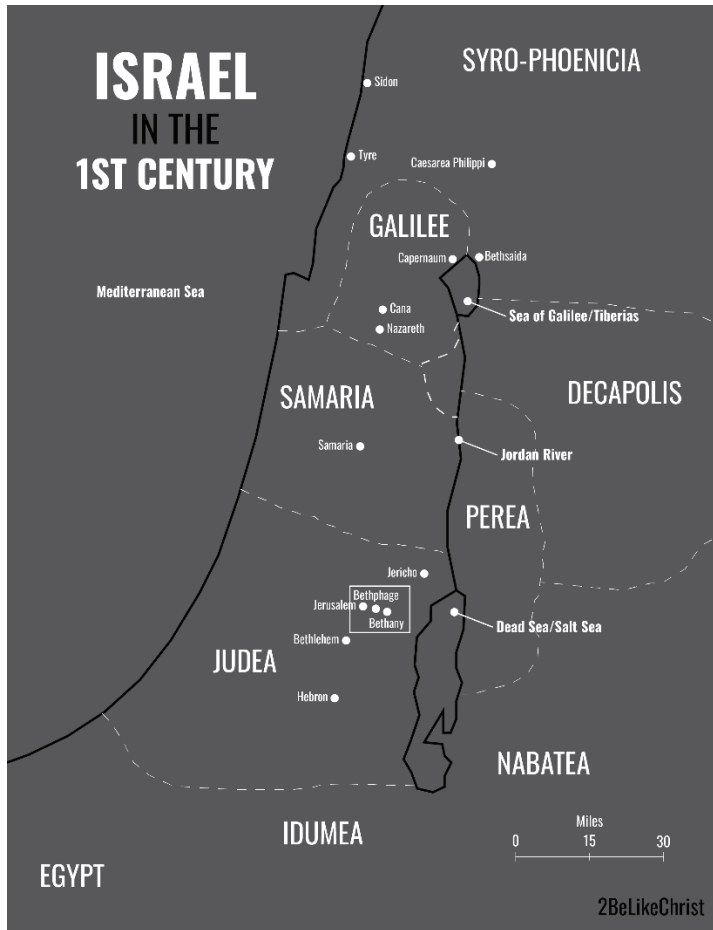
Luk 19:32 So those who were sent went away and found it just as he had told them.

Luk 19:33 And as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?"

Luk 19:34 And they said, "The Lord has need of it."

- It is important to recognize that the events we are about to read about took place at the beginning of the last week of Jesus' life.
- And the events of the next few chapters all take place in Jesus' last week.

- After leaving Jericho, Jesus made his way west to Bethany, Bethphage, and the Mount of Olives.



- The Mount of Olives was just outside the east wall of Jerusalem.
- Jesus told two of His disciples to go into the village and find Him a colt.
 - o But not just any colt.
 - o They would find a specific colt, one on which no one had ever ridden, tied up and waiting for them.
 - o If anyone asked them why they were taking the colt, they were to respond, “The Lord has need of it.”
- This was exactly what happened.
 - o The disciples went to the village.
 - o Found a colt tied up.
 - o The owner asked them why they were taking it.
 - o They told him the Lord needed it.
 - o The owner accepted the answer and the disciples brought it to Jesus.

- What is a colt?
 - Colt: Male donkey under 4 years old.
 - Filly: Female donkey under 4 years old.
 - Foal: Baby male or female donkey under 1 year old.
 - Gelding: Castrated male donkey.
 - Stallion: Uncastrated male donkey.
 - Yearling: Male or female donkey between 1 and 2 years old.
- The colt had already been providentially prepared by God.
- Jesus planned to use the donkey to enter the city of Jerusalem in an event commonly referred to as the Triumphal Entry.
 - The people would recognize Him as their Savior.
 - He was going to be welcomed like a King.

Luk 19:35 And they brought it to Jesus, and throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it.

Luk 19:36 And as he rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road.

Luk 19:37 As he was drawing near—already on the way down the Mount of Olives—the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen,

Luk 19:38 saying, “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”

Luk 19:39 And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples.”

Luk 19:40 He answered, “I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out.”

- The disciples put Jesus on the colt, and He rode along the road towards the city of Jerusalem.
- Matthew’s gospel informs us this was done to fulfill prophecy.
- Mat 21:4-5 This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying, “Say to the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.’”
- I don’t know about you, but when I think about a King, I typically envision him riding a mighty steed, not a donkey.

- Why did Jesus choose a donkey?
 - o Because Jesus wasn't a king like most kings!
 - o The prophecy cited here is from Zechariah 9:9.
 - o Jesus entered the city knowing He would receive a king's welcome but without the personal pride of other kings.
 - o Christ was entering their city as a king, but a king clothed in humility.
 - o He was their King, but He would also play the lowly role of being their sacrifice.
 - o The voices that glorified Him as He entered the city would soon curse Him as He was led out of the city to His death.
- It is interesting to contrast Jesus' first appearance on a donkey in Jerusalem to His appearance on a white horse in the book of Revelation.
- If we look back to the story of Jehu in 2 Kings 9:13 it reveals the practice of laying clothing on the ground was something done for royalty.
- Others laid palm branches on the ground (Matthew 21:8). This is where the name "Palm Sunday" comes from.
- As He got closer to Jerusalem the crowds got larger and larger.
 - o They were shouting praises to God.
 - o Matthew 21 tells us they were shouting the term "Hosanna."
 - If my research is correct, the word translated "hosanna" comes from the Hebrew term "Hoshia-na" (yasha'na), meaning "please save."
 - Although originally a cry for help, the people now used the phrase as a statement of praise for help arriving.
 - Psa 118:25-26 - Save (yasha) us ('na), we pray, O LORD! O LORD, we pray, give us success! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We bless you from the house of the LORD.
 - Mat 21:9 - And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"
 - We already know the Jews associated the term "Son of David" with the Messiah.
 - In this scene, the people appear to have connected the dots. Their prayer of "save us" was being answered by the One who came in the name of the LORD, Jesus, who was the Son of David!
 - o Why did Luke leave out the "hosanna" detail?

- Probably because he was writing mainly to Gentiles.
 - This point would mean a lot more to a Jewish audience than to a Gentile one.
- Luke records the people shouting, “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”
 - The people saw Christ as the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophets, and this infuriated the Pharisees.
 - They told Jesus He ought to make His disciples stop.
 - But He told them the stones would cry out praises if He hushed the people.

Luk 19:41 And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it,

Luk 19:42 saying, “Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.

Luk 19:43 For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side

Luk 19:44 and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation.”

- Matthew’s gospel reveals there is a bit of a time break between verses 40 and 41.
- This didn’t occur immediately after the triumphal entry, but it does make sense for Luke to include it here.
- Jesus had just been welcomed like a King, but He knew the fickle heart of the people.
- That same week they were going to approve of His crucifixion.
- That approval would be the climax of generations of Jewish rebellion against God.
- And even after Jesus resurrected from the dead, the majority of Jews would continue to resist His message.
 - There were some Jews who repented following the resurrection (see Acts 2).
 - But, as Paul discusses in the book of Romans, the majority did not.
 - In many cases, they were not just indifferent to the gospel, but hostile to it.
- This hostility would eventually push God’s patience to the breaking point.
- Matthew’s gospel gives us a picture of God’s wrath as if it were a liquid filling up a cup (Mat 23:32).
 - The more the Jews vexed God, the more wrath filled the cup.

- Eventually the cup was going to overflow and tip over and God’s wrath would be poured out on the Jewish nation.
- In verse 42, Jesus said, “Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.”
 - Jerusalem means “city of peace.”
 - But the people who lived there didn’t have any idea how to make peace with God or man.
 - The next 40 years would be some of the least peaceful in their history.
- In verses 43 and 44, Jesus prophesied about the violence that would befall the city.
 - About 35 years after Jesus went back to heaven, the city of Jerusalem was surrounded and destroyed by the Romans.
 - We will discuss this in greater detail in chapter 21.
 - God was going to use the Roman army to punish the Jews for their continual disobedience.
- Jesus’ compassion stands out to me in this text.
 - Jesus wept for people who were preparing to kill Him.
 - He was sad they were choosing the wrong path.
 - He didn’t find any joy in the fact that they were going to be destroyed by Rome in a violent siege.
 - Jesus didn’t/doesn’t enjoy punishing wicked people.
 - Eze 33:11 Say to them, As I live, declares the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel?
 - Jesus wants everyone to be saved (1 Timothy 2:4).
- Also, notice Jesus’ ability to accomplish His will even through human rebellion.
 - Jesus wanted those Jews to repent.
 - But He knew they wouldn’t.
 - So, He used their stubborn hearts to accomplish what He came to earth to do, to be the sacrifice for the world’s sins.

Luk 19:45 And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold,

Luk 19:46 saying to them, “It is written, ‘My house shall be a house of prayer,’ but you have made it a den of robbers.”

- Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem like a king, but instead of going to a palace, He went to the Temple.
- And in a scene that probably shocked much of the adoring crowd, Jesus, in righteous anger, upended the tables of the Temple market (Matthew 21:12).
 - As mentioned earlier, a lot of the Jews thought Jesus was about to set up an earthly Jewish kingdom and free them from Roman oppression.
 - But instead of marching to the Roman garrisons and demanding freedom, Jesus directed His anger at His own people.
 - Jesus was enraged at His fellow Jews who oppressed worshippers at the Temple.
 - He was disgusted by their extortion and greed.
- Let's ask a question... Should the Jews have been shocked that the Messiah acted this way?
 - Should they have been shocked that a messenger from God took issue with the sinful culture of their nation?
 - Did the God of the Old Testament just pat the Jews on the back and tell them they were doing a great job?
 - What about the prophets?
 - Did the prophets spend their time telling the Jews how well they were doing?
 - Answer: No!
 - If the Jews knew anything about the God they claimed to serve they would have known He had been verbally flipping tables for generations.
 - Only a person who didn't know the God of the kings and prophets of old would believe God would come to the earth and not correct the Jews first-and-foremost.
- Let's ask another question... Why was Jesus so angry?
 - Matthew tells us there were moneychangers and salesmen in the Temple complex.
 - But why did that incite Jesus to anger?
 - Didn't people need those services?
 - What was the big deal?
 - Wasn't Jesus going a bit overboard here?
- In order to understand a little better, I did some research into the ancient Temple and its practices.
- The Three Temples:

- (1) Without going into too much Temple history... The original Temple built by Solomon was no longer standing. It had been destroyed when the Babylonians conquered Judah.
- (2) Upon returning from Babylonian captivity, the Jews built a new Temple, but it didn't compare to the glory of the first.
- (3) In order to win the favor of the Jews, Herod the Great greatly "improved" the existing Temple to once again put it on the map as an architectural wonder.
- But Herod, with the help of the Jewish elite, had turned the new and "improved" Temple into a money-making machine, which was not its intended purpose!
- The Temple made money a few different ways:
 - (1) Temple Tax
 - A half-shekel (about a day's wage) was collected annually from most Jewish men for the upkeep of the Temple.
 - Estimating the total:
 - Let's use modern numbers and say every man made \$10/hour.
 - Every man worked 8 hours a day.
 - Approximately 3 million taxpayers around the world.
 - = \$240,000,000.
 - This tax was collected throughout the Roman Empire and shipped via armed guards back to Jerusalem.
 - Note the words of Titus the Roman general (and later emperor) in a speech to the Jews just before the fall of Jerusalem:
 - "We [Romans] have given you leave to gather up that tribute which is paid to God [the Temple tax], with such other gifts that are dedicated to him: nor have we called those that carried these donations to account, nor prohibited them; till at length you became richer than we ourselves, even when you were our enemies" (Josephus, Wars, VI.6,2).
 - (2) Money Changers
 - The Temple tax was not paid in common money, it was only paid with the Tyrian shekel (from the region of Tyre).
 - The Tyrian shekel bore the image of Melkart, their equivalent of Baal.
 - Most people weren't coming through Tyre so they had to get their money changed.

- Apparently, there was a bit of extortion going on during the changing process, which was making a few Jews rich, but would have been a hardship on poorer worshippers.
- (3) Animals sales
 - Jews sold animals used for sacrifice to fellow Jews in the Temple complex.
 - Why was this a profitable business?
 - If you remember the Old Testament commands about sacrifices, the animals couldn't be blemished.
 - Consider the concerns of a Jewish family that had to travel a long distance to sacrifice in Jerusalem:
 - If they brought an animal from home, there would be a risk the animal would be “blemished” in some way along the journey.
 - Bringing live animals (especially something as large as a lamb) would slow down the family's travel.
 - Even Jesus had to travel 75+ miles to get to Jerusalem for the feast.
 - It would have been much easier to travel light and buy an animal in Jerusalem.
 - Who wants to haul a sheep around for several hundred miles?
 - In addition, it was the corrupt priests who were responsible for inspecting the animals for blemishes, which would have been an opportunity to make a little extra profit...
- So, you can kind of see this playing out... People would come to the Temple, they would pay to get their money changed, then they would have to pay a high price to buy an animal with that money, and then they would be required to give their half-shekel tax... triple dipping.
- Ancient historian Josephus called Annas the high priest “a great hoarder up of money.”
 - In the 1st Century, the position of High Priest was a position acquired through bribery.
 - The priestly line from the Old Testament no longer existed.
- Josephus (Antiq. 14.105-109) reported that in 54 B.C. the Roman general Crassus raided the Temple, taking cash reserves weighing about 2000 talents (about 176,000 pounds) (roughly 3.5 billion dollars in today's money).
- Keep this in mind when you read the rest of the New Testament and the gospels.

- Jesus was going around telling people they wouldn't need to worship at the Temple any longer (women at the well, John 4).
- Paul would later preach that we (disciples) are the Temple of God.
- Why were the Jewish elite so bent on discrediting Paul?
 - Was it because they really cared about the souls of their Jewish friends?
 - No! Paul was directly attacking their money making ability with this new Christian teaching.
- In the Old Testament, we read about how the people had become so corrupt they started moving idols into the Temple.
- Were the Jewish elite of the 1st Century any better? They brought their idolatries and worship of money into the Temple complex.
- Imagine how hard it would have been for a poor person to come up with enough money to worship God at the Temple.
 - The Jewish elite were making it hard for people to worship God.
 - That was why Jesus was so angry.
- God's house had been turned into a den of robbers.

Luk 19:47 And he was teaching daily in the temple. The chief priests and the scribes and the principal men of the people were seeking to destroy him,

Luk 19:48 but they did not find anything they could do, for all the people were hanging on his words.

- How did the people respond to the Temple cleansing?
 - The Jewish leaders hated Jesus and plotted to kill Him.
 - But the common people listened to His preaching intently.
- The other gospel accounts tell us the Jewish leaders were hesitant to take any action against Jesus, because the Feast of Passover was that week, and they didn't want to stir up the large crowds of people.

